

**Cedarville University Diversity Statement**  
**[FINAL DRAFT – Approved by Trustees, October, 2006]**

***“Cedarville University actively seeks to attract and serve a diverse group of Christian employees and students who exercise their spiritual calling to be agents of reconciliation; pursuing unity, peace, and community in an atmosphere that recognizes our union in Christ and celebrates the contributions of all who seek to follow Christ.”***

**Background for the Diversity Statement and Planning Guidelines**

According to our Mission Statement, *“Cedarville University is a Christ-centered learning community equipping students for lifelong leadership and service through an education marked by excellence and grounded in biblical truth.”* The *Cedarville University Diversity Statement* supplements our mission statement by articulating our commitment to be a diverse Christian university, known for our unity in Christ, our love for all who bear His image, and our commitment to biblical community. The purpose of this statement is to help Cedarville University fulfill its mission by equipping its faculty, staff and students to respond biblically to the challenges and opportunities inherent in a diverse culture.

**Definition of Diversity.** By virtue of our mission, Cedarville University is composed of individuals who are committed to Jesus Christ and to the authority of His Word. When we speak of the diversity of the students, faculty, and staff at Cedarville it is limited to people who share this commitment. This includes male and female Christians of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, levels of physical ability, and ages. It excludes those whose actions or behavior are inconsistent with our Christian mission, doctrinal distinctives, and the lifestyle expectations articulated in the student, faculty, and staff handbooks. Our approach to diversity also reflects a desire to make Cedarville as accessible as possible to people of various socioeconomic levels.

**Biblical Foundations for Diversity.** Cedarville University’s approach to diversity is built upon the following biblical themes:

**Creation** Diversity, as we have defined it, is a demonstration of God’s intention and divine order for humankind. It serves as a positive reflection of God’s creative and sovereign hand; contributing to our learning, and enhancing our enjoyment of community. **(Genesis 1:27)**

**Imago Dei** *Imago Dei* refers to the biblical doctrine that all people, regardless of race, gender, varying degrees of physical ability, or socioeconomic class are created to bear the image of God. Therefore, a biblical understanding of diversity celebrates the value of all human beings as image bearers with God-given worth and dignity. *Imago dei* extends to people of other faiths, and to those whose viewpoints or beliefs are hostile to

Christianity; therefore, all people are to be treated with respect and dignity. (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 9:6; 2 Corinthians 3:18)

**Consequences of the Fall** Sin has had ruinous consequences for humankind; introducing conflict, disunity, injustice, oppression, and a breakdown of the human community. Scripture gives abundant evidence that sin is not only personal but also corporate; sinful individuals with access to power can use that power corporately to structure society and its institutions in ways that favor the powerful at the expense of the powerless. (Isaiah 10:1-2; Amos 2:7; Amos 5:10-15)

**Biblical Pattern of Redemption & Reconciliation** Sin separates all people from God, and leaves all equally in need of redemption. God offers redemption to all who will believe in Christ, making no distinctions based on race, gender, ethnicity, ability, age, or socioeconomic level. Within the body of Christ there is no hierarchy of value based upon these areas of difference. This pattern of redemption, reconciliation, and equality is evident in the work of Jesus Christ and the life of the early church. (Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47; Acts 10:27-28, 34-35; Acts 15; Galatians 2:6-14; Ephesians 2:17-18; I Corinthians 12:12-20)

**Biblical Ethic of Love** The Biblical ethic of love is one of the defining marks of all true followers of Christ. This ethic calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves, love our enemies, greet strangers, help those in need, and treat others as we would like to be treated. Obedience to Christ requires that we intentionally live according to this ethic. (Psalm 82:3; Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:34-35; Ephesians 4:1-6)

**Narratives about Heaven** The future family of God is described as containing people of every nation, tribe, people and language, worshipping together, united in Jesus Christ. Racial and ethnic differences in heaven are not erased, rather they remain intact as together we ascribe glory, honor and praise to Jesus Christ. The fact that heaven is repeatedly described in this manner is evidence of the importance that God places on unified worship among diverse people. (Revelation 5:9-10)

Personal redemption begins the process of restoring individuals and healing the communities in which we live. Once redeemed, we are called to be ministers of reconciliation; living according to an ethic of love, actively engaged in acts of mercy, forgiveness, restitution, and justice. Corporately, we should also apply the redemptive power of the gospel to institutions that have been corrupted by sin, increasing the degree to which they reflect biblical values and priorities such as love, gentleness, peace, kindness, self-sacrifice, and self-control.

**Diversity and Unity at a Christ-centered Learning Community.** Cedarville University is a local community of learners. We function as one context of the body of Christ. Within this context we strive to live with one another in unity, peace, and righteousness. Our ability to fully demonstrate these qualities of Christian community is limited by the extent to which we resemble the breadth of God's family. Recognizing that unity is not uniformity, and based on the diversity that we witness in the body of Christ, we believe that greater diversity at Cedarville University enhances the educational experience by providing a better context for demonstrating the unifying power of the Gospel. It also better equips all our students for success in the increasingly global and diverse workplace that awaits them.

As a Christ-centered learning community, Cedarville University has a calling that is higher than tolerance, superficial compliance or obligation. Our goal is purposeful transformation to the image of Christ. Rather than embracing concepts like tolerance, we are called to build Christian community. Such a community should model the reality of the body of Christ, inclusive of diverse people of God using varied gifts for God's glory. The policies and values of such a Christ-centered University should reflect the Biblical mandate to be ministers of reconciliation, and to bring about genuine unity within a diverse world.

In order to accomplish this objective, all members of our community (students, staff, faculty, administrators, and trustees) should be encouraged to develop and practice the following abilities:

- A. The ability to engage people of different cultures and backgrounds and to affirm their value as persons created in God's image.
- B. The ability to appreciate and biblically evaluate the intellectual and artistic contributions of different cultures.
- C. The ability to identify and discuss issues that are of global and international importance.
- D. The ability to understand and overcome some of the challenges of sharing the Gospel with people outside of our own cultural or socioeconomic group.
- E. The ability to recognize the harmful effects of personal and systemic discrimination based on race and other individual differences that are included in Cedarville's definition of diversity.
- F. The ability to understand the church's role in countering racism and all other forms of injustice which are inconsistent with a Biblical view of people and community.
- G. The ability to accept personal responsibility for intentional reconciliation and restoration of community.

**Directions for Growth.** Based upon a biblical understanding of diversity and upon a desire to see Cedarville University achieve its educational mission as a Christ-

centered learning community dedicated to equipping lifelong leaders, we are committed to pursuing the following diversity-related objectives.

- A. Cedarville University will intentionally use its resources to attract and retain a more diverse faculty, staff, administration, board of trustees, and student body.
- B. Cedarville University will seek to promote the academic success and leadership ability of all our students; making no exclusions based on gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, physical ability, or age.
- C. Cedarville University will seek to intentionally facilitate the professional growth of all its employees; making no exclusions based on gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, physical ability, or age.
- D. Cedarville University will maintain a policy that forbids all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment (EEO Policy).
- E. Cedarville University will maintain a well publicized grievance policy for any employee or student who reports harassment or discrimination based upon race, gender, age, or disability (EEO and Unlawful Harassment Policy).
- F. Cedarville University will engage in regular training to encourage all employees: 1) to become equipped to function as effective agents of reconciliation, 2) to understand what unlawful discrimination/harassment is, and 3) to be aware of existing policies and procedures for addressing grievances.
- G. Cedarville University will address the learning outcomes noted above (A-G in *Diversity and Unity at a Christ-centered Learning Community*) in its curriculum, chapel programming, and co-curricular programs.
- H. Cedarville University will require each division to include appropriate diversity related objectives and to assess their progress annually.
- I. Cedarville University will conduct an audit with external evaluators every five years to assess institutional progress toward these objectives.
- J. Cedarville University will appoint a standing Diversity Task Team, reporting to the President and Administrative Council, to oversee progress and to make suggestions for programming and policy that supports increases in diversity.
- K. Cedarville University will seek to use our influence as one of the leading Christ-centered universities in America to affect change in the church and society consistent with a biblical view of diversity.

**Statements of Legal Compliance** Cedarville University provides equal educational opportunities for all students. Its policies prohibit unlawful discrimination against any person because of race, color, gender, age, national or ethnic origin regarding access to any educational opportunities including, but not limited to, recruitment, admission, financial aid, retention and graduation, student housing, classes, activities, and programs. (The University also prohibits Unlawful Harassment and Discrimination in regards to employment. See "Other Related

Policy Statements" below.) The University reserves the right to discriminate on the basis of religion as permitted by law.

Any student who believes she or he has been the subject of unlawful harassment or discrimination should contact one of following persons:

Dr. Carl Ruby, Vice President for Student Life  
Cedarville University  
251 N. Main St.  
(937) 766-7871

Ms. Kirsten Gibbs, Dean of Students  
Cedarville University  
251 N. Main St.  
(937) 766-7872

In addition, any student may report harassment or discrimination to the U.S. Department of Education at the following address and telephone number:

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100  
(800) 421-3481

In addition, any person who believes she or he may have been discriminated against concerning matters pertaining to employment may contact the following individuals, or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC"). Further contact information can be obtained from the University's Human Resources Department on campus.

Dr. Robert Milliman, Academic Vice President  
Cedarville University  
251 N. Main St.  
(937) 766-7770

Mr. Tim Bosworth, Associate Vice President of Human Resources  
Cedarville University  
251 N. Main St.  
(937) 766-7885

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
P.O. Box 7033  
Lawrence, KS 66044  
1-800-669-4000  
[info@ask.eeoc.gov](mailto:info@ask.eeoc.gov)

## **Other Related Policy Statements**

### **Unlawful Harassment Policy [Pending Trustee Approval in Fall, 2006]**

Sexual harassment is but one type of workplace discrimination. If an employee believes that he or she is being discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or gender, the employee must report the situation to any member of management or the President. Any concerns will be promptly investigated. All employees should understand the importance of reporting discriminatory conduct. Employees who engage in discrimination or harassment should be aware that they will be subject to serious disciplinary measures, up to and including discharge.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity Statement**

Cedarville University is an equal opportunity employer whose policy is not to discriminate against any employee because of race, color, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, or disability in relation to admission or access to or employment in its programs and activities.

Our policy is to make reasonable accommodations to the limitations of qualified persons with a disability, and to provide them with employment opportunity to the extent practical.

If an employee believes he or she has been discriminated against, such employee may follow the procedure for grievance as outlined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). These procedures have been posted at the University in accordance with the regulations of the EEOC.

The University, under various sections of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (as amended) reserves the right to discriminate on the basis of religion, (or gender with regard to certain positions) where the approved job description for a position indicates that the determination relates to a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of that particular position, or where the job description can demonstrate that the University is unable to reasonably accommodate an employee's religious observance or practice without undue hardship in the conduct of that position's responsibilities and activities.