

# Life in the Ruins

Are Wisdom & Virtue Possible in the  
Modern University?

] A conference by the Center for Morality in Public Life ]

Co-sponsored by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute

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5 November 2011  
The Catholic University of America

# Program

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## Opening Remarks

Andrew Haines, President, CFMPL

## Introduction to the Day

Stephen Kunath, Vice President, CFMPL

## “Wisdom in the Historical University”

Mark Wunsch, Christendom College

## “The Primacy of the Liberal Arts”

Bracy Bersnak, Christendom College

## “Grace and Virtue”

R.J. Snell, Eastern University

## “Virtue & Professional Success”

Mattias Caro, Director of Content, CFMPL

## Closing Remarks

Andrew Haines, President, CFMPL

# Why this conference?

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In the past, the idea of a university education included formation not only in the values of liberty and self-expression, but also in the traditions of critical reasoning and practical wisdom.

Today, the prospect of learning virtue in the college setting is unlikely, at best. To begin, campus environment of modern academia is a different world from the *studia* of old; moreover, the idea that virtue exists, and that it is something desirable and teachable, continues to fade.

For those of us who continue to believe in the primacy of practical wisdom alongside scholarly rigor, there is an important question that must be asked: *Are wisdom and virtue really possible in the modern university?*

The aim of this conference is to provide some answers to this question, departing from a number of perspectives. In particular, by considering the question both from the theoretical as well as the practical dimension, we hope to afford at least some small insight on the place of practical wisdom in today's university, and on the hope of securing that learning in ages to come.

## About the sponsors

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### **Center for Morality in Public Life — [www.cfmpl.org](http://www.cfmpl.org)**

The mission of the Center for Morality in Public Life is to provide a forum for discussing issues of human dignity, societal flourishing, and the common good in a way that is accessible and available to students and professionals, alike. In addition to publishing the up-and-coming blog, *Ethika Politika*, CFMPL hosts local conferences, as well as sponsoring events designed to bridge the gap between good living and good thinking.

### **Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) — [www.isi.org](http://www.isi.org)**

The Intercollegiate Studies Institute is a non-profit, non-partisan, tax-exempt educational organization whose purpose is to further in successive generations of college students a better understanding of the values and institutions that sustain a free and humane society. Founded in 1953, ISI works "to educate for liberty" — to identify the best and the brightest college students and to nurture in these future leaders the American ideal of ordered liberty. To accomplish this goal, ISI seeks to enhance the rising generation's knowledge of our nation's founding principles—limited government, individual liberty, personal responsibility, the rule of law, market economy, and moral norms.

## A note to participants

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For more information on CFMPL—and to read our daily blog, *Ethika Politika*—please visit: <http://blog.cfmpl.org>.