
A Statement of Values

The University of Missouri, as the state's major land-grant university, honors the public trust placed in it and accepts the associated accountability to the people of Missouri for its stewardship of that trust. Our duty is to acquire, create, transmit, and preserve knowledge, and to promote understanding.

We the students, faculty, and staff of MU hold the following values to be the foundation of our identity as a community. We pledge ourselves to act, in the totality of our life together, in accord with these values.

Respect

Respect for one's self and for others is the foundation of honor and the basis of integrity. A hallmark of our community is respect — for the process by which we seek truths and for those who engage in that process. Such respect is essential for nurturing the free and open discourse, exploration, and creative expression that characterize a university. Respect results in dedication to individual as well as collective expressions of truth and honesty. Respect is demonstrated by a commitment to act ethically, to welcome difference, and to engage in open exchange about both ideas and decisions.

Responsibility

A sense of responsibility requires careful reflection on one's moral obligations. Being responsible imposes the duty on us and our university to make decisions by acknowledging the context and considering consequences, both intended and unintended, of any course of action. Being responsible requires us to be thoughtful stewards of resources — accountable to ourselves, each other, and the public we serve.

Discovery

Learning requires trust in the process of discovery. Discovery often fractures existing world views and requires acceptance of uncertainty and ambiguity. Therefore, the university must support all its members in this lifelong process that is both challenging and rewarding. As we seek greater understanding and wisdom, we also recognize that knowledge itself has boundaries — what we know is not all that is.

Excellence

We aspire to an excellence that is approached through diligent effort, both individual and collective. Pursuing excellence means being satisfied with no less than the highest goals we can envision. Pursuing excellence involves being informed by regional, national, and global standards, as well as our personal expectations. We recognize and accept the sacrifices, risks, and responsibilities involved in pursuing excellence, and so we celebrate each other's successes. We commit ourselves to this process in an ethical and moral manner.

These statements are mere words until we integrate them as values in our individual lives and reflect them in our institutional policies and practices. We pledge ourselves to make them effective in the very fabric of our lives, our community, and all our relationships with others, thereby enhancing the development of individuals and the well-being of society.