

## **VI-1.05 POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY OR EXPRESSION**

(Approved by the Board of Regents, July 11, 1997; amended, June 22, 2012)

### **PURPOSE**

This policy affirms that the University System of Maryland's (USM) commitment to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity includes the protection of members of the USM community from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. These principles require that the treatment of students, faculty, and staff of USM institutions, and applicants for admission and employment, be based on individual abilities and qualifications and be free from invidious discrimination.

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. "Gender identity or Expression" is defined as a person's actual or perceived gender identity, self-image, appearance, behavior, or expression, regardless of whether that identity, self-image, appearance, behavior, or expression is different from that traditionally associated with the person's gender at birth.
- B. "Sexual Orientation" is defined as the identification, perception, or status of an individual as to homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

### **II. PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION BASED UPON SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION**

- A. This policy specifically prohibits discrimination against students, faculty, and staff on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression in academic admissions, financial aid, educational services, housing, student programs, and activities, recruitment, hiring, employment, appointment, promotion, tenure, demotion, transfer, layoff or termination, rates of pay, selection for training and professional development, and employee services.

- B. The USM reserves the right to comply with conditions on the application of this policy required by the terms of any bona fide employee benefit plan such as a retirement, pension, or insurance plan, and to enforce or comply with any Federal or State law, regulation, or guidelines, including conditions for the receipt of federal funding.

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION**

- A. The protections of this policy shall be included in all appropriate USM and institution equal opportunity statements and related documents.
- B. The USM and each institution shall include the protections of this policy in its procedures to implement and enforce its equal opportunity and non-discrimination policies, including the identification of those officials responsible for receiving, investigating and resolving complaints of discrimination prohibited by this policy.