

We, the members of the St. Mary's College of Maryland Faculty Senate, write to reaffirm the rights of all of our college's community members, our institutional responsibility to them, and our commitment to protecting all members of our community. This is a moment for us to reiterate the sentiment embodied in the College's Nondiscrimination Policy: "St. Mary's College of Maryland does not discriminate or condone discrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender/gender identity and expression of color, religion, creed, age, genetic information, disability, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or marital status."

In the College's Mission and Values statement, we commit to fostering a "collaborative learning community" that values "the power of a diverse community; local, national, and global engagement; social responsibility and civic-mindedness; and civility and respect for self [and] others." Furthermore, our current Strategic Plan reaffirms our commitment to "aim toward greater diversity among students, faculty, and staff" – including racial and ethnic diversity – because we believe that "diversity brings strength." We want our students to "recognize and challenge injustice" and should be prepared to do the same ourselves. This commitment must include the protection of members of our community who enrolled in classes or sought employment in good faith and under the protection of the nation's laws. We are especially concerned for the Muslim members of our community and for those affected by the potential repealing of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA).

In keeping with these commitments, we recommend that the College register its support for the safety and security of all students, faculty, and staff, including those who may lose legal protections. We propose that the College join the Sanctuary Campus movement by offering the following assurance:

Unless compelled by law, St. Mary's College of Maryland will not enter into any agreements with federal, state, or local law enforcement agencies for the purposes of enforcing federal immigration policy or forms of discrimination that contravene our values.

When students, faculty, and staff join our community, we ask them to abide by the St. Mary's Way, which includes "examining and shaping the functional ethical values of our changing world." At this moment, the College should model what we seek to instill in our students as well as our faculty and support staff. By standing against the forces of nativism and xenophobia, we reaffirm our core values and show support for members of our community who have been, or might soon be, targeted.

Passed unanimously, 12/1/2016

Parts of this statement have been adapted from a Mount Holyoke College petition.