



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY  
**COLLEGE OF NURSING**

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION: Our Commitment**

Augusta University College of Nursing (AU CON) is a diverse community of learners that reflect the multicultural mosaic of the world around us. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) affirms the ongoing imperative of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in academic nursing.<sup>1</sup>

**We believe:**

- Diversity encompasses broad demographic differences as well as *unseen facets* that inform how we experience the world;
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion strengthen our AU CON community and are essential to our success and future viability;
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion are *fundamental prerequisites for excellence* in nursing education, science, practice, and service.<sup>2</sup>

The AU CON collectively strives to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion as a vital aspect of our mission and in pursuit of *inclusive, equitable excellence*. The terms diversity, equity, and inclusion appear throughout this document. The definitions are drawn from AACN's document and are congruent Augusta University Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) operational definitions for diversity and inclusion. Our statement goes beyond diversity and inclusion to include equity.

**Diversity** refers to “a broad range of individual, population, and social characteristics, including but not limited to age; sex; race; ethnicity; sexual orientation; gender identity; family structures; geographic locations; national origin; immigrants and refugees; language; physical, functional, and learning abilities; religious beliefs; and socioeconomic status.”<sup>3</sup>

**Inclusion** occurs in “environmental and organizational cultures in which faculty, students, staff, and administrators with diverse characteristics thrive. Inclusive environments require intentionality and embrace differences, not merely tolerate them. Everyone works to ensure the perspectives and experiences of others are invited, welcomed, acknowledged, and respected in inclusive environments.”<sup>4</sup>

**Equity:** “Equity is the ability to recognize the differences in the resources or knowledge needed to allow individuals to fully participate in society, including access to education, with the goal of overcoming obstacles to ensure fairness.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> AACN Position Statement: Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Academic Nursing, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Augusta University Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Rationale [for diversity and inclusion]. <https://www.augusta.edu/diversity/staff.php>

<sup>3</sup> AACN Position Statement: Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Academic Nursing, 2017

<sup>4</sup> AACN Position Statement: Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Academic Nursing, 2017

<sup>5</sup> AACN Position Statement: Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Academic Nursing, 2017

These values inform our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the CON. The values of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are predicated on **respect** and form the basis for **culturally-congruent practice**, defined below.

**Respect:** taking the time to realize that everyone sees and experiences the world in a unique way. Once you realize these differences you can make efforts to respect people in the way they feel respected.<sup>6</sup>

**Culturally-congruent practice:** “The application of evidence-based nursing that is in agreement with the preferred cultural values, beliefs, worldview, and practices of the healthcare consumer and other stakeholders. [...] Nurses design and direct culturally congruent practice and services for diverse consumers to improve access, promote positive outcomes, and reduce disparities.”<sup>7</sup>

As a result of our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the AU CON seeks to coordinate efforts with ODI and the AU community to construct and continuously improve our culture of *inclusive excellence*.

**We embrace:**

- Critical reflection and building self-awareness as foundational to appreciating the uniqueness of others;
- Exploration and expression of different beliefs, ideals, and perspectives toward greater understanding of our world;<sup>8</sup> and
- Ongoing assessment of policies, practices, and procedures to advance the guiding principles of *equal access* and *equitable distribution*.

**We commit:**

- To building capacity to sustain long-term growth in diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- To cultivating an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated as a strength of the College.
- To recruiting and retaining an academically talented and diverse student body.
- To recruiting and retaining and diverse workforce.

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<sup>6</sup> From the University of Michigan Expect Respect website <http://urespect.umich.edu/>

<sup>7</sup> American Nurses Association (ANA). (2015) *Nursing: Scope and standards of practice* (3<sup>rd</sup>ed.). Silver Springs, MD: Nursesbooks.org

<sup>8</sup> ANA. (2017). Diversity Awareness. Retrieved from <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/workforce/clinical-practice-material/diversity-awareness/>