[Policy Manual](http://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Policy-Manual/Policy-Manual)  /  [Academic Affairs](http://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Policy-Manual/Policy-Manual/Academic-Affairs)  /  [Governance](http://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Policy-Manual/Policy-Manual/Academic-Affairs/Governance)  /  Development Review Revision and Archiving of University Policy

**Policy Name: Georgia College Non-Discrimination Statement**

**Policy Statement:** Georgia College is committed to the fundamental principle of equal opportunity and equal treatment for every prospective and current employee and strives to create a campus environment which understands, fosters, and embraces the value of diversity.  No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or genetic information, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination, under any program or activity conducted by Georgia College.

**Definitions:** (accepted definitions of terms of interest are included from the GLAAD Media Reference Guide)

**Gender Identity -** A person's internal, deeply held sense of their gender. For transgender people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into one of those two choices (see *non-binary and/or genderqueer* or *Gender Non-Conforming* below) Unlike gender expression (see below) gender identity is not visible to others.

**Gender Expression –** External manifestations of gender, expressed through a person's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice, and/or body characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture. Typically, transgender people seek to align their gender expression with their gender identity, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth.

**(Additional definitions referenced in definitions above)**

**Gender Non-Conforming** A term used to describe some people whose gender expression is different from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity. Please note that not all gender non-conforming people identify as transgender; nor are all transgender people gender non-conforming. Many people have gender expressions that are not entirely conventional – that fact alone does not make them transgender. Many transgender men and women have gender expressions that are conventionally masculine or feminine. Simply being transgender does not make someone gender non-conforming. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as gender non-conforming.

**Non-binary and/or genderqueer** Terms used by some people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman. They may define their gender as falling somewhere in between man and woman, or they may define it as wholly different from these terms. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as non-binary and/or genderqueer.

**Keywords:** Non-discrimination, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-binary and/or gender queer.

**Reason for the Policy:**

This proposal originally came from SGA as an issue that impacts the rules that student organizations must follow in treating all students equally. Such a policy would be appropriate as applied to the entire campus community and that the current policy leaves out specific groups that exist on our campus.

This is also in-keeping with other campuses in the USG. By not keeping our non-discrimination clauses up-to-date with our system’s premier institutions we risk not only creating an environment in which students, faculty, and staff are not adequately protected from discrimination, but we also risk creating the impression of an institution that does not value the non-discrimination that we strive to practice. That impression directly reflects on our ability to attract the highest quality and most diverse and inclusive group of students, faculty, and staff.

In January 2013, President Dorman charged the Diversity Action Planning Committee to develop a plan to address diversity at GC.  He stated “While we desire to be an institution that has greater diversity among faculty and students, we clearly have some internal work to do.”

The actionable items included recruitment and retention of diverse students, recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff, and creation of an environment on campus and in the greater Milledgeville community that creates a welcoming environment for diverse students.

The DAP Defines Diversity –

The definition of diversity traditionally utilized by Georgia College includes race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity/expression and socioeconomic class.

In an effort to reach inclusive excellence it requires a focus on underrepresented students who have historically been marginalized within the US institution of higher ed.

The DAP specifically lists Goal #4 as Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention Success.

With this expectation to create strategies to increase the diversity of faculty, professional staff and administration at all levels, we must also look at the underrepresented areas of the student body. In an effort to recruit a student body of those who are underrepresented, American Indians/Alaskan Natives, African-Americans/Blacks, Hispanics, Latinos/a, Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiian, Asians, multiracial, Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgendered, Queer (LGBTQ) students, first generation and students with disabilities, we must mirror this as role models in our faculty, staff, and administration.

Therefore, being specific in the non-discrimination statement to include Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Non-Religion, we as a senate body are acting on the goals in our DAP.

Our SGA has a non-discrimination clause that is more updated and inclusive than the one by which Georgia College abides. Over time they’ve continued to modify their non-discrimination clause while ours has remained stagnant. They asked SAPC to consider whether the University statement was inclusive enough and if it was time to improve that. This update has real impacts to how student groups operate and how we as a University treat the people who comprise it. It adds non-religion, gender identity, and gender expression as characteristics that despite not being included until now are valued aspects of expression, worthy of our protection.

The addition of each individual item helps to both convey support for, and protect, people on our campus. These aspects of non-discrimination are included in campuses in our state and in our country.

Typically we ask our students to learn from us, but in taking on this issue the committee found that our students were dealing with this better than we were.

SAPC voted *unanimously* to bring this forward to the body because we believe that our current statement doesn’t go far enough to align with our mission. It’s an issue long-overdue for our attention. A vote here demonstrates that it’s the will of our Senate to codify our commitment to non-discrimination.

Respectfully submitted for the Senate’s consideration, here is our proposed update:

**Proposed Outcome:**

To recommend including "**non-religion, gender identity, and gender expression**" to Georgia College's Statement of Non-discrimination

Georgia College is committed to the fundamental principle of equal opportunity and equal treatment for every prospective and current employee and strives to create a campus environment which understands, fosters, and embraces the value of diversity.  No person shall**,**on the grounds of**race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, non-religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, gender identity, or gender expression** be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination, under any program or activity conducted by Georgia College.

**Applicability of the Policy:** This update impacts how student groups operate and how we as a University treat the people who comprise it. It adds non-religion, gender identity, and gender expression as characteristics that despite not being included until now are valued aspects of expression and diversity, worthy of our protection.

**Related Policies:** Diversity Action Plan

**Procedures:**

**Non-Compliance:**

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies and may result in prosecution in accordance with state and federal law.

Creation Date: Month, Year for new policies

Revision Date: Month, Year

Last Reviewed Date: Month, Year

Next Review Date: Month, Year - Two years from Last Reviewed Date

Responsible Department:

Cabinet Approval Date:

Effective Date: