

Miami University Diversity and Inclusion Statement

What Constitutes Diversity?

We view diversity holistically, understanding that the definition is constantly evolving. Our definition of diversity includes but is not limited to race, ethnicity, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, class, religion, disability, age, military status, visa status, economic status, and language/linguistic ability. Diverse and well-reasoned ideas, approaches, and experiences are also essential parts of inclusion and equity.

What Are Our Guiding Principles and Values?

Miami University is committed to and fully embraces the philosophy and belief that a diverse academic community is among an institution's greatest strengths. Every unit and individual on campus benefits from diversity. A diverse and inclusive campus enhances the living, learning, and working environment for every student, staff, and faculty member. We therefore aspire to attract and retain a broadly diverse group of faculty, staff and students.

What Actions Do We Commit to Taking?

Creating and sustaining an inclusive environment where active and successful engagement occurs requires effective policy and practice. These are the responsibility of all Miami administrators, faculty, staff, and students. These practices and policies include (but are not limited to):

- attracting the widest array of talented students, faculty, and staff;
- providing appropriate financial aid to those who need it;
- deliberately designing curricula that promote deep learning and provide critical learning opportunities;
- providing support, professional development, and working conditions for students, faculty, and staff that lead to long-term retention, satisfaction, and growth; and
- examining these and other practices and policies, and changing them when we find them lacking.

In addition to taking proactive steps like these, we also actively work to eliminate acts of harassment, hate, and violence on our campuses. We oppose activities that threaten our 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.

In these ways, we work to ensure that all members of our community experience and recognize Miami as a safe space where a diversity of thoughtful ideas and lived experiences are welcome, valued, and contribute to collaborative and respectful knowledge-making.

What is the Rationale for Our Position?

The position we take here is a reaffirmation of the position we have long taken. This is evident in our Mission and Values statements, 20/20 Strategic Plan (Foundation Goal #2 Diversity, Inclusion, Global Experiences), and Code.

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.¹

There is 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.

¹ 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).