

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NAGAP Condemns U.S. Department of Education's Attack on Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education

February 17, 2025 – As the leading organization for graduate enrollment management professionals, NAGAP, The Association for Graduate Enrollment Management, strongly condemns the recent *Dear Colleague* letter issued by the U.S. Department of Education. This directive misinterprets the mission of higher education and represents an alarming attack on the foundational values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our institutions.

NAGAP has always been proactive in its commitment to fostering diversity and inclusiveness within our membership, profession, and all our activities. Our commitment embraces differences across age, culture, disability, ability, education, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, life experiences, immigration status, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Furthermore, we believe that diversity strengthens institutions by broadening perspectives, enhancing learning experiences, and cultivating inclusive environments that benefit all students.

The *Dear Colleague* letter misrepresents efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by conflating these principles with racial discrimination. It disregards the well-established benefits of diverse learning environments and seeks to undermine institutional commitments to equity-driven practices. The suggestion that institutions cannot consider the lived experiences of students in the admissions process runs counter to decades of research demonstrating the value of holistic admissions in fostering diverse and dynamic learning communities.

Diversity in graduate education is not about exclusion—it is about access, opportunity, and ensuring that every qualified student, regardless of background, has the ability to succeed in higher education. The Department of Education's directive ignores the structural barriers that have historically disadvantaged underrepresented students and seeks to curtail efforts aimed at addressing inequities in educational access.

NAGAP stands firmly with institutions of higher education that are committed to diversity and inclusion. We will continue to support research, best practices, and policies that champion equity in graduate enrollment management. We urge institutions to reject the harmful implications of this directive and reaffirm their dedication to fostering inclusive academic environments.

We call on the U.S. Department of Education to reconsider this approach and to work collaboratively with higher education leaders to support policies that enhance educational access and excellence for all students.

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About NAGAP:

NAGAP, The Association for Graduate Enrollment Management is the only professional organization devoted exclusively to the concerns of individuals working in the Graduate Enrollment Management context. Our mission is to engage and advance Graduate Enrollment Management professionals by promoting excellence and collaboration through education, research, and professional development.