

IHL Board of Trustees

Policies & Bylaws

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

One of the strengths of Mississippi is the diversity of its people. This diversity enriches higher education and contributes to the capacity that our students develop for living in a multicultural and interdependent world. Our system of government, rooted in respect for all people and respect for each individual, is based on understanding. Embracing diversity of thought, cultural background, experience, and identity helps to foster inclusive and intellectually enriched campus communities that maximize opportunities for success among all students and employees.

Institutions of higher learning have a moral and educational responsibility to ensure that talent is developed in all our citizens, and that our universities, individually and collectively, are strengthened by diversity in student bodies, faculties, administration, and in all areas offering employment opportunities, including construction, financing, and consulting. Increasing access and success among all populations assists the state of Mississippi in meeting its enrollment and degree completion goals as well as advancing critical economic development.

The Board recognizes the importance for campus environments to promote diversity and ensure that all aspects of institutional practice affirm our commitment to access and success, with particular attention to heightening participation and achievement of underrepresented individuals, as defined by each institution and approved by the IHL Board. To that end, the Board adopts the following goals for higher education in Mississippi:

1. To increase the enrollment and graduation rate of underrepresented students at our institutions;
2. To increase the employment of underrepresented individuals in administrative, faculty and staff positions;
3. To enhance the overall educational experience through infusion of curricular content and co-curricular programming that enhances multicultural awareness and understanding; and
4. To increase the use of underrepresented professionals, contractors, and other vendors.

The Board recognizes that the full and meaningful implementation of this statement and these goals requires that a high priority be assigned to this endeavor; therefore, the Board will require that the performance evaluation of all institutional executive officers and the Commissioner include diversity outcomes as among the most significant elements. The Board also expects the institutional executive officers and the Commissioner to incorporate appropriate diversity metrics into the performance evaluation in their units and in the establishment of goals and performance evaluation of the institutions and organizations.

