

# MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

## POLICY AGAINST DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, RELIGION, NATIONAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN

### POLICY

#### A. INTRODUCTION

1. Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts has established a policy of unequivocal prohibition of all forms of discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin. Any condition or force which impedes the fullest utilization of the human and intellectual resources available represents a force of destructive consequence for the development of our Commonwealth, and ultimately our nation.
2. The role of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts is to educate, train and prepare students to live and work in our increasingly global and diverse world. It is the commitment of the College to take all possible steps to provide an inclusive and diverse learning, living and working environment which value diversity and cultural tolerance and looks with disfavor on intolerance and bigotry.

#### B. DEFINITION

1. This policy proscribes all conditions and all actions or omissions including all acts of harassment which deny or have the effect of denying to any her/his rights to equality, dignity and security on the basis of her/his race, color, ethnicity, culture or religion.
2. Harassment on the basis on gender, race, color, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin is explicitly and implicitly prohibited. For purposes of this policy, speech or other expression constitutes harassment if it:
  - a. is intended to insult or stigmatize an individual or a small number of individuals on the basis of their gender, race, color, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin; or
  - b. is addressed directly to the individual or individuals whom it insults or stigmatizes; or
  - c. makes use of insulting or "fighting" words or non-verbal symbols.
3. In the context of discriminatory harassment, insulting or "fighting" words or non-verbal symbols are those which by their very utterance tend to incite to an immediate breach of the peace, and which are commonly understood to convey direct and visceral hatred or contempt for human beings on the basis of their gender, race, color, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin.
4. This policy reaffirms the values of civility, appreciation for racial/ethnic/ cultural/religious pluralism and the pre-eminence of individual human dignity as preconditions to the achievement of an academic community which recognizes and utilizes the resources of all persons.

### C. COLLEGE RESPONSIBILITY

1. Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts will vigorously strive to achieve diversity in race, ethnicity, culture and religion sufficiently reflective of our society to give our students an appreciation of and the ability to relate in our increasingly global and diverse world. Discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin in any form, individual or institutional, constitutes an egregious offense against the tenets of human dignity and the accords of civility espoused by the College. Such discrimination undermines the establishment of an academic and social environment of genuine cultural, racial, ethnic and religious pluralism.
2. Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts bears a responsibility by law and an obligation by social morality to eradicate racial, ethnic and religious discrimination as we strive to promote an atmosphere of acceptance with dignity for all individuals and groups within our system of public higher education. This College is committed to establishing and maintaining a system of learning which genuinely appreciates the social and academic value of a pluralistic-educational community and fervently combats all behaviors, which constitutes illegal discrimination.
3. Examples of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, all of which are prohibited by this policy, include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Differences in the terms, conditions and privileges of employment (including hiring, promotion, salary, salary increases, discipline, granting of tenure, selection for awards, etc.) based on race, religion or national origin.
  - b. Excluding or limiting members of one or more racial, ethnic or religious groups from a category of positions or from a department or division.
  - c. Classifying a position or positions as being unsuitable for persons of certain races, ethnic origins or religions.
  - d. Waiving required position qualifications for one race, religion or ethnic origin but not for another.
  - e. Developing position descriptions or qualifications, which, without lawful justification, are so specific as to have a disparate exclusionary impact on persons of one race, religion or ethnic origin.
  - f. Singling out or ignoring one group of students because of their race, ethnic background or religion.
  - g. Advising students of similar interests and backgrounds differently because of their race, religion or national origin.
  - h. Treating or causing others to treat persons of one race, religion or ethnic origin differently because of assumptions about or stereotypes of the intellectual ability, interests or aptitudes of persons of a particular race, ethnic origin or religion.
  - j. Harassing or abusing, or encouraging others to harass or abuse, a person or group of persons because of their race, ethnic origin or religion, whenever such harassment or abuse constitutes harassment.

#### D. INSTITUTIONAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

1. The College's Discrimination Complaint Procedures will serve as a system of review and resolution for both informal claims and formal complaints of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination. Any member of the College Community who believes s/he has been a victim of racial, ethnic or religious discrimination may initiate the informal claim or formal complaint procedures as outlined in the College's Discrimination Complaint Procedures. Further information or advice may be obtained by contacting the Director of Affirmative Action.