IUPUI Statement on Civility

IUPUI envisions itself as one of America’s leading universities not only because of our scholarly achievements, our research funding, or the number of our graduates. We are also a leading university because we have accepted the responsibilities of leadership and committed ourselves to conducting our work and interactions with others in an exemplary way.

We often speak of IUPUI as being a family. Like members of a family, we have dedicated ourselves to creating an environment where individuals can succeed because each person is important. When any one of our members is prevented from doing her or his best, the entire community is diminished. Our institutional ethic compels us to foster the best possible environment for doing our work as educators, learners, and supporters of the educational process. Periodically, we must reaffirm these fundamental ethics and values that form the framework for our university family.

Among those values is fostering a climate of civility and mutual respect regardless of race, gender, age, disability or status in the institution. IUPUI has achieved much of its promise as an urban university because we work together toward common ends. Because the university is so complex and diverse, however, we will not always agree with one another. When we disagree it must be done with civility. We encourage everyone to speak and act judiciously and with respect for one another.

Also among our values is academic freedom and an open exchange of ideas and opinions. However, when there are messages displayed that promote divisiveness in our academic community, we have an obligation to condemn those messages as being antithetical to our university ideals and sense of shared responsibility for each other’s welfare. If we are to be true to our commitment to diversity and be welcoming to all, everyone must do his or her part. We know the terrible legacy of unopposed statements of racial divisiveness and diatribe. If we don’t discourage such statements, they become insidiously acceptable and poison the climate of trust and respect we strive to maintain. When apathy leads us to permit discrimination or harassment because we ourselves are not objects of such behavior, we have failed our community.

No set of rules or policies can wholly govern human conduct. Civility is a fragile construct that each of us must cherish and preserve. We have created a vision for diversity for IUPUI that sets forth guiding principles and values that will help us create a community of respect. We have policies designed to eliminate discrimination and prevent harassment when our shared commitment to these ideals fail. Our Office of Affirmative Action enforces these policies and assists in educating the campus community about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Our Office of Student Life and Diversity offers a variety of leadership programs and activities to help students participate in a civil community. Our Office of
Human Resources provides training and orientation for employees. And our Office of Multicultural Professional Development supports faculty and staff in a variety of ways to enhance their skills. Please contact these offices with your concerns and questions.

First issued by Gerald L. Bepko, Chancellor, May 1997
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If you have any questions for HRA, please e-mail: Human Resources Administration
If you have any questions about this site, please e-mail: Juletta Toliver
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