

YORKTOWN UNIVERSITY, INC.

A Personal Letter of Welcome

Dear Student:

A degree in Government or Business from Yorktown University prepares you for a number of productive careers while increasing your knowledge, challenging you intellectually, and reinforcing your faith in God, country, and the truths that bind us as American citizens.

At the end of your education journey we hope that you will have reinforced your commitment to live an ordered life, or what the Greek philosophers called the “good life,” which expresses itself publicly in civic virtue.

Yorktown University’s motto, “Putting Western Civilization Back into Education” expresses our belief that higher education today is no longer mindful of the role education plays in maintaining our civilization. By that, we mean that our obligation to pass on to new generations the received truths that define who we are as a civilization, community, a people, and a nation is lacking in higher education today.

Because we citizens of the United States are grounded in the West—its history, its philosophy, literature, art and science and experience of God’s intervention in history—our first obligation must lie in comprehending ourselves as participants in Western civilization. Only then may we expect to understand other cultures. In an essay published at our website titled “The West,” I argue that fundamental to Western civilization is our apprehension of God’s intervention in history. Indeed, it’s clear that religious experience is at the root of all cultures, and that mankind is, and has always been, a faith-oriented creature. Here’s a link to that essay:
http://www.yorktownuniversity.com/new_west.cfm

In too many instances today, educators have devalued basic traditions, neglected the study of Western civilization and denigrated religious faith. They have turned away from the pursuit of truth that used to be the mark of an educated person. Moral relativism so dominates popular culture that it is difficult even to use the word “truth” without the qualification, “as I see it.”

In classical Greek, however, the word “truth,” *aletheia*, also means “reality.” Educated persons understand that pursuit of truth is consonant with discovering reality. This is not our “opinion,” it is a fundamental truth necessary to healthy culture, society, education and character development.

In the ancient world—as you’ll discover from some of the courses that you take at Yorktown University—the ancient Greeks came to discover and give names to all the many facets of human personality and consciousness that we take for granted today. That’s why when non-Western thinkers grapple with truth about their humanity they do so in the language of Western philosophy.

Taking you on this intellectual journey—a journey by which you discover reality—is Yorktown University’s basic mission.

We aspire to offer our students the opportunity afforded President Ronald Reagan in the 1930s when he attended a small liberal arts college, Eureka College. There, in a much simpler time, the future president of the United States studied and learned classical economics; unbiased American history, religion, literature; and how to think and write clearly. That’s why colleges existed—back then.

Unfortunately, millions of Americans attending college and university today do not have that opportunity. The shrillness of television news and talk radio is only one sign that we live in difficult times, created, largely by the massive failure of our system of higher education to create an intellectual consensus about truths fundamental to living a good life.

The absence of such a consensus challenges all of us to return to fundamentals, to ask basic questions about community, justice, culture, government and economics, theology and the role of religion in society, and, yes, Western civilization.

That’s what the Founders of our country did, when, also in difficult times, they fashioned the language and vocabulary by which they explained their desire for independence and political liberty; fought a war to win that independence; and created a governing constitution that is one of the greatest achievements in the history of mankind.

But those were times when it was the mark of an educated citizen to know something about philosophy, law, politics, government, and the history of Western civilization. And the Founders enjoyed a received consensus of those fundamental truths that constitute the moral and intellectual capital of Western civilization. Your education at Yorktown University will imbue you with that moral and intellectual capital.

Today, that capital is disappearing, and our professional classes, rather than face the need for responsible political and social involvement, have walked away from their political responsibilities, and, have turned over the public forum—local, state, and federal politics—to “professional” advocates; organized interest groups; lobbyists; journalists; labor unions; “professional” politicians, whose only

work experience has been elected office; and the many “shouting heads” that dominate television and radio programming.

But, most important, our intellectual classes, largely congregated in our institutions of higher learning, have free reign to create new values in their own image and to have exclusive control of education. The result is fragmentation of collegiate communities into special interest and bizarre fringe groups. Students earn credits, but fail in learning about our civilization, our country’s history, government, economy, culture, language and Constitution.

The answer to the question “Where should I go to school, then?” is not necessarily “my local community college” or “to a small, private, sectarian college.” First of all, the Internet has made it possible to live at home and earn a high-quality degree at costs comparable to your local community college. And, though many students would like to attend the college sponsored by their religion, many sectarian colleges are just too expensive and too often indistinguishable from your local public university in terms of political correctness and value-free curricula.

Yorktown University’s attempt to recover the tradition of faith-centered colleges is demonstrated in a first-rate faculty of scholars who’ve dedicated their lives to the pursuit of knowledge. They are not “politically correct” because their scholarship is not skewed to predetermined ideological causes and conclusions. That alone makes Yorktown University unique and distinct. Moreover, Yorktown University’s undergraduate Core Curriculum revives what once was common in higher education, a classical foundation. Our response is to affirm that each and every student must be educated for civic leadership and an understanding of our historical, legal and philosophic traditions.

Yorktown University’s faculty is committed to the transfer of this knowledge to our students. By joining us you will become a member of a community of discerning men and women for whom higher education benefits all aspects of your life as citizen, employee, husband and wife, and parent.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard J. Bishirjian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard J. Bishirjian, Ph.D.
President