

**Section 427: General Education Provision Act (GEPA) Statement
Michigan State University**

Diversity in the faculty, students and staff is a major source of MSU's intellectual vitality and innovative spirit. MSU strives to be a community where people of different cultures, intellectual positions and lifestyles can reach their full potential. Such an environment develops respect for differences while fostering caring relationships, cross-cultural understanding, and common educational commitments. Advancing diversity within community is one of the six guiding principles that govern the university. MSU has a long history of commitment to what former President John Hannah called, "the assault on inequality." In 1935, the governing Board of Michigan State College strongly endorsed a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sex, religion, or national origin. The university adopted an affirmative action program in 1970, adding people with disabilities and veterans in 1974, and the MSU Board of Trustees monitors that program through required annual reports. In 1992, THE MSU IDEA, a plan for achieving a new level of diversity and excellence at MSU, was adopted to meet the needs of a changing America. It called for bold strategies and objectives to improve collaborative efforts on behalf of diversity and excellence in the 1990s and beyond. Administrators and faculty throughout the University are held responsible not only for greater efforts on behalf of diversity and excellence, but for results. Under this, the integration of curriculum, disciplines, academic and academic support groups, and the integration of ethnically and racially diverse groups, persons with disabilities and women throughout the mainstream of university life, are MSU's allied goals. Racism, sexism, denigration of persons with disabilities and other painful manifestations of inequality are not tolerated at MSU.

The Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives (OIII) mission is to serve as a central resource to the MSU community to enhance diversity and ensure equitable treatment. It is responsible for monitoring and evaluating many of the programs, activities, and procedures which support the university's commitment to equal opportunity, affirmative action, and diversity for the entire campus community—faculty, staff and students. OIII works actively with college-level and support unit- planning programs to advance recruitment and retention, and maintain a supportive climate for all who work and study at MSU. OIII assists in the monitoring of academic and support staff hiring procedures by completing Unit Hiring Analyses for faculty and support staff. As a part of the documentation, it reviews the hiring and retention activity within the various university units and recommends strategies to increase the recruitment of women and persons of color. OIII also participates in college and unit-level planning meetings where hiring, retention, and diversity issues are discussed with each dean and college administrators, and assistant vice presidents who report to the Vice President for Finance and Operations. The Director is responsible for affirmative action, compliance and monitoring in the university, serves as the senior advisor to the president for diversity, and is a member of the Provost's College Level Planning Team. Each college and support unit provides a written summary of its yearly progress toward achieving diversity among students, personnel, curriculum, co-curricular programming, and resources to the College Level Planning Team that forms the basis for discussions with the college deans and assistant vice-presidents. OIII has designed and implemented two recruitment resources, the Academic Recruitment Resources Database and the Community Resources Database, and supports unit searches with tailored recruitment assistance that have had a significant impact on academic hiring trends. The Academic Recruitment Resources Database is a compilation of searchable internet resources for

recruitment purposes. It helps academic departments in their hiring processes to target professional organizations and special interest groups that may assist in identifying women and minority candidates in specialty areas where the departments may be hiring.

The Community Resources Database is focused on highlighting community resources and agencies. Potential faculty can look at this site to find local social service agencies, medical facilities, recreational outlets, social and political affiliates, and a host of other community offerings with particular attention to those community resources supportive of a diverse community. This helps them to gain better insights into the East Lansing and the mid-Michigan region. These two resources together have created a more comprehensive approach to identifying, recruiting, and hiring potential academic and administrative employees.

MSU offers a number of diversity support services. The Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach and Engagement facilitates a variety of services for re-entry adults: referral, computerized career guidance, registration on the Lifelong Education Option, and non-credit personal growth courses. **Native American/American Indian Students** are represented by the North American Indian Student Organization (NAISO). NAISO sponsors cultural and social programs and promotes campus-wide awareness of current issues affecting American Indian students. NAISO also provides a social support system for students through linkage with the extended Indian community in the Lansing area. The **Asian Pacific American Students** are represented in student government by the Asian Pacific American Student Organization (APASO). APASO provides opportunities for students to meet socially and culturally, and serves as a support system for students to discuss issues and concerns relevant to Asian Pacific American Students. **African American Students** are represented in student government at all-campus and residence hall levels. The Black Student Alliance (BSA) serves as the

communication linkage of the Black student community and addresses the academic, political, and social needs of African American students. Programs include: the Black Student Welcome Reception, Co-Sponsor of the Annual Black Student Retention Conference, and coordination of Black History Month events. The Black Caucuses provide cultural enrichment and appreciation, social interaction, and political voice for Black students in their particular halls. The caucuses also help to educate residence hall students about cultural differences and commonalities in order to promote understanding and social awareness. **Latino/Hispanic Students** (Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Hispanics/Latinos) are represented in student government by the Culturas de las Razas Unidas (CRU). CRU provides cultural and social programs and workshops on academic skills. The group also monitors and responds to University programs and issues on behalf of Hispanic students. **Students with disabilities** receive assistance and information from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD). RCPD coordinates sign language interpreters for academic program requirements. A number of assistive technologies and learning formats are located in the RCPD office. A variety of student resource groups meet regularly and provide opportunities for advocacy and support. Staff members facilitate the assessment of student needs to match the assignment of housing units which accommodate wheelchair users and other disabilities. Transportation services are available to students for whom on-line or routed bus service is not accessible. The **Child and Family Care Resources Program** (CFCR) coordinates information, resources and University initiatives to assist student-parents and students managing the care of dependent elders. A resource and referral service is contracted with the Office for Young Children, to help student-parents find child care. A temporary well-child care service is contracted with Spartan Kid Care, Inc. and offered at Spartan Child Development Center. The service offers three free days of child

care per year to meet short-term and emergency child care needs. Financial assistance may be available through such sources as local scholarship programs, the MSU Office of Financial Aid, and federal and state government programs. Support groups for student-parents; child care are offered at Spartan Child Development Center located in the Spartan Village apartment complex. The center attempts to meet the special child care needs of student-parents with a sliding pay scale and varied scheduling options. The **Women's Resource Center (WRC)** serves the interests of women students, faculty and staff with information, consultation, programs and a monthly newsletter, "Wisdom, Words, and Women." Women students also comprise the Women's Advisory Committee to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services, and serve on the Women's Advisory Committee to the Provost.