

The University of Richmond is committed to complying with all applicable federal and state civil rights laws, the decision of the United States Supreme Court in *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, and its own policies prohibiting discrimination. The University's policies prohibiting discrimination are available [here](#).

We are grateful for the efforts of so many across campus to ensure that the University of Richmond remains in compliance with federal and state civil rights laws.

This memorandum is intended to provide additional guidance on the application of the University's policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. This memorandum will be updated from time to time. The questions set forth below are simply a means of organizing this memorandum and incorporating issues raised in recent federal guidance. The questions themselves should *not* be construed as reflecting current practices on campus.

Finally, nothing in this memorandum is intended to conflict with either the University's Statement on Free Expression or its commitment to academic freedom.

1. Who is protected by the University's policies prohibiting discrimination?

The University of Richmond prohibits discrimination and harassment against applicants, students, faculty or staff on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, ethnicity, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, military or veteran status, or any classification protected by local, state or federal law.

Each of these categories is referred to as a "protected status."

Federal and state laws and the University's policies protect *all* applicants, students, faculty, and staff from discrimination or harassment based on protected status, regardless of whether they are members of a minority or majority group.

2. Can the University, its schools, or programs consider race, ethnicity, or national origin in the admissions process?

No. In *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, the United States Supreme Court ruled that consideration of race, ethnicity, and national origin in the admissions process is prohibited in most circumstances. The University complies with the Supreme Court's ruling.

3. Can the University consider race, ethnicity, or national origin in determining who receives a scholarship?

No. The University of Richmond awards need-based aid based solely on: (i) a student's financial circumstances; and (ii) federal and institutional financial aid calculation methodologies, neither of which takes protected status into account. Similarly, the University does not consider race, ethnicity, or national origin in determining which students receive merit-based scholarships.

4. Can I consider race, ethnicity, or national origin in selecting participants for my program, group, or opportunity?

No. You cannot provide opportunities, benefits, or advantages based on race, ethnicity, or national origin in a way that disadvantages other qualified people.

5. Can a department or hiring manager consider race, ethnicity, or national origin in the hiring process to create a more diverse department or team?

No. Departments, search committees, and hiring managers cannot make hiring decisions, either favorable or unfavorable, based on an applicant's protected status. Race, ethnicity, or national origin cannot be considered as either a plus factor or as a negative factor in the hiring process. All candidates for a position should be evaluated using the same criteria.

6. Can I have quotas or minimum requirements for diversity on panels, applicant pools, positions?

No. You may not set quotas or minimums based on race, ethnicity, or national origin for applicant pools, hiring panels or other committees.

7. Can I consider other characteristics, such as first-generation status, geography, family income levels?

Yes. You can consider such other factors so long as there is a legitimate justification for using those factors that connects to the mission, objective, or purpose of the program or organization. In other words, you can consider factors such as first-generation status or geography as long as you are not using those factors as a proxy for race, ethnicity, or national origin.

8. Can I create programming focusing on or centering specific races, ethnicities, or national origins?

Yes. You can have programming that centers, highlights or discusses the experiences of certain groups, but that programming must be explicitly open to all who wish to attend. Programming must not stereotype or demean people based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. Similarly, there should be no space or facility on campus that excludes people based on race, ethnicity, or national origin.

9. What do I do if I believe a University policy is being violated?

The University strongly encourages campus community members to promptly report incidents that may involve discrimination or harassment. Anyone who believes that they or someone they know has experienced discrimination or harassment in violation of any University policy should report such conduct at [Report.Richmond.edu](https://report.richmond.edu). The University prohibits retaliation or retribution, in any form, against an individual who reports, in good faith, an actual, potential or suspected violation of its non-discrimination policies.

10. Who do I go to if I have questions about this memorandum or about the applicability of federal and state civil rights laws or the University's non-discrimination policies?

Questions about this memorandum or about the applicability of federal and state civil rights laws or the University's policies can be directed to the University's Compliance, Title IX, and Non-Discrimination Office or the Office of University Counsel.