

Statements of University positions on Marriage, Singleness and Family in the USMB Confession of Faith in relation to laws governing same-sex marriage. *

General Policy Statement

Fresno Pacific University welcomes all eligible students who desire an education in a multid denominational Christian setting regardless of their race, sex, sexual orientation, or religion. As a religious university founded and owned by the Mennonite Brethren Church, the university is officially guided by the U.S. Mennonite Brethren Church's Confession of Faith which endorses a traditional understanding of marriage and of chastity outside of marriage. All university employees and students commit themselves to respect the Confession of Faith, and abide by the policies and behavioral expectations of the university.

The university recognizes that other Christian institutions and denominations have, in good faith, revised their expectations regarding marriage to endorse same-sex relationships, and that it is possible for Christian bodies to disagree on this issue. The university desires to remain in relationship with these other Christian bodies wherever and to whatever extent possible.

Relationships with Partner Institutions

The educational community at Fresno Pacific University is committed to the success and well-being of all those it serves regardless of their race, sex, sexual orientation, or religion. The university invites students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives to join the FPU community and prepares them to understand, teach, and support all diverse populations. All university programs meet all applicable state and federal requirements for serving all populations.

The university desires to partner with educational and social services agencies, health care and other organizations committed to the success and well-being of all whom we serve. Additionally, the university enjoys short- and long-term relationships with a wide-range of community members and organizations. These partnerships are organized around a variety of goals and initiatives and work to advance the welfare of all individuals and groups.

Students

Fresno Pacific seeks to be a place where FPU students feel safe to pursue higher education. In support of this endeavor, the institution has designated a Safe Space Person to whom students can speak, confidentially, to seek support and understanding regarding various matters pertaining to sexuality. All Fresno Pacific students, upon admission, agree to abide to by university behavioral expectations applicable to their degree program.

Faculty/Academic Freedom

All professors and instructors are expected to teach, write and make public comments in such ways that clearly demonstrate an attitude of respect toward the university's Confession of Faith. Faculty have freedom to discuss controversial matters, including expressions of personal viewpoints on matters related to sexual orientation, gender identity and same-sex marriage, including views which may vary from the university's Confession of Faith, as these discussions relate to subject matter appropriate to their courses and other professional assignments with the university. All conversations shall demonstrate mutual respect and graciousness toward others who may or may not share the same views of the Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith. When making public statements on controversial matters, all professors should be clear they are not speaking on behalf of their School or for the University.

*Statements are in response to a Board resolution in October 2015.

FPU Board of Trustees Resolution MB Confession of Faith on Marriage, Singleness & Family October 23, 2015

The Board of Trustees of Fresno Pacific University affirms its commitment to the MB Confession of Faith statement on Marriage, Singleness and Family.

The Board instructs the university administration to draft a concise policy statement that (a) warmly embraces the desire and commitment of the university to educate and serve diverse students who are supportive of the FPU mission, including LGBT students, and that (b) recognizes the MB Confession of Faith statement as the behavioral standard for all employees of the university.

The Board further directs the administration to involve appropriate members of the university community who may be helpful in producing a wise policy statement that is clear but reflects gracious Christianity, to review the statement with legal counsel, and to present it to the Executive Committee of the Board for review prior to the next Board meeting. The Executive Committee shall forward their approved version to the Board for discussion at its next full meeting.

February 26, 2016: Board of Trustees, approved pending legal review and Board Exec final approval

March 2016: Legal review, approved

March 28, 2016: Distributed with permission of Board Chair

April 5, 2016: Reviewed in sessions with faculty, minor revisions suggested

May 10, 2016 Approved to submit to Board Executive with suggested revisions

May 31, 2016 Approved by Board Executive