



What is C.S. Lewis College?

The College will be a fully accredited undergraduate College of Great Books and the Visual and Performing Arts.

Who was C.S. Lewis?

Clive Staples Lewis (1898–1963) was an outstanding and influential British literary scholar, writer, academic, and Christian apologist. He is particularly hailed for his contributions to literary criticism, apologetics, and children's and fantasy literature.

Of his over thirty books and numerous essays (the majority of which have remained in print since his death), the most well-known are *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Mere Christianity*, and *The Screwtape Letters*. Lewis's works have been translated into over thirty languages and have sold millions of copies worldwide.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the C.S. Lewis Foundation?

Inspired by the life and legacy of C.S. Lewis, the C.S. Lewis Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing the renewal of Christian thought and creative expression throughout the world of learning and the culture at large. Since its founding in 1986, the C.S. Lewis Foundation has pursued its mission through several initiatives including regional conferences and retreats conducted throughout the U.S., the C.S. Lewis Faculty Forum, and the C.S. Lewis Summer Institute, convened triennially in Oxford and Cambridge, England. The Foundation also owns C.S. Lewis's beloved Oxford home, "The Kilns," now a Study Centre for resident scholars and a highly favored tourist destination for Lewis devotees worldwide. From the outset, the Foundation has been actively planning the founding of C.S. Lewis College.

When is the projected opening of the College?

Subject to all appropriate approvals, the College currently plans to commence instruction in Fall 2012.

What needs to be accomplished before the College opens?

The C.S. Lewis Foundation is currently working with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Higher Education to petition for and obtain formal approval to operate as a degree granting institution. Additional steps will include the development of curriculum, policies and procedures, the appointment of faculty and staff, and the recruitment of students.

Why was Northfield selected as the location for this College?

Over the past several years, the C.S. Lewis Foundation has been engaged in an extensive search for an appropriate site for the envisioned C.S. Lewis College. Consistent with carefully developed criteria, the Foundation's Site Selection Committee narrowed the list to four potential sites, including the greater Amherst area of Massachusetts. The Northfield campus of Northfield Mt. Hermon School satisfied key criteria of the Committee and Trustees of the Foundation, including historic significance, proximity to other highly regarded educational institutions, size and quality of facilities, and scenic beauty.

What is the projected size of the student body, faculty, and staff for the College?

The college is projected to enroll 400 students and employ 40 faculty and 45 staff.

With what denomination, if any, will the College be identified?

C.S. Lewis College will not be identified with any particular Christian denomination. Rather, in the spirit of Lewis's own commitment to the idea of *Mere* (basic) *Christianity*, the College looks forward to a rich association with Christians of all traditions.

Why launch another liberal arts college at a time when many liberal arts colleges are having enrollment and financial difficulties?

To be sure, these are challenging times for all institutions, but such challenges cannot be allowed to dictate a course of action. History has shown that seasons of stress often offer unique opportunities for the launching of innovative initiatives.



This is such a time, and the need for a college such as C.S. Lewis College has never been greater. Today, as never before, young people hunger for an education that gets to the root of things and equips them to understand and engage the culture.

C.S. Lewis College will be distinctive in that it will offer an education that immerses all of its students in a “Great Books” curriculum while also fostering serious exposure to the visual and performing arts, to the surrounding secular educational community, and to Christian spiritual formation.

What is a “Great Books” curriculum?

In contrast to most higher education programs where lectures, textbooks, and tests provide the essential elements of learning, a Great Books program is distinguished by three key features:

- Students approach learning through the study of the classic texts that constitute the “great conversation” of Western Civilization. In addition, opportunity will be given to examine classics in non-Western traditions.
- There are no lecture-based courses. Instead, all instruction takes place in seminars, tutorials, and laboratories characterized by highly participatory discussions among students and faculty.
- There is a single, unified curriculum for all students. This fosters an unparalleled sense of community and collegiality as spirited conversations emerge from shared encounters with profound ideas.

What are the benefits of the C.S. Lewis College’s Great Books curriculum?

The Great Books curriculum and related educational experiences of C.S. Lewis College are designed to nurture the development of exceptionally well grounded students in several ways:

- First, by instilling and refining those intellectual virtues that enable sound learning, including the abilities to read carefully and tenaciously, to grasp and evaluate complex theories, and to engage in sharp analysis and reasoning.
- Second, by fostering an appetite for knowledge and wisdom that culminates in a mature understanding of the full range of ideas that inform the Western intellectual tradition, as well as key ideas originating in non-western cultures.
- Third, by sharpening the ability to communicate and respond to ideas effectively, both verbally and in writing.
- Finally, by cultivating a deep respect for those foundational Christian moral, spiritual, and theological understandings that inform our appreciation for goodness, truth and beauty.

How do the visual and performing arts fit into a Great Books program?

Existing Great Books colleges are committed to a curriculum that focuses upon the examination and discussion of written texts. In contrast, C.S. Lewis College deems it essential that students interact with ideas expressed both in written form and in the visual and performing arts. By so doing, students will be better prepared to understand and constructively engage contemporary culture.

Are there other Great Books colleges?

St. John’s College is a Great Books college with campuses in Annapolis, MD, and Santa Fe, NM, which pioneered the development of the first complete Great Books program, launched in 1937. Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, CA, is a Catholic Great Books college founded in 1971. Many other colleges and universities have since offered Great Books programs to complement their traditional academic programs.

How will C.S. Lewis College be funded?

The Northfield property has been purchased for the use of C.S. Lewis College by Hobby Lobby, a privately held retail chain of arts and crafts stores based in Oklahoma City, OK. As owner of the property, Hobby Lobby will invest more than \$5 million in operations and capital improvement projects to support the creation of C.S. Lewis College. Following start up, the College will be funded by the usual combination of tuition, private donations, and grants.

What will be the College’s financial impact on the local community?

It is difficult to estimate the economic impact a higher education institution may have on its community. However, several factors will clearly contribute to a positive financial impact on the community. \$5 million will be spent on operations and capital improvement prior to the opening of the College. Annual expenditures for the College after four years are estimated at \$20 million. Much of this will directly impact the community. In addition, bringing 40 faculty and 400 students to campus (plus parents on special occasions) will present added opportunities for those engaged in retail business, long and short term housing, utilities, food and entertainment. Many of the 45 staff to be hired will come from the local area.

How can I get more information on the C.S. Lewis College?

For more information on C.S. Lewis College, please contact the C.S. Lewis Foundation:

By phone at (909) 793-0949

By e-mail at college@cslewis.org

By web contact form at <http://www.cslewis.org/contact/index.html>