

Fundamental Institutional Values¹ (rev. 10/20/07)

A Muhlenberg education develops each individual's capacity for a life of leadership and service by challenging and strengthening mind, spirit, character, and community. We believe the College's faculty, students, staff, trustees, and alumni share and contribute to the following values. Accordingly, these values should guide and inform those engaged in the College's strategic planning process as we identify goals, develop strategic initiatives, and set priorities.

I. Commitment to the Life of the Mind

- We believe that liberal education integrates experiences both within and beyond the classroom, and provides students with the passion and tools for self-initiated and self-directed life-long learning.
- Muhlenberg demonstrates an unusually strong dedication to teaching. This is reflected in the faculty's rigorous intellectual standards, pedagogical expertise, and close relationships with students, and in the balance of academic challenge and personal support that we offer our students.
- We value vigorous and open-minded debate within the context of civility.
- We insist upon intellectual integrity and personal accountability.
- We value critical independent thinking and reject intellectual orthodoxy.
- We believe in the fundamental importance of research and the creation of new knowledge for the intellectual vitality of both faculty and students.
- We believe that the life of the mind embraces both analytical and creative effort.
- We believe that liberal education should nurture both the capacity for independence and the ability to work collaboratively with others.

¹ This document derives from "A Covenant of Values, Principles and Behaviors for a College of Character" developed by the Campus Climate Committee of the Muhlenberg College Board of Trustees (April, 2003), and subsequent suggestions from the President's Staff and the President's Planning Group (October - November 2003).

II. Commitment to Spirit and Character

- We acknowledge the value and power of spiritual life, as well as our individual limitations in achieving absolute understanding of truth. Accordingly, we respect and show active interest in and concern for both our own and other faith traditions, and we respect the views of those who do not identify with any faith.
- We believe that honesty, integrity, and truthfulness should characterize both our public and private behavior, and that the development of ethical standards is an important component of liberal education.
- We value the physical well being of ourselves and others, as well as the important life lessons that can be learned from healthful physical activity.
- We are committed to self-improvement and strive openly and actively for ever higher standards of excellence in all areas of endeavor.
- We realize that pushing ourselves to stretch our personal limits of knowledge and understanding will sometimes result in failure and that failure provides opportunities for personal growth.

III. Commitment to the Life of the Community - On Campus and Beyond

- We treasure a distinctive campus climate characterized by warmth, friendliness, a strong sense of community, and close relationships among students, faculty, and staff.
- We demonstrate mutual respect for differing ideas, perspectives, experiences, and personal identities.
- We strive to function as a caring community, demonstrating concern for and offering support to each other, while challenging each other to excel.
- We reject as unacceptable behavior characterized by violence, malice, disrespect, indecency, or contempt for others.
- We are committed to developing a campus culture in which fairness, equality, human diversity, and justice are successfully integrated with the healthy clash of ideas and beliefs.
- We acknowledge our obligation to be good neighbors and good citizens, particularly in the Lehigh Valley, and to improve the lives of those inside and outside our community who have less access to education and political power, fewer privileges and resources, and who bear the burden of discrimination.
- We are committed to being good citizens of the Earth, and to making institutional decisions that are mindful of our complex relations with the ecosystem.