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teaching & learning

Diversity Statement Examples

As a reader, consider: What is memorable? What themes do you observe? What active role does the author take? Does the author take a passive role? What did the author learn?

Anthropology (The Professor Is In)

Doing my Ph.D. at the University of Hawaii was for me, a suburban haole girl from Pittsburgh, a trial by fire in American race politics. During my time in graduate school the Hawaiian sovereignty movement took off, and I became acutely aware of the charged history of white presence on the islands. The anthropology department was deeply (although mostly unwillingly) implicated in this politics, and by the time I finished my Ph.D., I had been well-schooled in the mutual enmeshment of anthropology as a discipline and the history and epistemologies of colonialism. My teaching and research could not remain unaffected by this understanding.

...The classroom teaching experience I gained in Hawaii taught me the challenges and opportunities of managing a multiethnic classroom. Speaking in broad generalizations, I had to learn how to keep the white students from dominating all classroom discussion. And I had to learn how to create space to Native Hawaiian students to express their tentative but critical perspectives. None of these things happened without conscious effort; I had to critically examine what I was teaching. Did the content of the course thoughtlessly reproduce the standard of white and Western model of legitimate knowledge? Did my teaching methods squelch challenges to my authority, or did I open up a space for critiques and questions?

Biology (UC San Diego Sample Statements)

My future plans for promoting diversity and inclusion in the context of a Teaching Professor position include:

Research:

- Publishing the results of the “Creating an Inclusive Classroom” TA training workshops.
- Studying and publishing the effects of study group interventions in BILD 3 (see Research Statement).

Teaching:

- Employing the teaching methods described above to ensure equity and inclusion in my classrooms.

Service:

- Continuing my involvement with organizations that promote diversity in STEM fields: Association for Women in Science (AWIS), IRACDA, and the UCSD MARC program).
- Continuing to foster relationships between UCSD and local minority serving institutions such as City College.
- Engaging in community outreach by teaching Student Tech K-12 workshops.
- Helping recruit underrepresented minority students for UCSD graduate programs by contributing to the SACNAS conference.

I have taught many subjects in biology, to adults and teenagers, to single mothers and Ivy League first-year students, in small seminars and large classrooms. Still, my approach to teaching is grounded in the perspective I gained during my first year as a teacher in El Salvador and the lessons I learned there: Make the subject fun. Show your students you care about their learning. Be creative and try different techniques until you reach the students who don't sit at the front of the class. Understand that your experience is different from that of your students. Be explicit about the criteria for success. Show respect and work hard, and expect respect and hard work in return.

Engineering (UC San Diego Sample Statements)

I am well aware that being a scientist or researcher does not mean just being successful in research. At the same time, one should be excellent in his/her interactions with the community and the students, in his/her role to lead the academic society and in responsibilities to transform the community. To this end, I have been engaged in several volunteer activities, such as, tutoring in high schools to attract especially female students' attention to science and math, guiding and encouraging female students from my undergraduate school, to apply to graduate school, and mentoring younger female scientists through the Women in Engineering network. At University X, I mentor a female, minority undergraduate student for her undergraduate research project. I train her on building and characterizing on for studying. Next year, she will pursue her own research project on designing and developing, which will possibly lead to a journal publication. Hopefully, her research experience will carry her to one of the top graduate schools in US.

Literature/Linguistics (UC Merced Statement)

I later became a McNair scholar, a post-baccalaureate achievement program designed to prepare underrepresented and underserved students for graduate school. This federally funded program serves low-income, first-generation, and underserved students preparing for post-undergraduate doctoral work. It was because of this program and its mentorship support that I went on to earn a Ph.D. in Literature & Linguistics, focusing specifically on underrepresented texts in the field. In Graduate School, I was able to "pay it forward" by becoming a McNair Graduate Fellow; I designed and lead grad school preparation courses for a new generation of McNair Scholars, and mentored students across STEM-Health, Sociology, and Humanities fields. In facilitating their research projects and meeting with them weekly, my students have taught me much about their disciplines and have impressed me with the complexity, depth, and curiosity found in their various research questions.

...In my administrative work, I am co-facilitator of our campus' Collaborative Racial Healing Learning Community for faculty and staff, supported through a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the Office of Diversity & Inclusion. As a learning community, our shared goal is to identify historical wounds related to race, whether located in broader national narratives or more locally, as in the context of our campus. As an initial participant of the pilot program's launch in 2017-18, I conducted needs assessment with the group and made changes to the curriculum for 2018-19 to heighten the program's impact and increase participant engagement by offering more opportunities for self-efficacy. I have also served as a member of the 2017-18 Faculty Development Subcommittee of the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee to the Vice President for Diversity & Inclusion. Through this work I helped develop strategic planning to support faculty initiatives and dialogues around recognition and redressing of racism and bias across campus.