

A Resolve to (Ethnic? Racial? Other?) Diversity Statement Promote Racial and Ethnic Diversity at Rhodes

—————Promoting racial and ethnic diversity at Rhodes is important not simply for ~~the its own~~ sake ~~of diversity~~ but because ~~diversity diversity~~ is essential for the college to achieve ~~to our~~ its ideals of educational excellence, ~~our~~ to uphold its commitment to serving ~~our~~ the community, and ~~our~~ to adhere to its belief in social justice.

—————~~P~~Promoting diversity is essential ~~to our~~ for the college to achieve its ideals of educational excellence.

Rhodes strives to provide for its students an education that promotes the development of open-mindedness, integrity, wisdom, and knowledge. The college encourages the development of these faculties to achieve its purpose in support of truth, loyalty, and service. In the context of our society, Rhodes cannot achieve these ideals of educational excellence without promoting racial and ethnic diversity among its constituents.

First, Aan institution arrives at excellence in education by bringing together the best and the brightest people for teaching and learning. Because the best and brightest come from many backgrounds and places and not just a few ~~We learn through differences,~~ the college deprives its members of the full range of opportunities available to them when it fails to promote diversity. Such educational and institutional impoverishment is inconsistent with the purpose of liberal arts education in general and the mission of Rhodes in particular.

~~(This is hardly the thesis for the paragraph or section. After all, what are these ideals of educational excellence?)~~

~~(Moreover, the point is not that the best and brightest come from many places but that if you don't hire from the many places you lose something. What is that thing you lose? Why not hire from a few places?)~~

~~Second, an institution arrives at educational excellence by promoting the thoughtful exchange of ideas and opinions from as broad a base of experience as possible. In American higher education, the promotion of racial and ethnic diversity is the most meaningful and effective means of ensuring challenging dialogue.~~

~~Education Rhodes must bring people together not to hear a monologue, but to have an open dialogue about diverse ideas, opinions, and experiences.~~

~~(Does a diversity of ideas, opinions, and experiences require "racial ethnic diversity"?)~~

~~Teaching and learning at its best involves the exploration of conversation difference, requiring interaction with people other than those just like ourselves. Education is about bringing together the very best and brightest people for teaching and learning. The very best and brightest people come from many backgrounds and places, not just a few. Education is about institutions - accomplish little of enduring value unless their students are questioning deep-rooted assumptions and learning to think critically. The diversity of the participants in that context arena is essential invaluable to the educational processes for developing these faculties to ensuring educational excellence.~~

~~In short, Rhodes students who understand that excellent education promotes the full development of its participants through exploring difference will not only desire a diverse institution, they will demand it.~~

~~Promoting diversity is essential to our commitment to serving our community for the college to uphold its commitment to serving the community. We draw~~

Whereas the majority of liberal arts colleges foster the development of their students and their institutions through social and geographical isolation, Rhodes is distinctive for pursuing involvement with its
~~great strength from~~ neighborhood, its city Memphis, and its~~the surrounding~~ region. We have
For more than seventy-five years, the institution has placed itself not at the periphery but at the crossroads of commercial, political, and social interaction in order to fulfill its purpose. In the interest of that mission for truth, loyalty, and service, Rhodes has an
obligation to serve ~~our city and region~~ its community within the context of our mission as a national liberal arts college.

First, in exercising this obligation, the college must engage the resources in its community, which is historically remarkable, culturally distinctive, and ethnically diverse. To attempt to serve a community without engaging its members would be arrogant, and to strive to serve a
(How does our mission as a national college come to bear upon our local or regional obligations?)

~~Our service to the city and region~~ without recruiting and preparing its ~~calls us to help~~ prepare ~~future leaders from its~~ its ~~entire population base~~ would be foolish.

Second, in exercising its obligation, the college must challenge the assumptions of its majority students. Preparing these students for service in a community of racial minorities will be ineffective when all that these students or their mentors have ever known is the privilege that a majority culture bestows upon its members. To live in a society that is constructed for one's advancement and benefit without the experience or perspective of people on society's margins, will produce little or no sense of cultural or societal disjuncture. To receive an education without the benefit of crossing ideological or cultural boundaries will produce a sense that life in this country and this world will never and need never change. Without a diverse education, those students, those future leaders may develop a narrow-~~mindness~~ mind understanding of their community and

reject what they cannot understand. They will have no appropriate sense of service or obligation.

Rhodes students who have the benefit of learning at a diverse institution will question their assumptions, will gain new perspectives, and will serve their community.

Ultimately, these students will not only desire a diverse institution, they will demand it.

~~———— Diversity~~ Promoting diversity is essential for the college to adhere to its belief in social justice ~~to our belief in social justice.~~

The college should promote diversity because to do so is essential for achieving its ideals of educational excellence and because to do so is essential for upholding its commitment to serving the community, but are these reasons enough? Perhaps they are, but the most compelling argument for promoting diversity at Rhodes is simply because it is right.

To do what is right requires courage and conviction.

We Rhodes ~~have~~ has a long history of individual faculty, staff, and student involvement in issues of social justice. Examples of ~~individual~~ personal demonstrations of moral courage ~~are found~~ appear throughout ~~our~~ its history as a church-related college. ~~The past, however, is not enough. Pursuing truth, loyalty, and service cannot belong to a single moment or era alone. Social justice requires continuing vigilance.~~ Now is the time for ~~us~~ Rhodes to build on these individual expressions of social justice with a corporate commitment to ~~our~~ its church covenant that calls for the “effective recruitment of racial ethnic persons at every level of the college’s life.” Now is the time for Rhodes to wake up to the demands of the day.

To do what is right requires the college to promote diversity, and the institution must wait no longer to act. Justifiably, Rhodes students with courage and conviction will not only desire a diverse institution, they will demand it.

~~Conclusion~~ Promoting diversity is essential.

For the sake of educational excellence, community service, and social justice, Rhodes must act decisively and immediately to ensure racial and ethnic diversity. The report of our Diversity Task Force provides a planning guide for translating our resolve into specific action steps. Our students deserve our commitment to their future. Let the college resolve, therefore, to promote racial and ethnic diversity at all of its levels.

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