

# VALLEY COLLEGE

## Valley College's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement

Valley College recognizes and celebrates that each member of its community is unique, and that diversity is both essential to and a valued principle of the College as a place of learning and work. Valley College is committed to having a diverse campus community, promoting equal employment opportunities, ensuring nondiscrimination in all aspects of our programs and activities, and preventing implicit bias in all our actions. We strive to be an inclusive community that includes groups of diverse individuals and to encourage them to connect in ways that increase each participant's awareness, knowledge, and empathetic understanding to achieve positive results.

At Valley College, equal opportunity assumes that the concept of merit, based solely upon a person's ability to perform their job duties and academic responsibilities, will govern all personnel and educational decisions. This Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement is meant to ensure equitable opportunities, consideration and treatment for all current and prospective students and employees.

Diversity and Equity for Valley College is more than mere compliance with laws and regulations. Diversity and Equity benefits the College by promoting an inclusive environment free from constraint based on culture, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, religion, family structure or relationships, or economic status. The mission and character of the College can never be mandated and protected by statements alone – action is required through the continued efforts of staff and faculty to provide students with the opportunities to learn and excel in a professional environment.

This support and commitment is based upon the following beliefs of higher education:

- **Diversity serves as an important educational function.** One of higher education's essential functions is to broaden the perspectives of students by exposing them to individuals from different backgrounds and to a variety of disciplines, cultures, and points of view.
- **Diversity in higher education helps prepare students for the world of work.** Employers in all sectors of the economy increasingly see diversity as critical to organizational success and competitiveness. The expectation is that higher education and career education will prepare students for a work environment that is characterized by diversity.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in quality of a higher education.** A diverse faculty and staff are essential to provide academic excellence in teaching, mentoring, and service to the campus community.

The implementation of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement is essential in reaching the results we value as a college, which are:

- An institutional vision, leadership, and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion that fosters an increased sensitivity to different norms and cultural expectations.
- Faculty and staff who demonstrate academic and professional excellence and promotes critical thinking among the student body.
- Proactive initiatives that acknowledge, accept, support, and celebrate the diversity of the campus community
- The dismantling of preconceived prejudices and judgments about people and their cultural values

## Responsibility for Policy and Implementation

The final responsibility for the establishment, maintenance, and enforcement of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement rests with the President of the College, but the responsibility for implementation and compliance with the Policy is shared by the Vice Presidents, Chief Academic Officer, Campus Directors, Departmental Directors, and all faculty and staff members.

## Dissemination of Policy

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement is a public College document. To facilitate the dissemination and communication of the Policy, copies are available in the following places.

- The Employee Handbook
- The Student Catalog
- Consumer Information page of the College website

Additional copies will be made available to individuals upon request. The policy statement shall be communicated to all personnel, students, and prospective students through appropriate College publications such as the College Catalog and website.