

Miami University Diversity Statement

As stated in the **Code of Love and Honor**, Miami welcomes diversity in people, ideas, and experiences. While welcoming diversity, Miami also respects the dignity, rights, and property of others, and their right to hold and express disparate beliefs. Miami has embraced these principles in its **Mission and Values** statements, **20/20 Strategic Plan** (Foundation Goal #2 Diversity, Inclusion, Global Experiences), and its **Code** because of the fundamental belief in the freedom, equality, and liberty of all members of the community and its deep seated belief that the presence of a diverse student, staff, and faculty population who bring to campus their individual perspectives, ideas, and contributions, enriches the entire academic community, state, nation and world.

Diversity of all kinds¹ is integral to the mission and values of Miami University. Thus, achieving a diverse group of faculty, staff and students is among our most important goals. Actively engaging with a variety of people, perspectives, experiences, and ideas is part of a comprehensive and meaningful education in the 21st century. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that engaging with multicultural perspectives and dialoguing across diverse experiences can provide opportunities for those involved to think critically, increase understanding of disparate ideas, deepen learning, interact in meaningful ways with varied communities, and effectively participate in a heterogeneous world with increasingly porous borders. This research also tells us that students who interact with diverse peers and take courses that include multicultural perspectives are more engaged learners, more likely to become involved in community service programs, more successful in occupations that require teamwork and collaboration, and more likely to remain enrolled in school and pursue professional or graduate degrees after completing undergraduate degrees.²

Because Miami University is committed to and fully embraces the philosophy and belief that a diverse academic community, just as it is in society, is among the institution's greatest strengths, we therefore will always aspire to achieve a broadly diverse faculty, staff and student body. There is now a growing body of research, Amicus briefs, and court rulings that affirm the educational and workplace value of diversity. The research underscores our belief that opinions rendered by a diverse body and community further the University's goals by challenging traditional educational practices and *knowledge*, by allowing new and different world views to flourish and by positively impacting the ways of seeing and thinking about problems and issues which consequently allows for new perspectives and answers to emerge, curriculums to shift, and new scholarly pursuits to develop. Miami holds the belief that every unit and each individual on campus will benefit from diversity and that a diverse and inclusive campus will enhance the living, learning, and working environment for every student, staff, and faculty member in this community.

¹ We view diversity holistically, understanding that the definition is constantly evolving. Our definition of diversity includes race, color, gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, class, religion, ability, age, military status, and sexual orientation. Diverse and well-reasoned ideas, approaches, and experiences are also essential parts of inclusion and equity.

² See, for example, Gurin (2004); Gurin, et al (2002); Milem (2003); College Board (2009, 2010); Coleman et al (2006); Gratz v Bollinger (2003); Grutter v Bollinger (2003); Parents Involved in Community Schools v Seattle School District (2007); Regents of the Univ of California v Bakke (1978); Fisher v Univ of Texas at Austin (2016).

Of course, such benefits do not simply accrue as a result of asking members of this community with varied experiences to live, work, and attend class together. Rather, achieving these benefits requires our commitment and the development of a culture backed by thoughtfully structured policies and programs, as well as the establishment of learning environments and curricula supported by faculty and staff designed to teach students, and all members of the community, to interrogate and research the claims and beliefs of others, and take supported and carefully-reasoned positions themselves.

Creating and sustaining an inclusive environment where active and successful engagement occurs is the responsibility of every administrator, faculty member, staff member, and student at Miami. Fulfilling this responsibility requires us all to intentionally work to attract the widest array of talented students, faculty, and staff; provide appropriate financial aid to those who need it; deliberately design curricula that promote deep and provide critical learning opportunities; and provide support for students, faculty, and staff that leads to long-term retention and satisfaction. This responsibility requires us to continually examine our practices and policies, and change them when we find them lacking. Only then can we ensure that all members of our community recognize Miami as a safe space where a diversity of well-reasoned ideas and lived experiences are welcome, valued, and contribute to knowledge-making.

In order to create an environment that enacts our commitment to Love and Honor, all members of the Miami University community commit to protecting and empowering the most vulnerable among us. We will not condone acts of harassment, hate, and violence—or any other activities that threaten Miami’s educational mission or the rights, dignity, or humanity of the students, faculty, and staff who are fulfilling that mission and working in good faith to engage respectfully across difference.