

OAKLAND CITY UNIVERSITY

LIFE IN COMMUNITY STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Oakland City University founded by the General Baptists is a Christian faith-based learning community dedicated to the enhancement of intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social development for positive leadership. We are committed to being a leading faith-based University that provides a Christian learning environment preparing students for service. Together in community, we seek to glorify God by integrating faith and learning while our actions in community embrace the process of maturing in Christ.

The Life in Community Statement identifies the expectations for living in the OCU university community. This statement reflects the faith statement and social principles of the General Association of General Baptists (<http://generalbaptist.com/national-offices/about-us>). When individuals join the Oakland City University community, they freely and willingly choose to take upon themselves the responsibilities and expectations outlined in this statement. This statement is not intended to be a measure of a person's spirituality or to promote legalism. We are reminded in scripture that we are called to be free, and we believe that freedom is best expressed when we serve one another in love. (Romans 14:1–23; 1 Corinthians 8:1–13, 10:23–33)

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LOVING GOD, OTHERS, AND SELF

Because we are commanded to love God with all that we are and to love one another, relationships and behaviors which reflect such love confirm our allegiance to God and glorify to Him. (Matthew 22:36–40)

Living in daily fellowship with other Christians is a privilege and an expression of God's will and grace. In recognition of this privilege, great value is placed on the quality of relationships in our community.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COMMUNITY

The greatest expression of Life in Community and the highest principle for our relationships is love. Since God first loved us, we ought to demonstrate love toward one another. (John 13:34-35) We have identified the following specific expressions of love as being applicable to living Life in Community.

Respecting One Another: Because of the God-given worth and dignity of persons, each member of the community is expected to be sensitive to the image of God created in every person. Therefore, discrimination against others based on race, national origin, age, sex, or disability is not acceptable. Any kind of demeaning gesture, symbol, communication, threat, or act of violence directed toward another person will not be tolerated. (Colossians 3:11–14; 1 John 3:14–18)

Caring for One Another: We are responsible to come alongside those experiencing grief, discouragement, illness, tragedy, or other personal trials. Expressions of bearing one another's burdens include comfort, encouragement, consolation, and intercession. (Galatians 6:2)

Speaking the Truth in Love: A community such as ours can be strengthened by speaking the truth to each other with love (Ephesians 4:15). Problems in professional and personal relationships can be resolved constructively by confronting one another in an appropriate spirit.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR

Attributes of the Heart: As a community we seek to live in accordance with scriptural mandates as ascribed in the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Fruits of the Spirit. (Exodus 20:2–17; Matthew 5–7; Galatians 5:22-24) The attributes of the heart should reflect the fruit of the Spirit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” In contrast to encouraging these positive attributes of the heart, Scripture condemns injustice (Micah 6:8) and attitudes such as greed, jealousy, pride, lust, prejudice, and hatred (Galatians 5:19–21). Although these attitudes are sometimes difficult to discern, they can hinder relationships with God and others and lead to unacceptable behavior.

Academic Integrity and Truthfulness: As a Christ-centered University community, we apply biblical responsibilities for honesty to all forms of academic integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, and academic dishonesty are forbidden; we expect truthfulness and fidelity to be expressed in every learning context. (Luke 16:10; Ephesians 4:25)

Statement on Human Sexuality: We believe that human beings, male and female, are created in the image of God to flourish in community, and that intimate sexual relations are intended for persons in a marriage relationship between one man and one woman. We expect our university community to maintain relationships that align with this sexual ethic.

Submission to Civil Authority: In keeping with scriptural admonitions to place ourselves under the governing authorities (Romans 13:1-3), members of our university community are expected to uphold the laws of the local community, the state, and the nation. An exception would be those rare occasions in which obedience to civil authorities would require behavior that conflicts with the teaching of Scripture. Behavior resulting in arrest on or off campus is subject to review within the University’s disciplinary procedures.

UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS

In addition to subscribing to the section on Christian Responsibilities, members of the Oakland City University community voluntarily commit themselves to the following expectations of behavior. These expectations are not set forth as an index of Christian spirituality, but rather as values and commitments of the OCU community. They serve as guidelines to preserve the ethos of Life in Community. The following expectations apply to all members of the university community: the faculty, staff, and students of Oakland City University.

Worship: Corporate worship, prayer, fellowship, and instruction are essential for our community. Therefore, students, faculty, and administrators are expected to attend chapel. Faithful participation is understood as a mature response to our community goals. In addition, members of the community are encouraged to participate in the life of a local church.

Entertainment and Recreation: The University expects its members to use discretion and discernment in their choices of entertainment and recreation (some examples include media, Internet usage, and games). Each year, Student Life and the Student Government Association may sponsor a limited number of off-campus dances for the student body. The University also considers the following forms of dance as acceptable for the campus community: sanctioned folk-dances, dances that are designed to worship God, dancing at weddings, and the use of appropriate choreography in drama, musical productions, and

athletic events. Activities and entertainment that are of questionable value or diminish a person's moral sensitivity should be avoided. Consideration for others and standards of good taste are important, and all activities should be guided by this principle.

Illegal and Legal Substances: Oakland City University prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of illegal substances and the abuse or illegal use of legal substances, including prescription and over-the-counter medication.

Tobacco: Recognizing that the use of tobacco is injurious to one's physical health, the university, therefore, disapproves of the use of tobacco in any form. In addition, we promote smoke free campuses with limited locations for tobacco use.

Alcoholic Beverages: The university recognizes the potential risk to one's physical and psychological wellness in the use of alcoholic beverages. It also recognizes that use of alcoholic beverages can negatively impact life in community. Employees are asked to respect this policy on campus and off campus whenever their lives intersect with the university (e.g. at school-related events or other venues where they may encounter students in a social setting.) No alcoholic beverages will be served or consumed at any University functions or programs on or off campus.

The University affirms that the Christian Responsibilities and University Expectations outlined in the Life in Community Statement lead to responsible citizenship and positive healthy lifestyle, as well as support the fulfillment of the University mission. For students, this statement is specifically applicable for students while they are actively engaged in the educational mission of the University or are representing Oakland City University in any off-campus events. For all employees, this statement is specifically applicable during the periods of their service or employment contracts.

Non-Discrimination Policy for Employment

It is the policy of Oakland City University to provide equal employment opportunity to employees and candidates for employment. Within the parameters of the University's Life in Community Statement, there shall be no discrimination against any employee or candidate for employment due to race, national origin, sex, age, or disability. This policy is applicable to the policies governing recruitment, placement, selection, promotion, training, transfer, rates of pay and all other terms, and conditions of employment.

Compliance with this policy is the personal responsibility of all OCU employees. The University is committed to recruiting, employing, and promoting qualified members of groups who have been subjugated to systematic, institutional, and societal forms of exclusion and discrimination. Further, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, the University will cooperate fully in the implementation of applicable laws and executive orders.

Oakland City University complies with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws. Oakland City University is an equal opportunity institution. As a religious educational institution, Oakland City University is permitted under the exemptions set forth in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to prefer employees on the basis of religion.

NOTE: The contents of this document utilizes excerpts and phrases from similar documents at collegial institutions: Taylor University, Indiana Wesleyan University, Anderson University, and the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.