



# OMEKO

## Graduate Medical Education Policy

Approved by the GMEC (Graduate Medical Education Committee) on July 1, 2020

Effective Date: July 1, 2020

Review Date: May 2021

Next Review Date: May 2023

**Policy Title:** Graduate Medical Education (GME) Diversity Policy

**Purpose:** To describe the methods of diversity for residents and fellows.

**Policy Type:** Sponsoring Institution/Sponsored Program Policy

### Background:

Oklahoma has a population of approximately 3.9 million and is a largely rural state. Oklahoma has the second highest proportion of American Indian individuals within the United States at 13.2% and African Americans represent a plurality of the population within rural geographic centers. Ethnically, Latinos make up 18.7% of the population and current estimates indicate 3.8% of the total population identifies as LGBTQ+. The foremost challenge facing Oklahoma communities is improving the health of residents with rural communities across the state facing a myriad of challenges, from an aging population with minimal access to healthcare, to limited opportunities for economic growth. The care continuum (i.e., prevention, screening, and treatment) and public health infrastructure is often unreliable to rural areas. Geographic isolation and poverty may increase the need for basic human services and further confound disease prevention, continuation in, and linkages to care.

In Oklahoma there remains a critical public health need to address vulnerable populations in rural, underserved areas through the enhancement of the medical and public health infrastructure. Oklahoma consistently ranks poorly in basic health indicators, including infant mortality, obesity, substance use, mental health, and access to health care services. These issues manifest in a variety of ways, but the magnitude can be encapsulated in life expectancy. Three Oklahoma rural communities rank in the bottom seven nationally for expected years of life—approximately 20 years less than the national average. Promoting and achieving health equity in Oklahoma communities requires a multidimensional, multidisciplinary approach.

### OSU Diversity Statement

*Oklahoma State University is a land-grant institution committed to excellence in diversity and inclusion. We strive to maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment that appreciates and values all members of the University community. We define diversity as engagement in meaningful actions, behaviors, and conversations that reflect a commitment to recognizing, understanding, and respecting the differences among students, faculty, staff, and visitors throughout the OSU system. We do not condone acts, behavior, language, or symbols that represent or reflect intolerance or discrimination. OSU is dedicated to cultivating*

*and enriching the competitive advantages that diversity and inclusion provides all members of the University community. We identify diversity as a quality-of-life issue, as well as an important economic driver for the prosperity and well-being of the state, nation, and world.*

**Policy:**

Oklahoma State University—Center for Health Sciences, which encompasses the College of Osteopathic Medicine and Graduate Medical Education, is an institution of medical education, healthcare, and research for the state of Oklahoma. As a land-grant institution, we strive to improve the health and well-being of Oklahomans as a means of achieving health equity. In doing so, we seek to engage and recruit physicians from a myriad of backgrounds that includes a variety of ages, races, ethnicities, colors, religions, sexes, sexual orientations, genetic information, genders, gender identities and expressions, national origins, disability status and veteran status. Understanding the social and economic contexts within Oklahoma, we aim to recruit residents/fellows from socioeconomically and educationally disadvantaged rural areas of the United States.

Our endeavors are congruent with the strategic plans of Oklahoma State University—Center for Health Sciences and the larger Oklahoma State University system, demonstrating our commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusions in all its forms. A body of diverse residents/fellows, faculty, and staff greatly enriches the educational, research, and practice missions of the University while ensuring we fulfill our land-grant mission of improving the health and well-being of Oklahomans.