



## **Policy on Discrimination**

The American Welding Society is committed to being an instructional content provider that is racially and culturally diverse, that values mutual respect, human dignity and individual differences, and that is supportive of intellectual, artistic and professional growth.

These benefits are compromised when individuals or groups within the community engage in acts of discrimination and discriminatory harassment as well as coercion against other individuals or groups, including intimidation by threats and/or acts of violence or personal vilification on the basis of race, color, religion, religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status or other personal attributes. Such acts undermine the fundamental values of the entire community and contribute to a hostile environment which may limit or deny access to the educational process, not just for those subjected to such acts but to the community as a whole. Acts of discrimination including discriminatory harassment are prohibited.

This policy is not intended to discourage the expression of ideas that, while they may be offensive, are protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

Speech or other expression constitutes discriminatory harassment if:

- It deliberately insults, stigmatizes, threatens or intimidates an individual or small group of specific individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status or other personal attributes; and
- It is addressed directly to the specific individual or individuals who it insults, stigmatizes, threatens or intimidates; and
- It makes use of "fighting words" or non-verbal symbols.

In the context of discriminatory harassment, "fighting words" or non-verbal symbols are words, pictures or symbols that are, as a matter of common knowledge, understood to convey direct hatred or contempt for human beings and that by their very use inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace.

Individuals who believe they have been subject to discrimination in violation of this policy may obtain redress through communication with the American Welding Society.