10. NON-DISCRIMINATION

Policy 10.A: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

The Board of Regents of the University of Colorado reaffirms its long-standing commitment to create and sustain a diverse and inclusive educational, living and working environment. In 1970, the University of Colorado first wrote “A Plan of Affirmative Action,” which was revised and adopted by the Regents in 1971. When the Regents last amended this Policy Statement in 1973, the Board required that the university “move swiftly to identify and correct inequities,” and acknowledged that “Real affirmative action also requires frequent evaluation and analysis to ensure that the University is, in fact, maintaining a reasonable rate of progress toward our immediate and long-range goals.” These goals included employing a “diverse, multi-racial faculty and staff capable of providing for excellence in the education of its students and for the enrichment of the communities which it serves” and achieving “equity in all aspects and policies and practices for all University employees.”

In 1995, 1999 and 2008, the Regents reaffirmed its “absolute commitment to the promotion of diversity in the university community,” insisting that “no individual or group shall be marginalized or systematically excluded”, and firmly asserted the importance of “academic freedom.”

Despite having policies for more than 50 years, inequities remain. The Regents acknowledge the history of efforts to foster a diverse and inclusive university community as a reminder of the ongoing work to be done. The board also recognizes that passive non-discrimination and affirmative action are not enough to resolve past and present inequities in higher education or society. Bias and the impacts of power imbalances remain. A true commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion requires that each member, department, and office of the university community engages in self-examination to identify the policies and practices that perpetuate inequities and create and commit to action steps that foster a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable community.

At the University of Colorado, our vision to be the premier, accessible, and transformative public research university is inseparable from having diverse and inclusive working and learning environments. Such environments are crucial to promoting academic excellence, most notably, outstanding teaching, learning, research, creative work, meaningful community engagement and culturally responsive health care.

To pursue our vision and execute our mission, the university must focus on those who have faced barriers to access, inclusion and opportunity including those with minoritized identities and work diligently to identify and remove those barriers. We must create a community culture that is socially just, affirming, and advances a sense of belonging for all members. We must value and protect robust and respectful debate and treat each other with fairness. Finally, we must
recognize the distinct and primary roles of our campuses in advancing these goals: the Anschutz Medical Campus, Boulder, Denver, Colorado Springs, in addition to system administration.

At the University of Colorado, we have the responsibility to achieve equity and equal opportunity in all aspects of our policies, practices, and behavior. It remains our collective responsibility to hold ourselves and each other accountable to create a better and more equitable institution.

The University of Colorado will continually assess its progress, and these goals will remain in effect until inequities no longer exist. In their strategic and budgetary planning, each campus and system administration will prioritize the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Progress and assessment will be presented to the Regents annually.

Term descriptions as adapted from the Association of American Colleges and Universities:

Making Excellence Inclusive

Diversity refers to the representation of faculty, staff, and students who hold individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations) with special focus on historically minoritized identities.

Equity is the creation of opportunities for historically underserved populations to have equal access to and participate in academic and professional experiences that address disparate outcomes and propel communities toward success.

Inclusion refers to the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in decision making, sense-making, curriculum, the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect in academic and professional settings—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.