



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT

The University of Puerto Rico- School of Medicine believes that diversity and inclusion are fundamental elements to provide an enriching environment for our students, residents, faculty, and academic administrators. . The School of Medicine is committed to actively participate in all efforts toward recruiting, enrolling, employing, appointing, and retaining a diverse group of students, faculty, and academic administrators; diversity broadly defined as characteristics that strengthen and enrich our academic milieu, in alignment with our mission and values.

The School of Medicine will encourage and support its leaders, the departments, the academic programs, students, residents, faculty, and academic administrators in an effort to promote inclusion, respect, and culturally competent communication. This will be done by ensuring that:

- The curriculum integrate and support the development of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to promote the elimination of health disparities
- The School maintains itself relevant to the community by maintaining current alliances and partnerships, and establishing new ones
- The Faculty receives training in cultural competence thus fostering the development of the skills and attitudes needed to facilitate inclusion
- Research efforts are aligned with the mission of providing significant and long-lasting contributions to the elimination of health disparities in the Archipelago of Puerto Rico

In addition, the School of Medicine is committed to the continuous monitoring and assessment of these efforts, thus ensuring compliance with the diverse and inclusive environment we aspire to achieve.

DIVERSITY CATEGORIES

It is expected from accredited medical schools that they “articulate its expectations regarding diversity across its academic community”. These expectations should be reflected into specific categories of diversity upon which the School must focus its diversity and inclusion efforts. These categories should be aligned with the School mission and should respond to the community it serves. In order to be able to accomplish what is proposed in its Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine has defined its categories of diversity for students/residents, faculty, and academic administrators.

The School recognizes individuals from the Traditionally Underrepresented in Medicine groups which include individuals self-described as from one or more of the following ethnic backgrounds: Hispanic or Latino; Black/African-American¹; Native American/Alaskan Native; Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. In addition, it recognizes the following specific categories for each group:

Students Diversity Categories:

The UPR School of Medicine’s mission includes not only the commitment to educate a diverse cadre of students but also to provide quality inter-professional health care services. This mission is rooted in the School’s values which include the “delivery of excellent clinical and preventive services without discrimination, sensitive to the needs of the people of our communities and geared toward the elimination of disparities.”

Crucial to this commitment is the recruitment, retention and advancement of a student body that better reflect our communities. Students recruited from these diverse backgrounds will expand other students’ understanding of the health disparities in these areas. Furthermore, it is expected that their participation in the medical school academic programs will impact health care services in their communities. Therefore, based on the above and the available data, the following are the designated categories:

- Traditionally Underrepresented in Medicine students with particular attention to those from Black Caribbean ethnic backgrounds
- Economically Disadvantaged Students - As defined by the federal standards and who qualify for Need-based Scholarships
- Educationally Disadvantaged Students - Self-described or graduates from the public school system
- Students from Rural or Health Professionals Shortage Areas – As defined in the HPSAs federal documentation or local municipality’s classification
- Students who self-identify as members of LBGTTIQ (lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-transsexual-intersex-queer) communities

1. For the purpose of this policy, the Black/African American ethnic category is defined as Black Caribbean.

***Faculty and Academic
Administrators
Diversity Categories***

A diverse faculty and academic administrators group is achieved when we recruit, retain, and further develop faculty and academic administrators that reflect the diversity of the communities served and when we open our doors to other underrepresented groups in our society.

As employees, rules and regulations from the human resources university system apply in terms of non-discrimination policies and open recruitment. However, it is in the best interest of the School to carry out its mission to further recruit researchers, basic scientists, and clinicians as well as to appoint faculty and qualified staff to leadership administrative positions that represent diverse groups. The inclusion of more diverse faculty and academic administrators will enrich the research agenda and the academic environment serving as role models to the student body. Therefore, based on available data, the following are the designated categories:

- Traditionally Underrepresented in Medicine Faculty with particular attention to those from Black Caribbean ethnic backgrounds
- Faculty with an Educational Disadvantage Background (originally from the public school system at the high school level) or originally from selected Health Professional Shortage Areas so designated by HRSA.
- Female faculty members as candidates to academic leadership positions

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The UPR School of Medicine will initially establish a ***Council on Diversity and Inclusion*** that will be responsible to carry out the purposes of this policy. Its president, based on his/her credentials and commitment to diversity and health disparities, will be appointed by the Dean of Medicine as the ***Diversity Officer*** for the School of Medicine.

The Council will directly respond to the Dean and will oversee all issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion at the institution. This means involvement with recruitment, retention and quality services for students, faculty, and academic administrators belonging to the diversity categories so described. As such, this Council will be responsible for the development and implementation of a ***Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan***.

It is expected that as part of the Plan the following activities and responsibilities will be included, among others:

- Ensure that all students, residents, faculty, and academic administrators are made aware of the diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Promote a culture of inclusiveness, respect, communication and understanding of diversity.
- Develop students and residents recruitment programs in collaboration with the appropriate offices, as well as enrichment programs to facilitate the admission of qualified students from diverse backgrounds
- Develop programs in collaboration with the appropriate offices, for the academic advancement and success of students, academic administrators, and faculty from diverse backgrounds.
- Promote the inclusion of cultural competence and diversity topics in the curriculum and in the Faculty Development Program activities.
- Work closely with the campus-wide Faculty Procurator and the Student Procurator to promote the consideration of this policy when dealing with issues related to diversity and inclusion
- Promote research agendas that specifically address health disparities, particularly in those areas that are consonant with this policy,
- Should seek to impact student selection committees and faculty recruitment processes.
- With the assistance of the administrative structure of the School and the departments, track and collect demographic data on school's constituents (students, residents, faculty, and academic administrators) in order to properly consider such domains and characteristics that could strengthen this Policy, such as educational background, life experiences, sexual orientation, record of service, among others.

It is expected that the work of the Council will be dynamic, and it may promote future revisions of this Policy with regard to the inclusion of additional diversity categories and changes in the governance structure in order to advance the Diversity and Inclusion agenda. Future revisions of this Policy must be approved by the Committee on Administration and endorsed by the UPR School of Medicine Faculty.

Approved by the Committee of Administration on November, 20, 2014

Approved by the UPR School of Medicine Faculty on December 11, 2014