

## **POLICY ON DIVERSITY DEFINITIONS AND CATEGORIES FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF**

The mission of the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine (SOM) is "to improve the health and well-being of individuals and populations through innovative educational programs in medicine and biomedical science, cutting-edge biomedical research, and leadership in academic medicine. The School strives to implement this mission with the highest professional and ethical standards, in a culture of diversity and inclusiveness, and in an environment that enables each individual to develop to his or her full potential." In support of this mission, the SOM, in all of its responsibilities to learners, faculty and staff, does not discriminate in any form on the basis of age, sex, gender, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, military or veteran status. The SOM does not discriminate in admissions decisions, decisions related to learners, educational programs or activities, or employment.

As an academic unit within the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the SOM complies with all federal and state laws and University of Missouri System policy regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the state of Missouri Human Rights Act Chapter 213 RSMO. The SOM Non-Discrimination Policy aligns with the university's notice of non-discrimination.

### **Definition of Diversity**

The School of Medicine believes that a diverse and inclusive institutional climate is essential to providing medical education that promotes the effective delivery of health care in diverse communities. A diverse learning and working environment is comprised of but is not limited to differences in racial and ethnic origin, socioeconomic background, disadvantaged background, rural and urban communities, gender identities, sexual orientations, geographic origins, academic backgrounds, as well as those who can contribute to the medical education learning community through different personal experiences such as overcoming hardship, demonstrating extensive involvement within the community, possessing multilingual abilities, and /or exhibiting different life experiences that may contribute to achieving diversity.

The School of Medicine operates within the diversity policies of the University of Missouri System and within diversity recommendations and best practices from the Association of American Medical Colleges. These policies are consistent with federal law and provide equal opportunity for all individuals. In addition, policies regarding the use of diversity metrics in admissions align with AAMC recommendations and the mission of the School of Medicine with a focus on access and opportunity and the educational benefits of a diverse student body.

## **Diversity Definitions**

In order to achieve a diverse student body, faculty, and administrative staff, the School of Medicine has identified the following diversity categories and definitions to support the recruitment and retention efforts of students, faculty and staff.

### **STUDENTS**

Student definitions apply to use in the admissions process and/or in identifying student affairs support services for diverse groups of students. The following definitions apply to students:

**Underrepresented Minority (URM):** Underrepresented minority status is defined by self-reporting as African-American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Native American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or Asian-Underrepresented. For the purposes of Asian-Underrepresented, this category is defined as those who do NOT identify as Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Asian Indian, or Thai.

- For applicants for admission, this information is self-reported through an optional question on the general application for admission to the university, the American Medical College Application Service application, and the School of Medicine supplemental application.

**Disadvantaged:** Disadvantaged status is defined as:

- growing up in an underserved or rural area where, based on personal experiences or the experiences of family and friends in that area, there was inadequate access to health care professional (e.g. physicians, nurses, hospitals, clinics and/or other health care service providers);
- experience involving immediate family (spouse, parent, child, sibling, mother or father-in-law, sister or brother-in-law, including step and adoptive relationships) that affected educational opportunities or social circumstances;
- receipt of state and/or federal assistance because of socioeconomic or other circumstances, including but not limited to welfare benefit programs, unemployment compensation, free and reduced lunch programs, housing assistance, fee waiver on exams such as the ACT, etc.;
- other situations that may have caused a personal disadvantage (e.g. lack of educational opportunity, lack of resources, etc.).<sup>1</sup>
  - For applicants for admission, this information is collected on the admissions application through an optional essay prompt.

**First-Generation College Student:** A first-generation college student is defined as a student whose parents or legal guardians have not earned a baccalaureate degree. A first-generation college student is the first in his/her family to attend a four-year college or university and earn a baccalaureate degree.

- For applicants for admission, this information is collected by the Office of Admissions through the admissions application based on parent level of education as reported by the applicant.

**Geographic Origin, Rural v. Urban:** As defined by the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services, urban counties are defined as those with a population density of greater than 150 persons per square mile, plus any county that contains at least part of the central city of a Metropolitan Statistical Area. Using this definition, 14 counties in the state of Missouri are urban

and 101 counties are rural.<sup>2</sup> Rural v. urban status is only tracked for those who reside in the state of Missouri.

- For applicants for admission, this information is collected by the Office of Admissions through the admissions application and rural v. urban status is assigned based on legal county of the applicant's permanent residence.

**Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex:** Gender identity is defined as an individual's concept of self as male, female, or genderqueer/non-binary (people who identify outside of the traditional man/woman gender classification, such as identification as both a man and a woman, as neither a man nor a woman, as an alternate gender outside of these categories, or as a gender that changes over time). Sex assigned at birth includes male, female, or a those individuals with a combination of chromosomal, hormonal and/or anatomical characteristics that do not align with a binary model of sex. Gender expression includes external manifestations of gender identity as feminine, masculine or androgynous.<sup>3</sup>

- For applicants for admission, applicants are asked the following optional questions on the admissions application:
  - What is your gender identity?
  - What is your preferred pronoun?

**Sexual Orientation:** Sexual orientation is the type of attraction someone feels towards others, and is often described in the context of gender. Gay is defined as someone who is attracted to someone who identifies with the same gender, commonly used by trans/cis men who are attracted to other trans/cis men but also used by individuals with any gender identity. Lesbian is defined as a trans/cis woman who is attracted to another trans/cis woman. Bisexual is defined as someone who is attracted to both someone of their same gender, as well as someone of a different gender. Queer is defined as an individual who feels that their identity and experiences fall outside of other sexual orientations. Straight is defined as a trans/cis individual who is attracted to someone else of the other binary gender (man/woman) as themselves.<sup>3</sup>

- For applicants for admission, applicants are not asked to identify sexual orientation.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF**

Faculty and staff definitions are used to identify the diversity of our faculty, and to identify varying support mechanisms for faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The following definitions apply to Faculty and Staff:

**Underrepresented Minority (URM):** Underrepresented minority status is defined by self-reporting as African-American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Native American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or Asian-Underrepresented. For the purposes of Asian-Underrepresented, this category is defined as those who do NOT identify as Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Asian Indian, or Thai.

- For faculty and staff, this information is self-reported on the human resources application. This information is not available to the hiring manager.

**Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex:** Gender identity is defined as an individual's concept of self as male, female, or genderqueer/non-binary (people who identify outside of the traditional man/woman gender classification, such as identification as both a man and a woman, as neither a man nor a woman, as an alternate gender outside of these categories, or as a gender that changes over time). Sex assigned at birth includes male, female, or a those individuals with a combination of chromosomal, hormonal and/or anatomical characteristics that do not align with a

binary model of sex. Gender expression includes external manifestations of gender identity as feminine, masculine or androgynous.<sup>3</sup>

- For applicants for faculty and staff positions, applicants are asked to provide traditional, binary sex identification, male or female, on the human resources application.

1. American Medical College Application Service application.
2. Missouri Department of Health Senior Services. (2015). *Biennial Report: Health in Rural Missouri*. Office of Primary Care and Rural Health.
3. GSA Committee on Admissions & GSA Committee on Student Diversity Affairs. (2017). Creating a Welcoming Environment for Gender Diversity in Medical School Admissions [PowerPoint slides.]. Retrieved from <https://www.aamc.org/admissions/highlights/>.

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