

**Metropolitan State University of Denver**  
**Department of Nutrition**  
**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement**

Metropolitan State University of Denver acknowledges the indigenous people, the land of Auraria, and the broader Denver area.

We honor and acknowledge that we are on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Nations. This area was also the site of trade, hunting, gathering, and healing for many other Native Nations: The Lakota, Ute, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Shoshone, and others.

We recognize the Indigenous peoples as the original stewards of the land, water, plants, and animals who called this place home. As these words of acknowledgment are expressed, the ties that these nations have to their traditional homelands are renewed and reaffirmed. Let us also acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. We respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather. We pay our respect to them and give thanks to all Tribal Nations and the ancestors of this place.

We also want to recognize the community and families of Auraria displaced by the creation of this campus for MSU Denver to have a place we now call home.

In the Department of Nutrition at Metropolitan State University of Denver, we believe that a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace is one where all students, faculty and staff feel valued and respected, regardless of their sex, gender identity, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, religion, education, weight status, thought or ability. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach and provide equal opportunity for employment, student support, experience and advancement in all programs, courses and workspaces. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and ensure that all voices are valued and heard.

The Department of Nutrition at Metropolitan State University of Denver recognizes and respects that each member of its community is unique, and that diversity is both essential to and a highly valued principle of the Department as a site of work and learning. The desire for diversity in the Department of Nutrition at Metropolitan State University of Denver is the foundation of our continuing and vigorous efforts to increase the diversity of the nutrition profession, to promote equal employment opportunities, to ensure nondiscrimination in all aspects of our programs and activities, and to prevent implicit bias in all of our actions. We strive to be an inclusive Department that engages groups of diverse individuals and allows them to connect in ways that increase each participant's awareness, knowledge, and empathetic understanding to achieve exceptional results. We are committed to creating an environment where underrepresented populations have equal access to resources and opportunities to learn and grow both personally and professionally.

The Department of Nutrition at Metropolitan State University of Denver is committed to modeling diversity and inclusion for the entire nutrition and dietetics industry and to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable treatment for all. The Department of Nutrition strives to accomplish the aims below by engaging in the accompanying action items to help promote diversity and inclusion in our workplace, our profession, and as a learning environment:

- View diversity, inclusion, and equity as connected to our mission and critical to ensure the well-being of our students, faculty and staff and the communities that we serve.
  - We pursue cultural awareness throughout our programs by creating substantive and meaningful learning opportunities for faculty, staff and students.
- Acknowledge and work to dismantle inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and continually update and report on organizational progress.
  - We develop systems for intentionality and awareness of bias during the hiring, promoting, and evaluation process for faculty and staff, and during the evaluation process of students

and prospective students in our programs.

- Explore potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with inclusiveness in the field of nutrition and dietetics and help to challenge assumptions about what it takes to be a successful professional in the field of nutrition and dietetics.
  - We develop and present sessions on diversity, inclusion, and equity to provide information and resources both internally, and to external members of the nutrition and dietetics community.
- Commit time and resources to expand more diverse leadership within our student body, department and advisory bodies.
  - We develop resources and expand offerings for underrepresented students, faculty and staff by connecting with other organizations committed to diversity and inclusion efforts.
- Lead with respect and tolerance. We expect all students, faculty and staff to embrace this notion and to express it in all interactions associated with the Department of Nutrition and through everyday practices.
  - We practice inclusive leadership with an authentic commitment to diversity and inclusivity. Students perform self-assessments that include awareness in terms of learning and leadership styles, as well as cultural orientation.

The Department of Nutrition at Metropolitan State University of Denver also incorporates our focus on diversity, equity and inclusion into multiple courses across academic programs and is a part of program assessment for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) and the Dietetic Internship (DI).

The implementation of the Department of Nutrition's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement is essential to meet the core values of Metropolitan State University of Denver:

**Community:** MSU Denver is an engaged urban university that promotes mutual relationships between the University and the community, where we apply the intellectual strength of our faculty and the energy of our students to solve real-world problems. We benefit the economic health, cultural health and well-being of the community and promote the public good through the transformation of urban communities in metropolitan Denver.

**Access:** Inspired by the students we serve, many of whom are low-income or first-generation, our self-confident academic community breaks down traditional boundaries and takes responsibility for meeting the challenges of access to education in the 21st century.

**Diversity:** MSU Denver has been committed to diversity, equity and inclusive excellence since its inception. This is evidenced by our efforts to embed systemic practices to achieve a high-quality, culturally sensitive education; is reflected by our leadership, faculty, staff and students; and is woven into the fabric of our University.

**Respect:** We boldly seek a climate of mutual respect and reflection that supports different beliefs and perspectives and promotes the open exchange of ideas. Because we respect everyone, communicate effectively, promote transparency, embrace dialogue, cultivate trust and respect governance structures, we are consistently able to make decisions with a students-first mentality.

**Excellence:** MSU Denver faculty members are known for their commitment to excellence in student-centered teaching and scholarship. Staff members are dedicated to the delivery of high-quality wraparound services for all students. Roadrunners strive for excellence in all they do, embracing the challenges in front of them and rising to reach their full potential.

