



# LIBERTY UNIVERSITY **ONLINE ACADEMY**

Student Handbook 2021/22



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Welcome to Liberty University Online Academy (LUOA), where we seek to provide quality academics through a biblical worldview for students in the United States and around the world. It is our prayer that our students graduate with an exceptional education and with a better understanding of who they are in Christ Jesus.

LUOA began in 2007 under the direction of the late Dr. Jerry Falwell and continues to enjoy the full support of the current president, Jerry Prevo, and the Executive Leadership of Liberty University.

LUOA is fully accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and Cognia, which is dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide. Cognia is the parent organization for the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC), and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). The Commonwealth of Virginia also recognizes LUOA as a member institution of the Virginia Council for Private Education. These accreditations and affiliations ensure that your student will receive the highest quality education available. We are pleased that we have obtained these credentials, which signify our commitment to providing a quality, Christ-centered educational opportunity for your family.

Our grades K–12 program offers curriculum for full-time or part-time students, students graduating with a standard diploma, advanced diploma, or on track to earn an Associate Degree. We offer dual enrollment courses through Liberty University for juniors and seniors who aspire to earn college credit and high school credit by completing collegiate coursework. These dual enrollment courses likewise qualify for NCAA eligibility. Our dedicated and highly qualified faculty and staff provide effective, knowledgeable, and professional support to engage students in the educational process and to aid parents and guardians throughout the school year. We have also developed proprietary curriculum from which your child will only benefit as a student of LUOA.

We appreciate your confidence in our academy, and we look forward to serving you as we seek to serve the Lord through LUOA!



Dr. Chris Rusk  
Dean / Superintendent

# VISION, MISSION, PHILOSOPHY

# VISION STATEMENT

Liberty University Online Academy (LUOA) seeks to lead students to faith in Jesus Christ, to develop young men and women who adhere to a Christian worldview, and to prepare them to participate as godly members of their home, church, and community.

# MISSION STATEMENT

To work toward its vision, LUOA seeks to provide support to parents/guardians in their biblical responsibility to train their children to become Christ-centered men and women with the values, knowledge, and skills essential to impact the world.

# PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The philosophy of LUOA is based on the premise that man's ultimate purpose is to glorify God (Isaiah 43:7; I Corinthians 10:31). Thus, LUOA serves as an extension of students' families to aid them in their God-given responsibility to educate their children for the glory of God (Psalm 78:5–6). LUOA exists to help students reach their full potential by guiding them in developing spiritually, morally, personally, socially, and academically (Luke 2:52; Colossians 1:9–10). The faculty and staff recognize that only when students accept Jesus Christ as Savior and yield to His Lordship can they realize their unique potential (Romans 10:10–13).

LUOA is a K–12 school that exists as a department of Liberty University. Teachers and administrative staff must be professed born-again Christians who are committed to living for Jesus Christ, understanding that their lives serve as an example to those whom they teach.

Education and learning are biblical imperatives (Deuteronomy 6:6–7; Proverbs 3:1–9); therefore, all instruction is biblically-based (Deuteronomy 4:2–9). LUOA designed the curriculum based on the following biblical themes:

1. **Creation** – God's mandate at creation was for mankind to have dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26–28), which has grown to require learning in the areas of language, mathematics, the physical and natural sciences, history, technology, and the fine arts.
2. **The Fall of Man** – The hostile environment resulting from the fall of man (Genesis 3:9–24) intensifies the need to gain an in-depth understanding of all curricular areas in light of God's written Word.

3. **Redemption** – Man is saved by professing Jesus Christ as Lord (Romans 10:10; Ephesians 2:8). LUOA writes curriculum with the intent of teaching all students this biblical truth.
4. **Discipleship** – The command for Christians to evangelize the lost and to disciple believers (Matthew 28:18–20) further elevates the need to master all of the above areas.
5. **Restoration** – Jesus rose from the dead and prepares a place for all those who believe in order that they may be restored to Him (Hebrews 9:28; John 14:3).

### Detailed Outline of Biblical Themes

Themes	Topics
Creation	God's glory
	God's sovereignty
	God created everyone and everything
	God created man in His own image
The Fall of Man	Sin and death
	Total depravity
	Satan
Redemption	God's love
	The Gospel – The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
	Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ
	Eternal life – Knowing God
Discipleship	The inerrancy of the Bible
	The authority of the Bible
	Bible reading
	Prayer
	Sanctification
	The Great Commission
	The local church
	Gifting
	Stewardship
	Personal responsibility and accountability
	The Christian's body as the temple of the Holy Spirit
	Marriage and family
	Leadership and service
	The biblical perspective of life

Themes	Topics
Restoration	The resurrection
	The judgment
	Heaven
	Hell
	The new heaven and the new earth

## EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Inform students of their sinful nature and God’s unconditional love for them (Romans 3:23; John 3:16).
- Lead students to an acceptance of Christ as their Lord and Savior (Romans 10:13).
- Help students recognize the Bible as the inspired, inerrant, authoritative Word of God (II Timothy 3:16).
- Develop a desire in students to know, love, and obey the will of God through daily prayer and Bible reading and participation in a local church (II Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 10:24–25).
- Instill in students the knowledge of the foundational truths and doctrines of God’s Word and the desire to apply these in life (II Timothy 2:15; Ephesians 6:13–17; I Peter 3:15).
- Instruct students about the importance of recognizing and overcoming sin and of living godly, obedient lives (Ephesians 4:21–32).

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Help students see and accept themselves as unique individuals, created in the image of God with special gifts to be fully developed for His glory (Psalm 139:13–16; I Corinthians 12:7–11).
- Instruct students to develop habits of good stewardship over all that God has given them—time, talents, material possessions—and the physical environment (Luke 12:48; Ephesians 5:16, I Peter 4:10).

- Teach students personal responsibility and accountability for their words, actions, and attitudes (Romans 14:12; Galatians 6:7–8; I Timothy 4:12).
- Encourage physical fitness, good health habits, and wise use of the body as the temple of God (I Corinthians 6:19–20).
- Teach students to develop the ability to make decisions based on biblical principles (Psalm 1:1–2; Psalm 119:105; I Corinthians 2:14–16).

## **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Encourage students to view all others as made in God's image and to treat them with love and respect (Genesis 1:27; John 13:35; James 2:8–9).
- Help students develop the skills, perspectives, and desire to function as cooperative members of the larger society (Romans 12:18; Romans 13:1–7; I Timothy 2:1–2).
- Help students develop biblical attitudes toward marriage and the family, emphasizing the need to establish God-honoring homes (Joshua 24:15; Psalm 127:1; Ephesians 5:31).
- Help students desire to lead others to a saving knowledge of Christ and to disciple believers by precept and example (Matthew 28:18–20; I Timothy 4:12).
- Help students develop the desire both to lead and serve in their communities as circumstances and God's direction permit (Matthew 25:21).

## **ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Help students reach their full academic potential by providing a developmentally appropriate instructional program with high academic standards.
- Teach students to use good study habits to enhance their creative and critical thinking skills (II Timothy 2:15; Proverbs 4:5–12).
- Teach students to interpret and apply all knowledge from a biblical perspective (Isaiah 8:20; I John 4:1).
- Help students develop independent study habits and foster a life-long love for learning and personal excellence (Colossians 3:17; 23–24).
- Prepare students for future educational or vocational experiences by developing in them the abilities necessary for effective communication, thinking, and technological skills (Proverbs 4:5–12).
- Help students become aware of changing world events and interpret them from a biblical worldview (Hebrews 13:8).

- Instruct students to acquire knowledge about and develop an appreciation for their Christian and American heritages (Psalm 33:12; I Timothy 2:1–3).

## SPIRITUAL CORE VALUES

1. **Commitment to Christ** – Everyone needs the saving grace of God purchased by the shed blood of Jesus Christ and the guiding truths of His Word.
2. **Love for Others** – Everyone is made in the image of God and, therefore, deserves our love and respect.
3. **Excellence** – As representatives of Christ, we must strive for personal, academic, social, and spiritual excellence in all that we do.
4. **Worship** – The family and the church are God’s primary educational institutions. The school exists to support the family and to extend the church.

## ACCREDITATION

LUOA is a K–12 online school, offering a traditional education through a technology-based format. LUOA is accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and Cognia, which are both dedicated to advancing excellence in education worldwide. Through the Cognia accreditation division, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), LUOA enjoys full accreditation. The Commonwealth of Virginia also recognizes LUOA as a member institution of the Virginia Council for Private Education. These affiliations and accreditations ensure that students will receive the highest quality education available.

# ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

# ADMISSIONS TO LUOA

As part of its mission to provide an excellent education, LUOA adheres to a set of standards and policies that ensure a quality educational program, adherence to a Christian worldview, and fairness and integrity in all of its operations. Upon acceptance, LUOA students agree to abide by the standards and policies set forth by the Academy. Parents/guardians enroll their minor students. The Academy regards the parents/guardians as having authority over their children with the Academy providing the academic and spiritual support for the children's development. Adult learners must abide by the **Adult Learner Policy**.

Enrollment is available beginning every Monday of the year, providing flexibility that enables LUOA to accommodate a variety of unique family life situations.

For each student, the enrollment process begins with the submission of a completed application and payment of the application fee. Upon acceptance, LUOA assigns each student to a personal admissions counselor who will review the student's previous school records in order to determine if assessment testing is needed. Using the records and assessment testing results, the admissions counselor drafts a class schedule for the full-time student. Enrollment is completed when parents/guardians agree to the class schedules, select start dates, and finalize financial check-in. With the completion of the enrollment process, LUOA assigns each student an academic advisor who supports students by monitoring academic progress until the completion of course schedules.

# TRANSFERRING CREDITS TO LUOA

LUOA may accept high school credits earned prior to student enrollment based on the submission of official transcripts. (A combination of grades and LUOA's math assessment test will determine math placement.) This measure is to ensure that LUOA places students in the course that best meets their demonstrated skill levels. For transcripts to be considered official, previous schools must mail, fax, or email transcripts containing a seal and/or administrative signature verifying document authenticity to LUOA. Credits and grades earned at previous schools will be listed on the LUOA transcript as "transfer."

Students who have taken high school courses through homeschooling may need to show documentation of work completed for transfer credit consideration and/or evaluation. If homeschooled students took a high school course in seventh or eighth grade, they would take an entrance assessment through LUOA before the transfer credits are awarded.

Transferred Bible courses will not be considered electives.

# STUDENT ACADEMIC STATUS

## ACADEMIC STATUS AS RECOGNIZED BY THE STATE

Some states view enrollment in any form of distance education as “homeschooling;” other states recognize accredited distance education institutions as actual schools. ***Parents/guardians are responsible for educating themselves concerning the education laws in their home states and how state laws view enrollment in LUOA.*** Since laws change, it is advisable to check with one’s state of residence annually.

## LUOA FULL- AND PART-TIME STATUSES

A full-time kindergarten student is defined as one enrolled in three (3) courses per term. A full-time first-grade student is defined as a student enrolled in four (4) courses per term. A full-time second- through twelfth-grade student is defined as a student enrolled in five (5) or more LUOA courses per term, including Bible courses.

Students in kindergarten taking fewer than three (3) courses and students in first grade taking fewer than four (4) courses are considered to be part-time students. For second- through twelfth-grade students, part-time student status includes all who register for one (1) to four (4) courses. Part-time students are not required to take the math assessment test (with the exception of those enrolling in high-school math, chemistry, and physics). Furthermore, part-time students are not required to submit previous school records in order to meet enrollment qualifications.

Part-time students may change status and enroll as full-time students by enrolling in the needed addition of courses, taking any potentially required assessment tests, and submitting previous official school transcripts.

## ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Full-year courses are divided into thirty-six (36) weeks of work, and semester courses are divided into eighteen (18) weeks of work. A full-time student attending the entire school year should complete coursework in ten (10) months, including time for holiday breaks. Semester courses are designed to be completed in five (5) months.

Students may shorten their course time by increasing the hours they spend on their coursework. However, to achieve the fullest learning potential from this academic experience, students are cautioned not to rush through the curriculum.

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

The LUOA school year consists of 10 months (180 days) of instructional work for academic credit to be granted for full-year courses and five (5) months (90 days) for semester courses. LUOA does not require parents/guardians to notify anyone regarding missed days of school since the pace is family-controlled and students can make up days according to their own schedules. If any student is struggling due to an illness or family issue for more than 10 days, parents/guardians should notify teachers and academic advisors so they can pray for the student and offer extra assistance as needed. LUOA expects students to work in each course regularly. Students not submitting work in a 30-day period without notifying LUOA will be administratively withdrawn, and a grade of FN (“finished for non-participation”) will be placed on their transcripts. Tuition will not be prorated for courses that result in a grade of FN.

# NON-INSTITUTIONAL CREDIT POLICY

In order to meet the requirements of the LUOA Diploma Completion Plans (DCP), LUOA requires full-time students to take LUOA core and elective courses. In order to be considered full-time with LUOA, students must take at least five (5) credits through the LUOA curriculum. Students who would like to earn credit for a course taken outside of LUOA while enrolled full-time should follow the steps below.

- Submit the Non-Institutional Credit (NIC) form to their academic advisor or admissions counselor. Include textbooks/curriculum, scope & sequence, planned method of evaluation, instruction time, etc.
- An LUOA administrator will approve or deny the courses.
- If approved, the administrator may comment on expectations.
- Upon completion of courses, students will update the NIC form, include documentation of the work completed (such as examples of written activities, graded assessments, final grades, etc.), and submit the form to their academic advisor.
- The administrator will assess the completion of paperwork and award or deny credit.
- If awarded, courses will be added to students' transcripts and graduation plans as transfer credits taken outside of LUOA.

**Note:** LUOA will include final course grades from outside accredited institutions in students' GPA (Grade Point Average). LUOA will issue a final grade of "P" (pass) on transcripts for homeschool courses; this grade will not affect GPA.

# EXTENSION POLICY

Under certain circumstances, LUOA may grant students an extension to complete their coursework. Students may also find that they need to withdraw from a course or the Academy and need their LUOA transcripts.

**It is the responsibility of parents/guardians and students to complete courses by established deadlines.** LUOA academic advisors will assist by alerting parents/guardians if it appears that students are in danger of not finishing in time. Courses which are incomplete at the end of the assigned period will result in a course grade of FN, with no credit earned or granted.

However, if additional time is needed to complete a course beyond the 5/10 allotted months, parents/guardians should contact an advisor for assistance as some options are available. (See details for extensions below.)

## FULL-YEAR COURSES

While certain flexibilities are available, LUOA expects students in full-year courses to complete their schoolwork within 10 months. For students requiring 10–11 months to complete their schoolwork, LUOA may grant a one-month extension without penalty. For students requiring 11–12 months to complete their coursework, *parents/guardians must specifically seek permission for a one-month extension* from their child(ren)'s academic advisor. Subsequently, LUOA will charge an extension fee of \$50 per course to the account. LUOA may place student access to coursework on hold until the extension fee is paid in full. Students not completing their coursework in 12 months will receive an FN in each applicable course and credit will not be granted. To request an extension, parents/guardians must contact their child(ren)'s academic advisor.

## SEMESTER COURSES

LUOA expects students in semester courses to complete their schoolwork within five (5) months. For students requiring 5–6 months to complete their schoolwork, LUOA may grant a one-month extension without penalty. For students requiring 6–7 months to complete their coursework, *parents/guardians must specifically seek permission for a one-month extension* from their child(ren)'s academic advisor. Subsequently, LUOA will charge an extension fee of \$50 per course to the account. LUOA may place student access to coursework on hold until the extension fee is paid in full. Students not completing their semester coursework in seven (7) months will receive an FN in each applicable course and credit will not be granted. To request an extension, parents/guardians must contact their child(ren)'s academic advisor.

# COURSE WITHDRAWAL

A parent/guardian must request a course withdrawal from the academic advisor.

If a student has worked no further than Module 1 of any full-year or semester course and the course withdrawal occurs within the first month of enrollment, the student will be charged for 0 months, but the “W” will show on the transcript.

If a student has worked no further than the fifteenth week of the semester, the course withdrawal will appear on the transcript as “W” (“withdrawn”) but will not affect the high school GPA.

If a student has progressed into the sixteenth week of the semester, a course withdrawal request cannot be accepted. The course must be completed, or a final grade of FN (“finished with non-participation”) will appear on the transcript.

Students who are enrolled for four months in a semester course or nine months in a full-year course, and who wish to withdraw but do not successfully progress in their coursework, will be given a final grade of FN.

Once LUOA officially accepts course withdrawals, courses may not be reopened without approval from LUOA administration.

# CONDITIONAL ENROLLMENT

There are some circumstances under which student enrollment at LUOA may be jeopardized. Conditional enrollment is when enrollment is contingent upon certain circumstances. LUOA will place students under conditional enrollment when

- There is a history of not maintaining sufficient academic progress,
- There is a history of technical difficulties,
- There is a history of late or missed payments,
- Students are on academic probation, and/or
- LUOA determines there are other issues.

These students must meet certain conditions in order to remain enrolled. LUOA reserves the right to cancel enrollment at any time due to non-payment of fees, unsatisfactory academic progress, inadequate digital literacy that inhibits the use of the curriculum, program abuse or plagiarism, and/or failure to follow LUOA procedures. **Students who do not maintain satisfactory progress per course for a period of thirty (30) days will be administratively**

**withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of FN (failure for non-participation).** The grade of FN will appear on transcripts and will negatively affect high school students' GPA. Tuition will not be prorated for courses that result in a grade of FN.

## CANCELLATION OF ENROLLMENT

As long as students are enrolled at LUOA, they represent the Academy. If at any time LUOA finds the testimony of a student detrimental to the Academy, he/she may forfeit the privilege of being a student. Also, LUOA administration reserves the right to cancel student enrollment at any time for reasons including, but not limited to, non-payment of fees, unsatisfactory progress, failure to submit work on a regular basis, inadequate digital literacy that inhibits the use of the curriculum, Honor Code violation(s), and academic dishonesty. Students who do not maintain attendance by progressing in each course for a period of thirty days or by remaining in blocked status due to financial holds for a period of sixty days will be administratively withdrawn from the applicable course(s).

In such cases, parents/guardians of students are responsible for completing prorated tuition payments based on the students' time enrolled within their contracts, not on the amount of schoolwork completed. However, if students finish before the 5 or 10 month deadline, the full tuition for that course is still owed. *Transcripts will be released only when all obligations to LUOA have been satisfied.*

Once students are dismissed, reinstatement is considered only upon written application to and approval by the administration of LUOA. Reinstated students are automatically placed on probation. The administration will consult with parents/guardians as to the nature and length of the probation.

If student enrollment is suspended or canceled for any reason, schoolwork that is completed after the date of withdrawal will be considered "homeschool status" and will be marked as a transfer credit on the LUOA transcript. Upon reinstatement, if parents/guardians desire the "homeschool coursework" returned to regular credit, an academic advisor must review and accept a coursework portfolio of completed assignments and tests as conclusive documentation.

## RELEASE OF OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS

After completion of courses, LUOA will issue a school transcript upon request. Financial obligations to LUOA must be satisfied prior to the release of official or unofficial records and graduation diplomas. *Transcripts will be released only when all obligations to LUOA have been satisfied, and all official documentation is received from the previous school.*

# TRANSCRIPT CHANGES

Changes cannot be made to official transcripts unless there is documentation proving that the administration made an error. Individuals expressing concern must speak with LUOA academic advising or administration. LUOA administration will determine if a change is warranted. Any time a proof of claim is verified, LUOA will modify the transcript and send official copies to institutions that previously requested academic records.



# ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SUPPORT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

# ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

LUOA is a grade K–12 school dedicated to high academic standards within the framework of a technology-based educational program. The Academy believes in and is dedicated to preparing young people to fulfill elementary and secondary academic objectives that will enable them to pursue post-high school goals.

LUOA believes that a Christian education is of primary importance to all students. The Bible and its teachings are deeply integrated into LUOA's curriculum. It is the policy of LUOA to hold all curriculum materials against the Bible, the infallible Word of God. Historical facts are reported as such, and all opinions and interpretations must stand the scrutiny of Scripture.

LUOA realizes that there is no infallible material besides the Bible and that discretion is used when selecting or forming instructional materials. It is not the practice of LUOA to support or perpetuate any principles that stand in contradiction to the Bible. Therefore, information and principles are taught in compliance with the Bible. Notions that conflict with Scripture are challenged and designated as errors.

Course instruction is formatted on a browser-based Learning Management System (LMS) that is delivered via the internet. Courses are primarily text-driven with various forms of interactive components built into lessons such as videos, animation, and interactive elements. Accordingly, LUOA designs the lessons to actively engage students in the learning process and meet the multiple learning styles of students. LUOA develops lessons with the intention of maximizing student interest and maintaining student focus.

All full-time students must use LUOA curriculum. On rare occasions, high school students may supplement their coursework with pre-approved outside courses. (See **Non-Institutional Credit Policy** on page 19 for more information.)

Students completing their school year early may enroll immediately in the next year's program. Parents/guardians must meet financial obligations for the completed school year prior to their child(ren)'s re-enrollment and/or LUOA's release of official records.

# PARENTAL ROLE

*A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.*

Luke 6:40<sup>1</sup>

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in LUOA education. Even though the coursework involves self-instruction, parents/guardians are essential in actively assisting their students as “first responders” throughout each lesson. As such, parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring the quality of independent student learning and monitoring student quiz and test-taking to ensure student integrity.

Using a specially designed observer account within LMS, parents/guardians can view all graded assignments and monitor academic progress. LUOA strongly recommends that parents/guardians check the student observer accounts regularly in order to monitor student progress.

# FACULTY ROLE

LUOA teachers are degreed in their subject area(s), are licensed professionals, and/or hold a master’s or terminal degree. They provide support to parents/guardians and students through electronic correspondence. Teachers take responsibility for the day-to-day academic well-being of each student. Teachers provide an assessment of student work. Grades are always available to students and parents/guardians through the online grade book. Communication between teachers and students is accomplished primarily on two levels: correspondence in the LMS message center and comments made directly on the assignments. Teachers can also be available after office hours per student request. Using the communication options established within the LUOA structure, relationships among parents/guardians, students, and teachers become similar to those that exist in a traditional classroom setting.

# ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Students in need of assistance beyond that which can be resolved through messaging their teachers may call LUOA for assistance from subject matter experts at 866-418-8741. These

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the following version of the Bible is used for scripture quotations in this handbook: The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

services are available Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Tutorial assistance is limited to helping students understand the thrust of an assignment and understanding a lesson concept. Students needing full-service tutorial help must plan to secure those services through tutors in their locality at their parents’/guardians’ expense.

## SECTION 504 PLAN POLICY

LUOA offers students individualized learning opportunities. This means the academic goals for all students are the same, but the unique structure of our curriculum allows each student to progress at the individual’s own pace based on learning needs. This approach serves a variety of students, including those with special needs. LUOA strives to support the educational needs of each unique learner.

### Section 504

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based upon disability. Section 504 is an anti-discrimination civil rights statute that requires the meeting of needs of disabled and non-disabled students equally.

### Who is Protected?

Any qualified individuals with physical and/or mental impairments which substantially limit(s) one or more major life activity, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having an impairment.

### What are Examples of “Major Life Activities”?

- Self-care
- Eating
- Manual tasks
- Sleeping
- Walking
- Standing
- Seeing
- Lifting
- Hearing
- Bending
- Speaking
- Reading
- Breathing
- Concentrating
- Learning
- Thinking
- Working
- Communicating

### What does “Substantially Limits” mean?

*Substantially limits* may be interpreted to mean that the disability substantially limits the ability of an individual to perform a major life activity as compared to most students.

## What is “Reasonable Accommodation”?

Reasonable accommodation in the academic setting is a modification or adjustment of educational programs to afford students with disabilities equal opportunity to access the programs.

The Student Handbook lists educational goals for all LUOA students. It is important to balance the needs of learners with reasonable accommodations afforded through a 504 accommodation plan to provide the supports needed to “balance the playing field” for students with an impairment that substantially limits major life activities. To start the process for accommodations through a 504 Plan, parents/guardians should contact the Office of Student Support at [LUOAStudentSupport@liberty.edu](mailto:LUOAStudentSupport@liberty.edu).

## 504 Eligibility Determination

1. A committee consisting of the student (optional), head of the academic team, member of the student support team, the student’s parents/guardians, and a member of the Liberty University ODAS (Office of Disability Accommodation Support) team shall meet (via phone conference or email) to:
  - Determine the nature of the disability,
  - Review any medical verification and the student’s academic history,
  - Determine eligibility for 504 accommodations, and
  - Write/review a plan, if needed.
2. For those with existing LUOA 504 accommodation plans, the LUOA Student Support Office will notify (in writing) all stakeholders to review the 504 accommodation plan during the first week of enrollment in the academic year. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the student (optional), academic advisor, teacher(s), and parents and/or guardians. Stakeholders must acknowledge receipt of the accommodation plan before it can go into effect. Any stakeholder may request a meeting at any time to discuss amendments to the accommodation plan.
3. By virtue of the nature of the academic model utilized by LUOA and because there are no penalties for late work, students eligible for 504 accommodation plans can work at their individual paces. Frequent and descriptive feedback from teachers is also built into this educational model.
4. Standard student conduct is described in the **Student Expectations** section. Unless otherwise specified in an accommodation plan, LUOA requires these of all LUOA students. Student work should always be original and presented in the student’s own understanding or words, regardless of accommodations.

5. Students with a 504 accommodation plan may be eligible for a variety of reasonable accommodations on submissions or assessments. These can include but are not limited to:
- Quiz, test, and/or exam questions read aloud;
  - Quiz, test, and/or exam passages read aloud;
  - Quiz, test, and/or exam directions explained/paraphrased;
  - Repetition of quiz, test, or exam directions;
  - Students point to answers and parents/guardians or proctors select the given answers;
  - Students type responses into word processing documents and parents/guardians or proctors copy/paste the given responses into text boxes for submission;
  - Students speak answers and parents/guardians or proctors scribe or type the given answers into text boxes;
  - A basic function calculator; and
  - A one-month course extension for unfinished coursework if needed (the fee mentioned in the **Extension Policy** is waived).

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Technical support and communication are imperative to a successful experience in an online learning environment. Below is information regarding whom to call for different types of issues, as well as important contact information.

### **Contact a Teacher With**

- Questions about course content,
- Questions about accessing course learning tools,
- Questions about graded assignments,
- A need to resubmit an assignment because of a technical error, or
- A need to inform a teacher when no coursework will be completed for several days (vacation, medical leave, etc.).

Students can contact teachers through the messaging center in LMS.

### **Contact an Advisor With**

- Registration questions,

- Technology issues,
- Final grades requests,
- Transcript requests,
- A need to inform an advisor when no coursework will be completed for several days (vacation, medical leave, etc.), or
- Questions about an end-of-course grade.

Contact advisors by calling 866-418-8741.

### **Contact the LU HelpDesk With**

- Technology issues,
- Questions about operating a computer or software, or
- Questions about accessing course learning tools.

Contact technical support by calling 866-418-8741 or by accessing the [HelpDesk page](#).

# MINIMUM COMPUTER SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Below are the basic technical requirements needed to successfully operate the instructional technology of LUOA. Be advised that the specifications listed are the minimum requirements. LUOA recommends that students use equipment exceeding the minimum requirements whenever possible in order to achieve the best available user experience.

## **HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Desktop/Laptop**

Computers are preferably five (5) years old or newer. At this time, we cannot guarantee an optimal user experience with Netbooks, Chromebooks, or mobile devices, including tablets.

- **Processor:** 2GHz or more; elementary grades require Intel Core2 2.4GHz
- **Memory:** 2GB of RAM or more
- **Screen:** 1024×768 resolution or higher; 32-bit color or higher
- **Internet:** High-speed broadband internet; 1–2 Mbps or more per concurrent user

### **Media and Printing**

- **Printer:** Required (especially in elementary grades)
- **Scanner:** Required. High-resolution photos taken from phone or tablet cameras are accepted as long as the content is clearly visible, discernible, and legible.
- **Webcam:** Required. Can be included in phones or tablets.

- **Microphone:** Required. Can be included in phones or tablets.

## SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

### Operating Systems

- **PC:** Windows 7 or newer
- **Mac:** Mac OS X 10.9 or newer

### Web Browsers

As a general rule, always use the most up-to-date version of web browsers.

- **Compatible:** Google Chrome is recommended; Firefox is also sufficient.
- **Not Guaranteed:** Internet Explorer, Safari, and Microsoft Edge

### Required Software

The following software and browser settings are required for the successful use of LUOA's instructional technologies. Please note that all required software is available free of charge, including Microsoft Office 365. If you need assistance, you may contact technical support by calling 866-418-8741.

- **Web Browser:** Google Chrome OR Mozilla Firefox
- **MS Office:** Microsoft Office Suite, including Word, PowerPoint, and Excel
- **Adobe Reader:** Adobe Reader is required to view some PDF documents
- **Java:** JavaScript must be enabled in the browser settings. Java plugin may be required for some features.

## ASSESSMENTS

LUOA philosophically approaches learning and assessment from a mastery concept for daily work lessons. Mastery learning provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate this concept through various forms of assessment in which the teacher has the authority to provide multiple attempts of an assessment to bring the student to full understanding. The underlying premise of this philosophy is that all students can learn.

Because the curriculum is sequential, it is vital that students demonstrate mastery for present success to provide the foundation for future learning. In order to reduce guessing and improve student study habits, the number of attempts is limited by the LMS in most subjects to two attempts on daily work lessons. After two attempts, the student will be awarded the higher of the

two grades. Students who have connectivity issues during quizzes or tests should first contact their teachers and then contact their advisors.

## ASSIGNMENTS

For consistency in writing across the curriculum, students must properly cite all research projects using the MLA citation style. **Wikipedia is not considered to be a reliable source for research. Any work that includes or cites Wikipedia may be returned to the student for revision or may result in a significantly reduced grade.**

Because technology can fail, **students should save copies of projects to their personal computer in the event they need to be resubmitted.** Any courses requiring video submissions are uploaded behind LU's firewall for safety and security purposes.

LUOA teachers use rubrics to grade some assignments to help prepare students for what will be evaluated prior to submission of the work, to standardize grading by different teachers, and to categorize the feedback provided by teachers. Students should refer clarification questions to their teachers.

## TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

To clearly identify which policies apply to which assessments, each assessment has been categorized into one of four categories: Lesson, Assignment, Quiz, or Test. Each applicable item on the course Modules page has been designated with an identifier chosen from among these categories. For example, a quiz on the American Revolution may be designated by a title like "1.2.W **Quiz**: The American Revolution." These identifiers were placed on the Modules page to help students understand which Resubmission Policy and/or which portion of the Honor Code apply to that assessment (See the **Resubmission Policy** and the Consequences for Violations of the **Honor Code** for further details).

- **Lesson** – Any item on the Modules page designated as a "Lesson"

These include instructional content and sometimes an assessment of that content. Typically, a lesson will be the day-to-day work that students complete.

- **Assignment** – Any item on the Modules page designated as an "Assignment"

Examples of assignments include, but are not limited to, papers, book reports, projects, labs, and speeches. Students typically do their best work the first time on assignments.

- **Quiz** – Any item on the Modules page designated as a “Quiz”

Quizzes usually take the form of traditional assessments in which the students answer questions to demonstrate knowledge of the subject. Quizzes cover a smaller amount of material than tests do.

- **Test** – Any item on the Modules page designated as a “Test”

This usually takes the form of a traditional assessment in which students answer questions to demonstrate knowledge of a subject. Tests cover a larger amount of material than quizzes do.

From here forward in this handbook, lessons, assignments, quizzes, and tests may be denoted with capital letters to specify that these are the types of assessments to which the following policies apply.

## RESUBMISSION POLICY

*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.*

Colossians 3:23

LUOA expects students to submit their best work on the first submission of every lesson, assignment, quiz, and test. However, resubmissions may be permitted in the circumstances below.

- **Lesson** – Students are typically permitted two (2) attempts on a lesson. Students may freely resubmit for their first two (2) attempts without the need for teacher approval.
- **Assignment** – Students must complete any assignment resubmissions before moving past the ensuing Module. For example, a student may resubmit an assignment from Module 3 while in Module 4 but not an assignment from Module 2 while in Module 4. **High School students may not resubmit assignments without expressed written permission from a teacher.**
- **Quiz** – Students may NOT resubmit these for an increased grade.
- **Test** – Students may NOT resubmit these for an increased grade.

If students feel they deserve a resubmission on lessons, assignments, quizzes, or tests due to technical issues such as equipment malfunction, they should message their teachers to make the request, and that request will need to be approved by the academic team.

# ENHANCED COURSES

LUOA Enhanced Courses provide additional student support through increased interaction and communication with the course instructor. Enhanced courses are available for all high school core courses. Interaction takes place through the following:

- Weekly live teaching sessions,
- Question & Answer conferences with teachers before each test, and
- Discussion boards.

## PARTICIPATION GRADE

Students are given a participation grade based on attendance during the live teacher sessions and participation in discussion boards. For full-year courses, there are 20 live teacher sessions and four (4) discussion boards. For semester courses, there are 10 live teacher sessions and two (2) discussion boards. Participation grades are given at the end of each semester and count as Tier 3 assignments.

### Semester Grade Participation:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Participation</b>
<b>A</b>	Attended 8–10 live teacher sessions and participated in two discussion boards
<b>B</b>	Attended 6–7 live teacher sessions and participated in two discussion boards
<b>C</b>	Attended 5 live teacher sessions and participated in two discussion boards
<b>D</b>	Attended 3–4 live teacher sessions and participated in one discussion board
<b>F</b>	Attended 0–3 live teacher sessions and participated in zero discussion boards

## SEMESTER AND FINAL EXAM PROCTORING

The proctoring (or monitoring of students during educational examinations) of the semester and/or final exam by parents/guardians (or other approved adults) is required for Enhanced courses. LUOA will provide a form in the course that proctors will sign and complete. Students will then upload the form through an assignment before being able to begin exams.

## LATE WORK

In order to take full advantage of our Enhanced courses, it is important that students stay on track with their scheduled assignments so that they benefit from the discussions with their teacher and classmates. Meeting deadlines is a skill that will aid students in their high school classes and beyond. Enhanced courses offer LUOA students help in developing this skill by requiring assignments to be turned in by the due date in order to receive full credit. For each day the assignment is not submitted, 5 percent will be deducted from the assignment grade with a maximum deduction of 20 percent.

*\*Exceptions to this late policy may be considered in cases of illness, travel, or unforeseen events. Students will need to contact their teacher to seek approval for any exception.*

## FINAL WORK SUBMISSIONS

Submitting the final assignment on the Modules page signals that the student has completed the course. Students must submit all assignments and their final test *before* they can take the course completion. **Once the Course Completion assignment has been submitted, the course is closed.** Students and parents/guardians should be sure that they are ready to “close” that course prior to students submitting the Course Completion assignment.

## DETERMINING COURSE GRADES

Students read, watch, and listen to material in each lesson and complete problems, assignments, quizzes, and tests on computers. With the instant grading feature, students and parents/guardians have immediate feedback regarding progress. LUOA teachers grade written work such as paragraph answers, essays, and projects. Grades or comments made by teachers are transferred back to students.

The number of assessments for each module varies. Teachers have the prerogative to award credit for assessments as they deem appropriate for the work submitted. **Extra credit assignments are not available.**

LUOA requires teachers to grade assignments within 48 hours, with the exception of projects or papers, which will be graded within four (4) days.

Student grades will be determined according to the grading scale and assignment weights in the table below. LUOA determines final letter grades using a 10-point scale. Each assignment exists in an assignment group called a tier. Grades for the course are determined by averaging percentages of all assignments in each tier, weighing the tiers according to the assignment weights and summing the scores for the total course grade. Each tier is weighted according to the table below. Items that do not affect grades are found in Tier 0.

Grading Scale		Assignment Weights	
<b>A</b>	90–100%	<b>Tier 0</b>	0%
<b>B</b>	80–89%	<b>Tier 1</b>	25%
<b>C</b>	70–79%	<b>Tier 2</b>	35%
<b>D</b>	60–69%	<b>Tier 3</b>	40%
<b>F</b>	0–59%		

In order for students to receive credit for a course, the following conditions have to be met:

1. All semester exams and module tests have to be completed,
2. All Tier 3 projects or papers have to be completed, and
3. Fewer than 5 zeros per semester exist in the gradebook for blank submissions.

If students and/or parents/guardians question end-of-course grades, they should present concerns immediately to an academic advisor for clarification/correction.

## **AWARDING SEMESTER CREDIT FROM FULL-YEAR COURSES**

Students registered for full-year courses occasionally do not finish due to a variety of reasons such as administrative withdrawal or requested withdrawal. Students who complete the first semester and earn a passing grade will be awarded the grade earned based on the average grades earned in Weeks 1–18. Students will be awarded a *W*, *F*, or *FN* for the second semester, depending on the situation.

## **COURSE CREDIT**

High school students earn one-half (1/2) credit for each semester of successfully completed coursework. LUOA will accept credits earned prior to LUOA enrollment based on official transcripts and diagnostic test results. Credits earned in other schools will be recorded on LUOA transcripts as 1.0 credit for each standard high school course involving 150 to 180 clock hours of instruction.

Students who have taken high school courses through homeschooling must show documentation of work completed and demonstrate mastery on diagnostic tests in order to receive transfer credits.

Throughout the LUOA high school experience, additional credits may be earned for courses taken outside of LUOA, but it is standard practice for students to take courses offered at LUOA, especially core courses. LUOA will evaluate courses taken outside of the Academy for appropriate high school credit based on rigor, course content, and whether they are offered at LUOA. (See **Non-Institutional Credit Policy**)

Students may earn both high school and college credit for enrollment in a single course. One three-hour college course will be awarded one-half (1/2) high school credit.

# PREREQUISITES

Several courses contain prerequisites, meaning that the successful completion of a certain course or courses is required before entrance into specific courses. If a student has not met the required prerequisite(s) or fails a prerequisite course, then the student may be required to take or retake the missing or failed prerequisite course(s) before being able to take those specific courses.

# MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

LUOA curates educational materials that are consistent with the school's philosophy; however, the fallen human condition depicted in literature (as in Scripture itself) is not always pleasant. Valuable works sometimes have objectionable or profane elements. Good books provide four (4) recognized values.

- They build godly attitudes and character traits.
- They deepen our social and cultural awareness.
- They strengthen our use of written language.
- They provide a lifelong source of enjoyment and relaxation.

In order to instill these values in students and fulfill the stated objectives of the school, all LUOA students are expected to read and study good books on a regular basis. Recognizing that materials designed for one level may not be appropriate for another, three (3) levels of criteria are applied:

- Elementary materials must contain no objectionable material,
- Objectionable elements in sixth through eighth-grade materials must be limited and must serve a specific educational purpose, and
- Objectionable content may be included in high school materials but must be outweighed by positive literary, curricular, and/or Christian value.

Department chairs have approved required educational materials for students.

# LIBRARY

To enhance learning, the LUOA library offers students a thorough set of online resources through multiple databases. See the [LUOA Library](#) website for updates.

## **EBSCO K-12:**

- 5,000 academic journals
- 100 popular children's magazines
- K-12 encyclopedias and other reference works
- 1.7 million images of relevant photos, maps, and flags
- 11,000 electronic books

## **Periodicals Archive Online**

- A major collection of older scholarly magazines in subject areas such as the arts, humanities, and social sciences
- More than two centuries of content
- 37 key subject areas
- Multiple languages

## **Digital National Security Archive**

- Declassified government documents from 1945 to present
- Topics include U.S. policy toward critical world events
- Military, intelligence, diplomatic, and human rights dimensions

## **Music Periodical Database**

- Information about several hundred international music publications
- Variety of music from 20 countries
- 140+ music journals

# NATIONAL BETA CLUB

The National Beta Club is the largest independent, non-profit, educational youth organization in America. For more than 80 years, it has prepared students to be leaders in their communities. The mission of the National Beta Club is to promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, service, and leadership among middle and high school students.

Students who exhibit exemplary academic achievement and community involvement are invited to participate in this nationally recognized, merit-based organization. LUOA believes National

Beta Club allows students to highlight their unique abilities, talents, and leadership skills in a way that honors Christ and provides an excellent testimony to their communities.

### **LUOA Requirements for Membership**

- Full-time student with LUOA
- GPA of 3.5 or above for initial membership and 3.0 or above to maintain membership
- 15 service hours per calendar year
- \$25 membership fee per year

# STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

*In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

Matthew 5:16

A school environment based on integrity provides a setting of peace and trust. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians, students, and school personnel to work together to develop an educational community based on honesty in words and actions.

The Bible says, "Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out" (Proverbs 10:9). In order to issue a transcript and/or a diploma upon completion of the program, LUOA must have a reasonable degree of assurance that the earned grades and work completed are accurate reflections of student ability and mastery of the material. Therefore, LUOA views dishonesty related to coursework seriously and deals with it appropriately.

It is important that parents/guardians take ownership of their responsibility in the LUOA program and ensure there is sufficient supervision as students complete coursework and take quizzes and tests.

Program abuse primarily occurs when students become disrespectful to teachers or when they pursue alternative ways of completing coursework outside the conventional use of the curriculum per this handbook and LUOA communications.

A conventional approach means that students read the lessons, answer lesson questions, study for quizzes and tests without previewing the assessments first, and then complete quizzes and tests independent of "outside" resources of any form (i.e., notes, internet searches, etc.). **In other words, during quiz and test assessments, students are to rely solely on their mental preparations for that assessment.**

# HONOR CODE

*So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.*

James 4:17

By enrolling in LUOA, the student agrees to the following statement:

As a student of LUOA, I understand that it is my responsibility to uphold God's biblical mandate so that my life testimony demonstrates actions of integrity. In so doing, I will complete all assignments as instructed without resorting to cheating or plagiarism. I understand that it is my responsibility to turn in my assignments in a timely manner,

complete my own work, not share my work with others, and treat all students, teachers, and staff with respect.

## CHEATING

Cheating is giving aid to a student or receiving any form of aid, regardless of the source, without the consent of the teacher or the curriculum. Assistance in daily lesson work is not considered cheating if the student actually does the work. However, multiple occurrences of cheating on daily work or exceptional cases may result in an Honor Code violation. The line between lesson “assistance” and cheating is drawn at the point of someone or something other than a student providing actual answers to questions. **Students must complete quizzes and tests without the aid of any notes or other forms of written information and without information provided by human sources.** Students may receive help to clarify word meaning if they do not understand questions, but prompts that would guide students to the correct answers are inappropriate. Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring coursework to assist teachers in verifying student submission integrity. When determinations of cheating on quizzes or tests have been made, those students will receive a grade of zero (0%) for those assignments in their entirety.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying text from lessons onto quizzes or tests,
- Copying text from outside sources,
- Using answers from other students, and
- Viewing outside websites or LUOA lessons or assignments in advance.

## PLAGIARISM & SELF-PLAGIARISM

Whether intentional or not, plagiarism is submitting work that is not one’s own thoughts and opinions, has originated from another source, and is not properly documented. Self-plagiarism occurs when students submit work completed in other courses or contexts as if an original work for current assignments.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying from the internet or books,
- Someone other than students writing papers for the students,
- Sharing answers,
- Rearranging someone else’s words to use as one’s own,
- Downloading internet papers,

- Copying another student’s work in part or in whole, and
- Utilizing work from a previous context and submitting it as new.

LUOA, in partnership with parents/guardians, is committed to ensuring that students are properly equipped to follow accepted guidelines of research, to properly cite sources used, and to receive appropriate feedback and consequences when they fail to do so.

- In elementary grades 3–5, teachers stress that students know how to properly quote sources. Using information word for word is accepted so long as students use quotation marks and provide the source.
- Teachers in grades 6–8 focus research instruction on summarization principles. In addition to quotes, students are to put information in their own words. Students still provide sources with summarization.
- High school students are required to fully utilize MLA formatting and citation style.

At the beginning of each school year, students in grades 6–12 are presented with a *Back-to-School Quick Start* orientation. Included in this orientation is instruction for properly citing reference sources and practical measures to avoid plagiarism as well as a wealth of additional information to help students succeed.

Any project that requires research and source citation must have a Works Cited page in order for teachers to give credit. These reports also require the use of in-text citation called “parenthetical documentation” according to the MLA citation style.

To ensure academic integrity, teachers use *Turnitin*, a national plagiarism detection database. Teachers electronically submit assignments, essays, and projects to the database and receive reports detailing the level of plagiarism (if any) included in the materials and the possible sources from which the materials were copied. If the reports identify plagiarism, teachers will return the plagiarized reports to the students. LUOA will notify parents/guardians of the matter and instruct them on how to help their children succeed in written assignments. Offending students will be scheduled for a required plagiarism workshop. (See **Consequences for Violating the Honor Code**)

Once LUOA has withdrawn students for violating the Honor Code, the Academy will only consider reinstatement upon written application by offending students and subsequent approval by the administration. LUOA automatically places reinstated students on probation. The administration will consult with the parents/guardians and school coordinators as to the nature and length of the probation. At the administrator’s discretion, LUOA may impose certain conditions, such as requiring proctors for tests and exams.

# CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING THE HONOR CODE

If an Honor Code violation occurs, the offending student's teacher will communicate to the student via a comment on the assignment and will then submit the violation to the Student Support office. Next, the Student Support Coordinator will review the violation(s) and determine the consequence for the violation(s). Next, an email will be sent to the family or school. The family or school may then submit an appeal to the Student Support office. To submit an appeal, new evidence must be provided by the family or the Academy.

- **Warning** – This ONLY applies to elementary/middle school assignments and lessons and high school lessons. Students should accept these warnings as learning opportunities.
  - **Elementary/Middle School Assignment** – Work must be redone; however, resubmission does not guarantee an increase in grade.
  - **Lesson** – The original grade will be reduced.
- **First Offense**
  - **Assignment** – The student will:
    - Receive a reduced grade or a zero (0%) per teacher discretion,
    - Be required to complete the Plagiarism Workshop, and
    - Be permitted to retry the assignment for a higher grade on the next attempt at the teacher's discretion.
  - **Lesson, Quiz, or Test** – The student will receive a zero (0%).
- **Second Offense** – The student will receive a zero (0%) and be placed on academic probation.
- **Third Offense** – The student will receive a zero (0%) and the Student Support Coordinator, along with LUOA administration, will determine the consequences that should follow, possibly including academic withdrawal from the course or expulsion from the Academy.

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In the event that a dispute arises between student and teacher (e.g., grading, feedback, messaging), students should follow the biblical mandate from Matthew 18:15–17 and first contact the teacher in a respectful manner. If the student and teacher cannot successfully resolve the issue, the student should then contact his/her academic advisor who will then reach out to the Director of Faculty. The Director of Faculty will contact the teacher and student to resolve the issue.

# RESPECT

Students' actions and speech quickly convey to others the factors which motivate them in relationships. Students must be courteous to those with whom they associate by striving to live in harmony. Courtesy includes showing respect to all administration, faculty, and staff. Words are a powerful tool and must be used wisely.

Students are to communicate with teachers in a formal manner. LUOA expects students to use proper language, such as “please” and “thank you” in messages. In written communication, teachers and advisors cannot hear tones or see facial expressions when reading messages, so sometimes students' words may be taken in a way never intended. If and when differences of opinion between students and teachers occur, great care must be taken to address concerns in a respectful manner.

## **Accepted Forms of Communication:**

- Canvas Messaging System
- Liberty University email
- Phone (LUOA offices)

# TEN KEYS TO UNLOCKING LUOA EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

Online learning is unique in that students must take a more active role in learning and accessing information than traditional students in conventional classrooms. Instead of teacher-directed instruction, online course material is presented in text, video, and animation formats.

Written messages between students and teachers replace direct communication associated with traditional classroom instruction. Rather than simply sitting through a class and jotting

notes, online students must take the initiative to self-teach, using their teachers as resources rather than the primary presenters.

Online students will find that self-paced instruction has many advantages. The responsibility gained by being actively engaged in their personal learning experience will result in improved grades and depth-of-learning. LUOA's goal for students is for them to become independent learners through this experience. Consequently, students should be able to skillfully use personal learning styles to acquire knowledge, gain understanding, and wisely apply learning to life decision-making situations. To help transition to online learning, LUOA offers the following 10 keys to unlocking LUOA educational success.

### **1. Watch the Student Orientation Course and Read the Student Handbook**

- Watching the Student Orientation Course is required of all new students. The course provides practical advice to enable students to quickly acclimate to online learning using LUOA's Learning Management System (LMS).
- The student handbook provides valuable information regarding policies and procedures, all of which are designed to enable LUOA students to have a successful school experience. Be sure to read the handbook thoroughly. Students with questions about policies or procedures should contact their academic advisor.

### **2. Read and Secure Items on the Course Supply List**

- The supply list for each LUOA course can be found under Course Materials in the course syllabus. Some syllabi contain an additional Materials List page toward the end of the document. Parents/guardians and students should print the applicable lists prior to the start of each course. Securing project items in advance will ensure timeliness in completing course projects.

### **3. Understand the Lesson Design**

- Each new lesson in a module builds on previous learning objectives. Students' understanding of the materials covered in each lesson will directly relate to how they have mastered concepts in previous lessons.
- Lessons contain a variety of content, and the length is designed to help students focus on important information. It is important not to rush through assignments for the sake of completion. Mastery of the content is the goal. Quizzes and tests are designed to assess student mastery.

### **4. Submit Assignments on Time**

- LMS maintains an individualized assignment calendar for each student. As a general rule, students should pace themselves with the weeks designated on the Modules Page.

- With online courses, students can never say, “I know I turned it in, but you must have lost my paper.” All assignments are submitted through the LMS and stored indefinitely. LUOA recommends that students save a copy of all written projects in case there is an unforeseen technical issue with a submission.
- Students should click *Submit* when finished with assignments. Without this final command, teachers will not receive work, and students will not get credit for completing assignments.

## **5. Be an Active Learner**

- In online education, students are responsible for what they learn in courses. Rushing through assignments will not lead to information retention. Students should set aside time to take notes, to memorize important terms and definitions, and to understand lesson facts and concepts.
- Students need to answer all assigned questions fully; however, active learners go beyond the minimum requirements. Doing just enough to progress is not satisfactory. Students will have to use what they learn today as the foundation for what they will learn tomorrow.

## **6. Get Acquainted with Teachers**

- One of the secrets to successfully adjusting to online education is engagement with teachers. Discussing questions and ideas with their teachers is one way for students to actively invest in their education. Through this conversation, teachers can provide instruction that is meaningful to student needs. The following are examples of requests that are too general: “I don’t understand,” or “Please help.” These would be better stated specifically as something similar to “I understand that I need to write a paper on George Washington, but the directions do not tell me how long the paper should be and how many sources I am required to use,” for example. Good dialogue involves clarity in expressing ideas and seeking information.

## **7. Build for Success Through Organization**

- Daily organizational structure and strong study skills are fundamental elements of online learning success. Many students find that keeping a physical binder to take notes while studying lessons is an excellent way to increase learning. The notes provide a convenient means of review before taking quizzes and tests. Having a binder with class notes allows students to review when they are away from the computer or have lost access due to technical failure. Divide the subject binder by course, module, and lesson titles. Keeping notes may appear to be too time-consuming, but there are no shortcuts to learning.
- Academic success requires organization and perseverance.

## **8. Avoid Procrastination**

- Keeping up with schoolwork is every student's responsibility. Students should establish a daily study routine. Teachers can usually tell when students have rushed through assignments, so students should take their time to learn as much as possible.
- Steps to Writing a Research Paper:
  - Research the topic for a few days.
  - Create an outline and write the paper's rough draft.
  - Revise the rough draft.
  - Apply online spelling and grammar checks.
  - Avoid plagiarism by properly citing outside resources quoted and providing a list of references at the end of the paper.
  - When satisfied that the work is complete, keep a copy on a computer and submit it by following the directions provided with the assignment.
- Working diligently on projects provides an opportunity for lesson enrichment through research and/or discussion, which enables students to make practical life application of lesson concepts. To assist students in maintaining timeliness with work completion, the LMS restricts access to the next lesson of study until all preceding assignments are complete.

## **9. Look for Life Application in the Lesson Discussion**

- Education should make a difference in students' lives. Discovering ways to apply lesson information to life or future education makes learning fun. Realizing the significance of a topic or concept will help students remember the information better.
- Teachers want to understand that their students have more than book learning. They want to know that students can apply information to more than just a test question. Can newly acquired knowledge help students succeed in actual life experiences? Due to the nature of online education, students are not pressured for immediate answers to questions involving critical thinking, but these should naturally develop as they progress through the curriculum. Taking time to formulate a knowledgeable response before answering questions is best.

## **10. Set Goals**

- LMS provides an assignment calendar to keep students focused. The goal should be to complete all tasks required on the day they are assigned. Anyone

getting behind should use the next few days, the weekend, or scheduled holidays to get back on track. Unless students take ownership of academic goals, procrastination will replace production and make the school year a lot harder than it needs to be.

# HIGH SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

# HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Full-time students in grades 9 through 12 must be enrolled in a minimum of five (5) classes. *It is important to note that taking the minimum number of classes will require more than four (4) years to graduate.*

Students transferring to LUOA for their senior year must take five credits to establish full-time status. LUOA will not issue a diploma to part-time students who have not established full-time status for their final year of high school at LUOA. Re-enrolling students entering the twelfth grade who have already reached full-time status will be assigned courses based on LUOA DCP (Diploma Completion Plan) requirements.

Students who establish full-time status prior to their senior year must successfully complete at least five LUOA credit hours each year thereafter. Students may meet the credit hour requirement using LUOA courses, LUO dual credit courses, or combinations thereof.

Students who break enrollment with LUOA for a minimum of one academic year must re-establish full-time LUOA status for at least one year prior to graduation.

## CLASS PLACEMENT

For high school class placement, students must complete grades as indicated below.

- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade** – successfully completed the eighth grade
- **10<sup>th</sup> Grade** – accumulated a minimum of six credits
- **11<sup>th</sup> Grade** – accumulated a minimum of thirteen credits
- **12<sup>th</sup> Grade** – accumulated a minimum of nineteen credits and tentatively plan to graduate in the immediate year

## CLASS RANK & GPA

Because LUOA students attend school year-round without a mandatory school year start or end date, computing class rank is not possible. Student grade point averages are calculated on a quality point system. For transfer students at an accredited high school, LUOA will honor conventional school course statuses such as honors or Advanced Placement (AP). LUOA will weigh such transfer courses on the LUOA conversion system. For transfer students coming

from homeschool, honors courses will be accepted as unweighted standard courses. Homeschool AP courses will be weighted upon submission of AP national test scores.

<b>Standard Courses</b>	<b>Honors Courses</b>	<b>College or AP Courses</b>
A = 4.0	A = 4.5	A = 5.0
B = 3.0	B = 3.5	B = 4.0
C = 2.0	C = 2.5	C = 3.0
D = 1.0	D = 1.5	D = 2.0
F = 0.0	F = 0.0	F = 0.0

## ELECTIVE COURSES

At the high school level, a certain number of electives are necessary to meet graduation requirements. Students may meet credit requirements for high school graduation by taking courses provided by LUOA.

## DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

High school juniors and seniors may get a head start on their post-secondary education by enrolling in online college courses offered via Liberty University Online (LUO). Through this Dual Enrollment partnership program, academically advanced students may earn college credits in a variety of subjects.

*The tuition for three-credit courses is the same as for LUOA courses, and thus provides significant savings over the regular university tuition rate.*

Because all Liberty University coursework is accredited, courses are transferable to other institutions if students choose to pursue their post-secondary education elsewhere.

Students desiring to take dual credit courses must have a minimum 2.7 cumulative GPA, have completed at least 12 high school credits, and be over the age of thirteen.

Students who fail a dual enrollment course may repeat the course one time. These students must pay tuition for repeated courses. If these students plan to graduate from LUOA, the original and second attempt grades are listed on the LUOA high school transcripts and factored into the overall LUOA GPA. Failing a course a second time will result in removal from the LUOA dual enrollment program. Students may continue to enroll in LUOA high school courses but will not be allowed to enroll in additional dual enrollment courses.

Some dual enrollment courses may require additional course fees or other charges related to the content of the course.

If students withdraw from a dual enrollment course, the tuition is prorated based on University policies. Withdrawing within the first quarter results in owing 25% of tuition, within first half results in 50% tuition, and within three quarters results in owing 75% of tuition.

A complete list of courses offered for dual credit is provided on the LUOA's website [Dual Enrollment](#) page.

## NCAA APPROVED COURSES

If your student wishes to compete in an NCAA sport in college, all **LUOA Enhanced** courses and **Dual Enrollment** courses have been approved by the NCAA for Division I athletic program participation. See the [NCAA page](#) on our website for more information.

## VIRGINIA DIPLOMA

LUOA awards a diploma sanctioned through the State of Virginia via the Virginia Independent School Association.

## DIPLOMA COMPLETION PLANS

A Diploma Completion Plan (DCP) is a visual path for student education. LUOA offers three DCP tracks that students may take, depending on which diploma they choose to pursue. Note: Degree specifications change based on Liberty University registrar requirements. (See [High School Graduation Requirements](#) for more details.)

- 1. The Standard Diploma** – This enables prospective students to attend most institutions of post-secondary education. Students will graduate with a high school diploma from Liberty University Online Academy.  
[Standard Diploma Completion Plan](#)
- 2. The Advanced Diploma** – This path is rigorous and enables students to be more selective when choosing their post-secondary education. Students will graduate with a high school diploma from Liberty University Online Academy.  
[Advanced Diploma Completion Plan](#)

- 3. The Associate Degree** – Upon completion of high school requirements for the standard diploma through LUOA, students in this track also will be awarded an associate degree through Liberty University.

[Associate Degree](#)

## GRADUATION CEREMONY

LUOA hosts a formal cap and gown commencement ceremony as a part of Liberty University's on-campus commencement festivities each May. Graduating seniors of LUOA are invited but are not required to attend this special event. LUOA students who attend will participate in the same graduation ceremony like all other Liberty University students, which includes the keynote speaker session. Graduation is "second to none," and LUOA strongly suggests that students attend graduation to celebrate their hard work.

Because LUOA has an open enrollment policy, students finish their coursework at varying dates other than that of the formal graduation ceremony. Each official transcript shows the actual date coursework was completed, not the date of graduation.

Any student enrolling as an incoming senior after February 1 will be listed as a graduating senior for the class of the next academic year. (For example, a student enrolling as a beginning senior in February 2019 will be listed in the graduating class of 2020.) The formal graduation date recorded on diplomas is the date processed upon completing coursework.

## GRADUATION FEE

LUOA assesses a one-time, non-refundable graduation fee of \$50.00 to graduating seniors, regardless of attendance or non-attendance at the on-campus graduation ceremony. This fee is added to senior tuition accounts in February. Cap, gown, and graduation announcements are available.



# LEGAL POLICIES

# NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Liberty University does not engage in unlawful discrimination or harassment because of race, color, ancestry, religion, age, sex, national origin, pregnancy or childbirth, disability, or military/veteran status in its educational programs and activities. Liberty University maintains its Christian mission and reserves its right to discriminate on the basis of religion to the extent that applicable law respects its right to act in furtherance of its religious objectives. For any questions, contact our Student Support office at [LUOASupport@liberty.edu](mailto:LUOASupport@liberty.edu).

# CYBERBULLYING POLICY

Cyberbullying is defined as defamatory behavior through the use of electronic technologies such as school discussion forums, email communications, social media, personal websites, or cell phone communications with the intention of causing harm to others to the extent that the educational atmosphere has become one of abuse.

Cyberbullying consists of dangerous or abusive behavior that directly alters the condition of any student's education, thus requiring administrative action in order to protect students, staff, faculty, and/or administration.

## **Upon Receiving a Report of Cyberbullying, LUOA Will Take the Following Measures:**

- 1. Report** – Any student who believes he/she has been the victim of bullying has a responsibility to report the alleged bullying to his/her teacher or academic advisor as soon as possible. Furthermore, any student, parent, guardian, or teacher who has knowledge of conduct which may constitute cyberbullying has a responsibility to report such conduct to a teacher, an academic advisor, or an administrator.
- 2. Investigate** – In response to receiving notification of alleged cyberbullying, the LUOA administration will conduct an investigation in order to determine if a violation of the Cyberbullying Policy occurred. The investigation may involve reviewing documentation of the alleged bullying and interviewing the parties involved in the alleged cyberbullying.
- 3. Notify** – If LUOA determines that a violation of the Cyberbullying Policy did occur, the parents/guardians of all students involved will be notified of the occurrence(s) and the resulting disciplinary action(s). School administration will notify local law enforcement if it believes that criminal charges are warranted.
- 4. Disciplinary Action** – The LUOA school administration will take appropriate action in addressing the misconduct and doing its best to prevent it from occurring again. Disciplinary action may include the following measures:
  - Verbal warning to the student,

- Requiring a written apology sent to any student who was harassed, the administration, and any other parties involved, and
- Permanent expulsion from the academy.

## PARENTAL RIGHTS POLICY

Parents typically have undivided rights to make joint educational choices for their children. The only means of nullifying this is by court order. LUOA will not terminate or deny the rights of any parent until it has proof of legal obligation not to provide student information to one or both parents. In such cases, a court order must state that one or both parents may not have access to information pertaining to a child who attends LUOA. Additional identifying information such as a birth certificate may be required in order to verify parental status.

## SUICIDE & SELF-HARM POLICY

When a student is identified by an LUOA employee as potentially suicidal or self-injurious, LUOA administration will contact the student and parents/guardians to check on safety concerns. The purpose of this policy is to protect the health, safety, and well-being of LUOA students by having procedures in place to prevent suicide and other self-harming behaviors. This policy complements other LUOA policies in supporting the emotional and behavioral health of students.

## CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT POLICY

In recognition of the unreported criminal activities that surrounded the Penn State child abuse scandal, many states have enacted laws and/or reinforced current laws defining mandated child abuse or neglect reporting requirements.

The Virginia Legislature has extended reporting requirements, effective July 1, 2012, mandating that every employee of a public or private institution of higher education who, in his or her employment capacity, has reason to suspect that a child (under the age of eighteen) is an abused or neglected child, has a responsibility under law to report the suspected child abuse or neglect within twenty-four hours of concern. This report must be made to the local city or county Social Services office where the child resides, where the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred, or to the Virginia Department of Social Services toll-free child abuse and neglect

hotline at 800-552-7096. LUOA will contact our Liberty University Police Department directly with any concerns.

## ADULT LEARNER POLICY

Adults desiring to earn an LUOA high school diploma may do so under specific circumstances and upon agreement to the LUOA Adult Learner policies. An adult learner is considered any student over the age of nineteen.

### **Requirements for LUOA Admissions (whether full- or part-time)**

- A copy of a valid driver's license or official birth certificate
- A character reference email or letter from the learner's local home church including the amount of time in attendance
- High school transcripts or middle school report card

### **Adult Learners May Not**

- Be associated with any other high school graduation program,
- Communicate with any other students by any means,
- Disclose personal information,
- Participate in Social Clubs,
- Be enrolled in Liberty University or LUO courses when past the age of twenty-one,
- Have a high school diploma already, or
- Join LUOA social media.

LUOA is not a GED program. These policies apply only to adult learners seeking a high school diploma.