



Lincoln Memorial University
Response to the Florida Commissioner of Education
September 14, 2026

Institutional Commitment to Academic Excellence, Student Success, and the Public Good

Lincoln Memorial University (LMU) is committed to providing a rigorous, accessible, and student-centered education that prepares graduates for meaningful careers, responsible citizenship, and continued intellectual and professional development.

In response to the August 18, 2026, communication from Dr. Henry Mack, Florida Commissioner of Education, LMU reaffirms its commitment to the principles of academic excellence, intellectual inquiry, student success, institutional accountability, and service to the communities in which it operates.

The University recognizes that higher education has an important responsibility to students, employers, communities, and the public. Accordingly, LMU is committed to the following principles and practices.

1. Transparent and Merit-Based Admissions

LMU is committed to transparent admissions practices that are consistent with applicable law and institutional policy. The University clearly communicates admission requirements and criteria to prospective students, evaluates applicants according to the requirements applicable to their academic program and level of study, and supports consistent implementation through internal monitoring and staff development. LMU's admissions processes are designed to provide prospective students with clear information regarding academic requirements, application procedures, and enrollment expectations. LMU evaluates applicants on academic preparation, program-specific competencies, and professional potential, without regard to political or ideological considerations.

The University also maintains admissions practices that are fair, transparent, and focused on the qualifications and preparation necessary for students to succeed in their chosen programs. The

examples of admissions policies linked below contain clear criteria and requirements for regular, conditional, transfer, and international student admissions, demonstrating the university's commitment to these principles:

[BSN Admissions](#)

[LMU-Tampa PA Admissions](#)

[DO Admissions \(LMU-Orange Park\)](#)

[DVM Admissions \(LMU-Orange Park\)](#)

2. Free Inquiry, Viewpoint Diversity, and an Environment Conducive to Learning

LMU recognizes the importance of free inquiry, intellectual engagement, and respectful exchange of ideas within an academic community. The University supports an environment in which students and faculty can engage seriously with differing perspectives while maintaining appropriate standards of civility, academic conduct, and respect for members of the University community.

The [*Railsplitter Community Standards Guide*](#), to which all students are subject, prohibits and outlines sanctions for abuse, arson, bullying and harassment, damage to property, disorderly conduct, unauthorized entry, and violation of any local, state, or federal law. Similarly, the *LMU Employee Handbook* includes the university's commitment to fostering "an atmosphere of professional behavior based on mutual trust and respect among employees and between employees and students." To that end, it prohibits (for example) and outlines sanctions for "engaging in activities that provide a conflict of interest with [an employee's] university functions and/or use of professional authority to exploit others," "coerc[ing] students politically, socially, religiously, financially, or academically," "disparag[ing] other employees or students to the public." It requires that employees "show respect for the opinions of others," "respect and defend the free inquiry of colleagues," that faculty "support the legitimate expression of academic freedom of their colleagues, even if they do not agree with the position taken by a colleague," and "maintain objectivity in evaluating the competence and productivity of colleagues." The *Handbook* affirms the right and responsibility of all employees to "the opportunity for free inquiry and the free exchange of ideas in their subject areas." It requires faculty to "uphold and obey local, state, and federal laws" and affirms their right to "express

their views and to participate in the political and social issues of the community as individuals. However, when they speak or act in their capacity as private citizens, faculty must not speak for or represent the University and must not give the impression that they speak for or represent the University” or perform “unethical actions in the community.”

LMU maintains policies and procedures addressing student and employee conduct, harassment, disruption, and other conduct that interferes with the University's educational mission or the rights of others. The University is committed to ensuring that academic and campus operations can continue in an environment conducive to teaching, learning, research, and student development.

3. Intellectual Pluralism in Curriculum and Faculty Hiring

LMU is committed to promoting a rich campus intellectual climate that encourages students to engage with a broad range of ideas, perspectives, methodologies, and intellectual traditions appropriate to their fields of study.

The University's academic programs are developed and reviewed through established academic governance processes designed to ensure that curricula support the University’s mission and the educational needs of students, program objectives, institutional learning outcomes, academic rigor, and all applicable accreditation requirements. The academic program approval process begins with development and approval at the College or School level, then is subsequently elevated to the University Academic Council, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, President, and Board of Trustees.

As indicated in the *Employee Handbook*, LMU seeks qualified faculty members whose prior experience and professional references demonstrate teaching effectiveness, continuous professional development, a commitment to University service, positive professional relationships with colleagues, a commitment to the University's stated mission and purpose, and a commitment to scholarly research, grant development, publication, and/or other creative achievements. Faculty recruitment and appointment processes are conducted in accordance with applicable University policies and law. As outlined in a prior section, the *Handbook* affirms

faculty members' responsibility to show respect for the opinions of others, defend the free inquiry of colleagues, and not coerce students politically, socially, religiously, financially, or academically.

4. Affordability, Cost Discipline, Pricing Transparency, and Student Outcomes

LMU recognizes that the cost of higher education is an important consideration for students and families. The University is committed to providing prospective and current students with clear information concerning tuition, fees, financial aid, the true cost of attendance, and to ensuring students are equipped to pay student loans. LMU continually evaluates its resources and expenditures in support of its educational mission and seeks to use institutional resources responsibly, investing in high-demand programs and revising or eliminating those that are under-enrolled. The links below provide evidence of the University's transparency in publishing the cost of attendance for its programs:

[Undergraduate Tuition and Fees](#)

[Graduate and Professional Tuition and Fees](#)

As illustrated in its [Student Achievement Data](#), the University remains focused on student outcomes, including retention, completion, career preparation, graduate education, professional licensure where applicable, alumni satisfaction, and other measures of student success. As stated in its mission, "LMU is a comprehensive values-based learning community dedicated to providing quality educational experiences at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. The University strives to give students a foundation for a more productive life by upholding the principles of Abraham Lincoln's life: a dedication to individual liberty, responsibility, and improvement; a respect for citizenship; recognition of the intrinsic value of high moral and ethical standards; and a belief in a personal God."

5. Academic Rigor, Assessment, and the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence

LMU is committed to maintaining appropriate academic standards and ensuring that students demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes associated with their courses and programs. The curriculum approval process outlined in a prior section illustrates LMU's process for ensuring appropriate academic rigor in each of its academic programs. To help ensure the

integrity of student grades and prevent grade inflation, all LMU academic programs engage in an annual assessment process (described in the [LMU Assessment and Evaluation Policy](#)) that evaluates program effectiveness based on student performance on published outcomes for each one. Approximately two-thirds of LMU's programs utilize a nationally normed competency or standardized comprehensive exam as part of that process, and many (especially in healthcare disciplines) prepare students for a Board exam required for licensure. Graduate performance on such exams speaks directly to the level of preparation students receive. As part of the annual assessment process, academic leaders in these programs continuously monitor pass rates for any potential discrepancies with assessment of student performance throughout their programs.

While preserving some AI-free learning experiences, the University also seeks to ensure that emerging technologies are incorporated, when appropriate, in ways that support learning while maintaining meaningful standards for student achievement and academic integrity. The University maintains an [Academic Integrity Policy](#) that outlines its expectation that academic work reflects genuine student learning and maintains academic integrity standards governing student work, assessment, and scholarly activities. The policy addresses artificial intelligence, and LMU recognizes the need to continuously monitor this and other academic policies as technology evolves. As evidenced in part by the “Student AI Literacy” Canvas training module provided for new students and Generative AI Literacy and Fluency course available to faculty, the University is committed to helping faculty and students understand the appropriate use of artificial intelligence while preserving the integrity and validity of academic assessment.

6. Serving Students and Addressing Workforce Needs

As stated in its [mission](#), LMU is committed to serving students by providing a “foundation for a more productive life” by preparing graduates to meet the needs of the communities and workforce sectors in which they will live and work. Through the annual academic program assessment process outlined in a prior section, Program Advisory Boards, and ongoing feedback from (for example) leadership in the multiple healthcare settings in which students complete clinical rotations, LMU continuously evaluates its academic programs in relation to student demand, disciplinary and professional expectations, available employment opportunities, and the needs of communities and employers.

In addition to the assistance students receive from their academic programs, LMU provides University-level [Career Services](#) designed to help students transition successfully from higher education into employment or further education. These services are available to LMU alumni for life and include career counseling, cover letter/resume assistance, interview preparation, and job search guidance.

For programs serving Florida students and workforce needs, the University is committed to aligning its educational offerings, where appropriate, with the evolving needs of Florida's communities, employers, and workforce. This is evident in the high-demand programs offered in the state (Nursing, Osteopathic Medicine, and Veterinary Medicine) and the robust community relationships each program has established.

7. Research Integrity and Protection from Malign Foreign Influence

LMU is committed to protecting the integrity of its academic and research activities from inappropriate foreign influence and other activities that could compromise academic integrity, research security, institutional interests, or compliance with applicable law.

The University maintains appropriate oversight of research, international activities, conflicts of interest, and other areas subject to applicable federal, state, and institutional requirements, mainly through its [Office of Research, Grants, and Sponsored Programs](#) (ORGSP). For example, the ORGSP policy on “[Sponsored International Research Collaboration](#)” mandates compliance with all federal, non-federal, and international regulations and requires training for individuals who seek to engage in sponsored international research. It also prohibits engagement “in research collaborations with foreign entities identified by the United States Secretary of State’s list of the ‘Country of Particular Concern List,’ ‘Special Watch List Countries,’ and ‘Entities of Particular Concern’” and/or “collaboration with persons or institutions in sanctioned entities is prohibited.” In addition to robust review of all contracts, rejections of gifts with inappropriate conditions, full Section 117 disclosures, and ongoing training of research personnel, this is only one aspect of ORGSP’s ongoing effort to ensure the integrity of all research associated with LMU and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Conclusion

Lincoln Memorial University recognizes that restoring public trust in higher education depends upon institutions demonstrating their commitment to student success through meaningful policies, responsible stewardship, measurable outcomes, and continued accountability.

Recognizing this call to action as an opportunity for self-reflection, the University therefore reaffirms its commitment to “providing quality educational experiences at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels” through rigorous academic programs, intellectual inquiry, academic integrity, responsible stewardship of institutional resources, student success, workforce preparation, and service to the public good. The University will continue to evaluate its policies and practices to ensure that they support these commitments and the educational needs of the students and communities it serves.

Lincoln Memorial University

Approved by: President Jason McConnell, DBA, MBA

Date: September 9, 2026