



Diversity Statement Office of University Housing

Diversity and Social Responsibility are at the cornerstone of community life at The Ohio State University. The Office of University Housing defines diversity as an inclusive mixture of all the differences that make individuals at OSU unique. Further, social responsibility encourages individuals to not only think about how they act, but also the impact of those actions on others. Through opportunities for critical thinking, social interactions and discussion within our residence halls and larger university communities our goal is to empower students, staff, faculty and friends to learn from the wide array of human similarities and differences in an increasingly interconnected world.

Our goals are to:

- Increase sensitivity to differences through shared experiences, dialogue, and personal reflection
- Encourage students to address thoughtlessness that may impact the campus climate and the student experience
- Actively develop communities that are committed to diversity and inclusion
- Support and empower students who experience bias and discrimination

The following goals and guidelines are intended to facilitate personal development and to create positive experiences for all those who are part of Ohio State University residence hall communities.

Increase sensitivity to differences through shared experiences, dialogue, and personal reflection

Given that our residence hall communities have members with different lifestyles, values, ideas, cultures, and backgrounds, it is our hope that all those who live, learn and work in these environments will learn to respect and appreciate others with whom they interact. Students, staff, faculty and guests within our communities are asked to demonstrate this respect by:

- Listening and learning from the experiences of others living in, engaging with and working in our communities
- Actively challenging stereotypes by comparing and contrasting new experiences encountered at OSU with past evaluations made of others
- Respectfully questioning and/or discussing opinions, thoughts and ways of doing things that are different from ones with which we are more familiar
- Considering motivations for our behavior, and the impact such actions may have on the larger community

- Asking questions when in doubt about the impact of our words or actions

Encourage students to address thoughtlessness that may impact the campus climate and the student experience

The words “not tolerated” are different than “does not exist.” Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of university students, staff and faculty some members of our community will experience discrimination based on race, heritage, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, veteran status, etc. as part of their experiences here at The Ohio State University. The following are ways to create more positive residential experiences that are designed to reduce the number these instances:

- Consider discussing the content and messages displayed in resident rooms or community spaces in a manner consistent with the expressive rights of the resident(s).
- When possible, make staff aware of behaviors or actions that appear to promote discrimination or bias within the community
- Think about the intended and unintended impact of words or phrases when used in person, online, etc.

Actively develop communities that are committed to diversity and inclusion

By actively seeking to employ and retain staff members who recognize the importance of promoting and fostering social responsibility and community building in our residence halls, our goal is to create dynamic and inclusive environments for all students, staff, faculty and guests. We expect our staff to be talented facilitators who are also aware of the various campus resources and organizations available to effectively address bias related incidents should they arise. As a result of careful selection, extensive training, and continuous evaluation, we fully expect our staff and community members to be prepared to address the issues and realities that are part of fostering a diverse and inclusive campus community.

Support and empower students who experience bias and discrimination

University staff will work in conjunction with various offices to resolve cross-cultural conflict, perceived issues of bias or intolerance. As a community member, feel free to consult with staff to get resources for how to address any of these potential issues should they arise.

Closing Thought

Understanding differences can be a challenge for many students at The Ohio State University. We may not necessarily agree with, or fully understand, the diverse members of our community. We should, however, do our best to respect these differences by entering into new situations with an open mind and by engaging in thoughtful interactions with others in the university community.