

Creating an Inclusive Campus:
The Cabrini University Statement of Inclusivity

Inclusivity and Cabrini University Mission

Education of the Heart

Cabrini University is a Catholic institution of higher education dedicated to academic excellence, leadership development, and a commitment to social justice. The University welcomes learners of all faiths, cultures, and backgrounds and prepares them to become engaged citizens of the world.

Achieving an Education of the Heart through Core Values

Cabrini University provides an Education of the Heart through modeling, implementing, and utilizing our Core Values of community, respect, vision and dedication to excellence. In that effort, we work to insure that every individual has the opportunity to freely express ideas that differ from those held by other members of the community, with the expectation that those ideas will be both honored and affirmed.

The Cabrini University Mission – why inclusivity?

The legacy of St. Frances Cabrini and the charism of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart inspire the University, *as an institution of Catholic higher education*, to participate in the mission of "building relationships grounded in the belief that every person has something to contribute to the common good" (MSC provincial assembly 2009).

St. Frances Cabrini saw the wounds of a world that dismissed and withdrew from inclusivity. Her time in America was marked by a potent shift in society, bringing more and more immigrants to the United States from around the world. Mother Cabrini came to the United States to work with the Italian immigrants, many of whom were isolated from jobs, decent housing, and even their own Church. The challenges Mother Cabrini faced were rooted in the mainstream's assumption that the experience of those with power was normative for all.

Although America has come a long way since those days in the early 20th Century, our society still struggles to engage in positive ways. Cabrini University has an excellent role model in the legacy of Mother Cabrini and her Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. It was Mother Cabrini's charism to work with people prevented from power because of their place outside the mainstream. Also, we have excellent modeling through the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Located in sixteen different countries around the world, the Missionary Sisters work in partnership with each other and with the lay women and men they serve.

As an institution of higher education, Cabrini University, rooted in the long history of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, seeks to provide a holistic education that is "dedicated to academic excellence, leadership development, and a commitment to social justice" (see University mission

statement). A 21st century college education must value, promote and education about diversity. Through engagement with and in the world around us, the academic curriculum that inspires to be an “education of the heart” is required to fully embrace all aspects of diversity through our teaching, service, and community-building efforts. Furthermore, a college must not only teach about diversity, but administrators, staff, and faculty must also model a diverse community where all groups of people are valued.

Cabrini University, like Mother Cabrini, must not withdrawal from inclusivity. Rather, we must engage it and embrace it as our natural mission to welcome people of diverse backgrounds and ensure that everyone has a voice at Cabrini University. We must be mindful of the dynamics of power and privilege and never assume that the experience of the mainstream is normative for all members of our community.

Cabrini’s Inclusive Campus

We strive to create a community free from bias, a community that enhances each person's ability to learn and work in an environment where diversity is both embraced and valued. At Cabrini diversity includes individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion). Inclusion is the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity. To that end, Cabrini has created an Inclusivity Council to ensure a community:

1. Where all feel valued and appreciated.
2. Where there is evidence of cultural dialogue between people from diverse backgrounds.
3. Where there is increasing acknowledgement and acceptance of difference.
4. Where diverse constituencies participate in both academic and administrative decision-making.
5. Where barriers to inclusion—whether policy, practice, or systemic—are identified and addressed.

The following principles/qualities provide the foundations of an inclusive campus climate.

- In our inclusive environment we move beyond traditional definitions of diversity that center on race, religion, class, gender and sexuality.
- In our inclusive environment we create safe spaces for all members of our community to speak from and engage the community from their own unique disposition/worldview.
- In our inclusive environment we value the opinions of all members of our community.

It is imperative to note that expressions or actions that disparage an individual's or group's ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, or any other aspect of difference are contrary to the fundamental mission and values of the University.