

SUBJECT: Diversity and Donor-Funded Aid	Effective Date: 11-3-04	Policy Number: 2-200	
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	Responsible Authority: Provost and Executive Vice President		

APPLICABILITY:

This policy applies to all University of Central Florida divisions and units. This policy also applies to the University of Central Florida Foundation, Inc., to the extent that its activities such as those addressed in this policy affect University of Central Florida operations.

DEFINITIONS:

Diversity. *Diversity* refers to the variety of backgrounds and characteristics found among humankind and embraces many aspects of human similarities and differences. Diversity accepts, respects, and understands individual uniqueness and individual differences. Diversity includes but is not limited to an individual's race, national origin, ethnicity, sex, socio-economic status, cultural heritage, abilities and disabilities, religion, and creed.

Protected Categories. Federal and state law prohibits discrimination on the basis of certain protected categories, which include race, national origin, sex, religion, and disability or handicap. Florida law also protects against discrimination on the basis of marital status. These characteristics may be referenced as *protected categories*.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In 1994, a federal court of appeals decided in the case of *Podberesky v. Kirwan*, that the University of Maryland could not administer financial aid and scholarships on a race-specific basis for the purpose of remedying past discrimination. According to this case and cases that followed, such a practice would violate the equal protection rights of those non-minority candidates who were not eligible for such aid. In 2003, the Supreme Court ruled on two

admissions cases at the University of Michigan. In those cases, the Court held that while diversity can be a compelling state interest justifying race-conscious measures, any such measures must be narrowly tailored to that purpose and must encompass the gamut of diverse elements rather than focus on race or national origin. Since 1999, the One Florida Initiative has dictated that state universities not grant preference in admissions to a particular racial or ethnic group. However, the One Florida Initiative allows the use of socioeconomic factors to promote overall diversity and inclusiveness in the state universities.

SUMMARY OF POLICY:

The University of Central Florida is committed to diversity and inclusiveness in the acceptance of donor-funded scholarships, endowments, and funds; the distribution of such aid to students; and the extension of targeted programs for students. That commitment is exemplified in the operations of the University of Central Florida at all levels, including the acceptance of donor-funded aid. Diversity refers to the variety of backgrounds and characteristics found among humankind and embraces all aspects of human similarities and differences. It is this definition of diversity that will guide and control the University of Central Florida in the acceptance and use of donor-funded aid and in the allocation of scarce resources.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The University of Central Florida maintains a strong and abiding commitment to diversity in all aspects of university life, including student admissions and financial aid. In fact, one of the university's strategic goals is to become more inclusive and diverse by dismantling barriers and enhancing cultural and leadership competencies.

Frequently, the university and members of the public seek to promote this strategic goal through the donation of funds targeted for particular purposes, including scholarships. While the university supports the view that increased and improved interaction across the social lines of gender, race, generation, geography, and class benefits the university students, faculty, and staff, there are legal restrictions on the ability to pursue those goals through scholarships and programs that specify preferences based on race, national origin, sex, religion, and/or disability.

The combination of federal case law and Florida policy requires that we target our development efforts accordingly. As such, the university will not administer scholarships that restrict access on the basis of race, national origin, sex, religion, or disability or that otherwise target participation on the basis of protected categories.

PROCEDURES:

Development efforts should focus on promoting diversity through donations that are designed to be inclusive across a wide spectrum and that take a holistic approach to the advancement of diversity goals. Student qualities that may be considered in establishing and awarding scholarships include the following:

- a. demonstrated commitment to making meaningful contributions to a pluralistic community and the continuation of a diverse student body
- b. ability to overcome educational, social, or family disadvantages (family circumstances such as nontraditional family arrangements, first generation to attend college, etc.)
- c. history of proven ability to overcome or adapt to life challenges (scholastic achievement following life-altering illness or injury, adaptation to altered family circumstances, etc.)
- d. history of particular diseases, conditions, or circumstances (sickle cell anemia, breast cancer, rape, etc.)
- e. contribution to diversity in the UCF community, considering the social lines of gender, race, generation, geography, and class; also, contribution to diversity considering representation in the UCF community, the specific area or program, and the community served by UCF
- f. sensitivity to and understanding of racial and ethnic issues in society as demonstrated by life circumstances, events, or achievements
- g. commitment to learning to better communicate across the social lines of gender, race, generation, geography, and class
- h. race, national origin, sex, religion, or disability, as long as such a factor is not determinative
- i. academic merit and leadership potential
- j. stated intent to major in specific studies (African-American Studies, Anthropology, Social Work, Women's Studies, etc.)
- k. geographic location or background of the student (hometowns or home states, particular high school(s), community college, etc.)

