

Script for Module – Writing and Evaluating Statements of Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

INTRODUCTION

This module offers tips and tools for writing a statement about your contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion for your merit or promotional review. It will also help you develop a rubric for evaluating such statements when they appear in your colleagues' dossiers.

Statements of Contributions to DEI are voluntary documents for use in your dossier. However, it is the University of California's mandate that we recognize these contributions in personnel reviews because this work is integral to our roles as faculty.

The components of the module are listed on the left. The first section provides some background on why we are providing this module, and why it is important to recognize contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the personnel review process.

Next, the module offers some tips for writing an effective DEI statement.

Finally, you will have a chance to evaluate a few sample DEI statements.

Click the sound bars and complete the tasks on the screen in order to progress through the module. Also, look for links to the resources as you move through each lesson.

PART I

[Part I: Inclusive Excellence]

Why should we recognize DEI contributions in the merit and promotion process?

As faculty, we have a responsibility to respect the diversity of our students and colleagues, strive toward equity in our professions, and work toward making the university a more inclusive environment for students, staff, and faculty.

These efforts have not always been recognized in the faculty personnel process. As the 2021 American Council on Education report on "Equity-Minded Faculty Workloads" explains, "Faculty from historically minoritized groups are disproportionately called upon to do diversity work and mentoring, while women faculty do more teaching and service. These activities are vital to the functioning of the university, yet are often invisible and unrewarded, leading to lower productivity and decreased retention."

Recognizing faculty contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion can result in a more equitable personnel review process by highlighting the otherwise "invisible labor" that is

essential to the work of the university. Acknowledging and rewarding these accomplishments can help create a climate where all faculty feel valued.

Ultimately, recognizing contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion helps UC Davis strive toward Inclusive Excellence, which is the acknowledgement that an institution's success depends on how well it values and engages its rich diversity of students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Fostering diversity and inclusion promotes excellence by “embracing innovation and creativity, welcoming challenges to received wisdom or traditional knowledge, increasing the visibility of our dedication to the free pursuit of truth, [and] inspiring students to have high aspirations and to explore new ideas.”

[Part I: UC Davis Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Vision]

Finally, recognizing faculty contributions to diversity is essential to UC Davis' 2017 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Vision.

While this module speaks to all five of the Strategic Vision goals, it is particularly relevant for addressing Goal #4, which is to “Promote diversity and inclusion in research, teaching, public service, and training across campus and in neighboring communities.”

One of the Action Items identified to further this goal is to “Fulfill the promise of APM 210-1(d) by promoting and rewarding ‘contributions in all areas of...achievement that promote equal opportunity and diversity...including efforts to advance equitable access to education, public service that [addresses] the needs of California’s diverse population, or research... that highlights inequalities.”

[Part I: The University of California’s historic promise]

“I think the UC system and specifically UC Davis does a very stellar job at ensuring diversity in admissions. We have a huge diverse population in terms of our freshman class every year. But I think one place that a lot of universities including ours to an extent fall short is actually accounting for the diverse concerns that come with diverse students.”

UC Davis is first and foremost an institution of learning, teaching, research, and public service. As faculty at a public, land-grant institution, we have a responsibility to serve the population of the state of California.

[Part I: Defining diversity, equity, and inclusion]

The UC Davis Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Vision states that “Diversity—a defining feature of California’s past, present and future — refers to the variety of personal experiences, values and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language,

abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geographic region and more.”

By Inclusion, we mean “the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued as a fully participating member. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. Inclusion integrates the fact of diversity and embeds it into the core academic mission and institutional functioning.”

Equity refers to “the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all students, faculty and staff, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations, and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.”

[Part I: The UC Academic Personnel Manual]

Since 2015, the University of California Academic Personnel Manual 210-1-d has included the following stipulation: “Contributions in all areas of faculty achievement that promote equal opportunity and diversity should be given due recognition in the academic personnel process, and they should be evaluated and credited in the same way as other faculty achievements.”

Contributions to DEI, therefore, do not require a new category of evaluation. Whether writing your own statement or evaluating a colleague’s statement, consider whether the DEI contributions belong in the research bin, the teaching bin, or the service bin.

Making contributions to diversity, equity, or inclusion that far exceed expectations, when combined with an overall strong record, may result in an additional half-step advancement for recognition of these contributions in the category of research, teaching, or service, in accordance with Step Plus guidelines.

[Part I: What are the Expectations?]

For any university that strives toward inclusive excellence, the expectations are that its faculty

- nurture merit, talent, and achievement
- support diversity and equal opportunity
- and help to remove barriers for talented students, faculty, and staff from historically underrepresented groups

Some people’s contributions to DEI clearly exceed the basic expectations of faculty. How should we assess whether these contributions meet, exceed, or far exceed the expectations?

A statement describing contributions that meet expectations may demonstrate the candidate's awareness of the university's commitment to DEI, but it may describe activities that fall within the normal responsibilities of research, teaching, or service.

A statement demonstrating contributions that exceed expectations may discuss the ways in which the candidate went beyond what is expected of them as a faculty member to make a specific contribution to DEI through their research, teaching, or service.

A statement demonstrating contributions that far exceed expectations may discuss the ways in which the candidate went above and beyond to make significant contributions to DEI through their research, teaching, or service; in particular, the statement may demonstrate impactful contributions that likely would not have occurred without the faculty's tremendous effort or leadership.

It is essential to our mission as faculty to ensure equity and fairness in the classroom, in the lab, in the field, or any space where we supervise and inspire students and fellow scholars. This charge is similar to the Hippocratic oath for doctors.

[Part I: UC Davis Faculty Perspectives]

Many faculty have been encouraged to submit voluntary Statements of Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as part of their merit and promotion dossiers. However, faculty may not have clear guidelines on how to write these statements, and many faculty, Deans, and Faculty Personnel Committees may not have a clear understanding of how they should evaluate them.

According to UC Davis' 2021 COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey, 58 percent of faculty indicated that they did not agree that their colleagues had the ability to evaluate faculty contributions to diversity. The consequence is that the statements are often ignored or not given adequate weight in the academic personnel process.

While DEI Statements are voluntary, it is the university's stated policy that contributions to DEI should be given "due recognition" in the personnel process.

"Diversity issues in teaching, research, and faculty administrative operations are fundamentally important in a land grant university of our multi-community state. The knowledge of how faculty consider these issues is critical to evaluation of their success at, and value to, our campus within the context of the multi-cultural campus atmosphere of students, staff, Senate faculty and Federation members, visitors, and administrators."

- UC Davis Professor of Humanities

[Quiz: Understanding the use of DEI statements]

PART II

[Part II: General Guidelines for Writing DEI Statements]

This section of the module provides some guidelines for writing an effective statement of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion for your merit or promotion dossier. Here are some general tips:

Clearly describe your achievements and accomplishments regarding contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Provide specific examples.

Demonstrate awareness of the DEI issues that your work addresses. What inequities or issues does your work tackle? What is the broader context for the work you are doing?

Explain the impact or outcome of these achievements and accomplishments, or explain how your contributions can lead toward a particular impact or outcome over the long term.

Show how your achievements and accomplishments go beyond the customary expectations of faculty or entail extraordinary effort or commitment on your part. How does this work expand on your role as a professor or scholar?

Indicate how your contributions to DEI relate to your research and creative work, teaching and mentoring, or university and public service. Just as you do in your Candidate's Statement, be clear about how you categorize your DEI work in accordance with the APM.

If your department has a rubric for evaluating DEI statements, consider using it as a guide for writing your statement. Ask yourself: what kinds of DEI activities make a specific contribution to your field or discipline?

[Part II: Research and Creative Work]

"A scholar can contribute to DEI by asking the right research questions that are responsive to the needs of a broader community, and being ethical and engaging with those communities to ensure that they are in partnership with us rather than subjects of study."

- UC Davis Professor of Social Sciences

[Part II: Teaching and mentoring]

"I would love to see just more acknowledgement from professors on the fact that students come from different backgrounds, they have different challenges in their daily lives. Some students are wealthier than other students. The student that is less wealthy might be working two jobs on top of school and that's definitely going to put them at a

disadvantage when it comes to their performance in the class. So, I would love to see more acknowledgement from faculty on the different problems and needs that students have and how not everybody is coming in on an equal playing field, and it is important to assure that every student has the support that they need to bridge that gap and succeed.”

[Part II: University and Public Service]

[Part II Exercise: Categorize DEI Contributions]

[Part II: Sample Statement: Outreach]

These examples of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in terms of research and creative work, teaching and mentoring, and university and public service may sound familiar. Many of us already do this work, although we may not have articulated this as contributions to DEI in our candidate statements for merits and promotions. We hope this module offers some ideas for how you can do so for your next personnel review. Let’s take a look at an example of an effective DEI statement.

“The most unique feature of my diversity activities has been an outreach effort to underrepresented students at a high school in West Sacramento. This project began several years ago, when I organized and taught a one month paid summer internship program, supported at the level of about \$20,000/year by a federal high school apprenticeship program.

This project brought 5-10 high school students to the UCD campus for a one-month program in computational physics. For the past four years, I have continued the project with a somewhat increased level of funding (\$25,000/year) now from a national institute for science education. The higher level of support allows us to recruit 10-12 students per year. Last summer we added a laboratory component to what had previously been an exclusively computational program: in parallel with writing python codes for simulations of disordered magnets, the students constructed a magnetic/superconducting levitated train.

The high school has a diverse population including many students from under-represented groups (White 37%, Hispanic 36%, Asian 12%, African American 7%, Filipino 3%, Native American/Alaskan native 2%, Pacific Islander 1%). One of the goals of this apprenticeship program is to serve a community which does not otherwise have such opportunities.”

- Professor of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

This statement describes contributions to DEI that far exceed expectations of UC faculty. While general support for the university’s mission to serve the diverse populations of California are expected of faculty, this person went above these

expectations to engage directly with K-12 outreach initiatives. Furthermore, this work entailed extraordinary effort and leadership.

First, this statement shows clear evidence of specific achievements and accomplishments.

The statement also demonstrates an awareness of how this work relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts broadly, for example, by explaining how the project is designed to “serve a community which does not otherwise have such opportunities.”

One of the characteristics of a good DEI statement is its ability to clearly explain the impact or outcome of the professor’s achievements and accomplishments. This statement shows the impact of these outreach efforts, not only in terms of the increased funding and numbers of students recruited into the program, but also in terms of the students’ own accomplishments as a result of their participation in the program.

Given that the outreach efforts targeted high school students, this statement describes contributions to university and public service.

[Part II Exercise: Plan Your DEI Statement]

PART III

[Part III: Evaluating Sample DEI Statements; Instructions]

When evaluating your colleagues’ Contributions to DEI Statements, you should consider the criteria laid out in APM-210-1-d, as well as the specific needs or expectations of your department or program. You may want to work with your colleagues to create a rubric to be used by the entire department.

In this segment of this module, you will be asked to evaluate some sample Statements of Contributions to DEI. Please follow these instructions:

- Review the statement
- Answer a series of questions about the statement
- After you answer the questions, compare your overall assessment with the feedback provided

[Part III: Case Study: Cultures through Food]

I believe that inclusivity in the classroom fosters students learning, and that the classroom should be a safe, open, and encouraging environment for students to express their identities, ideas, and worldviews. I encourage students to explore areas of food science and food history that relate to their families and cultures through course assignments.

“One assignment asks students to interview their grandparents (or any person from that generation) to understand the difference between what their grandparents ate when they were young and what the students eat today. Students presented their projects, and often their dishes, to the class. Doing so gave them an opportunity to share their heritage or culture with the other students in the class. To emphasize the importance of sharing cultures through food, I took the students to a local restaurant that serves the same dishes my grandmother made when I was a child.

Course evaluations show that these activities made students feel more welcomed and included. Many students expressed their appreciation for learning about their classmates’ cultures through food and family stories. I created a blog where students can share their recipes and stories with each other and with the general public.”

- UC Davis Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Professor

Analysis and Feedback

The statement discussed specific teaching activities, including a class assignment, a field trip to a restaurant, and the creation of the blog. The candidate demonstrated a clear understanding of how exposure to diverse cultures can create a more inclusive, nurturing environment for diverse students. The impact of the assignment was clear in the discussion of the students’ positive responses on course evaluations and the blog.

While creating a classroom environment welcoming to all students is certainly expected of UC faculty, the professor’s contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion may have exceeded expectations by designing a unique assignment that directly engaged students’ diverse cultures and then extending the assignment beyond the classroom by bringing students to the restaurant and creating the blog.

However, these accomplishments pertain only to one course, and they do not clearly demonstrate that the candidate far exceeded expectations through tremendous effort or commitment.

[Part III: Case Study: Inclusive Voting Surveys]

I conduct statistical research on voting patterns. While I was working on an earlier project, I noticed that there is a big gap in representation of women, especially women from historically underrepresented groups, in existing literature. As my primary goal is to document the role of social pressure in voting patterns broadly, and as other research indicates that many women experience “incomplete freedom” at the ballot box, I knew I had to change my research protocol to ensure greater subject representation with regard to gender, ethnicity, and class.

I worked with both voters' rights organizations and community women's organizations to locate research subjects previously excluded from these surveys. Last year, I published my findings in the nation's top journal of social statistics.

For the past year, I have also been serving as a mentor for a student in the McNair Scholars Program, which guides students who are first-generation, low-income, or students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups toward earning a PhD. Under my guidance and mentorship, this student acquired valuable research and professional skills that earned her acceptance in a highly competitive graduate program.

Analysis and Feedback

The statement explains that the candidate's DEI contributions entailed adjusting their approach to research so as to explicitly include groups of women who had been excluded from this type of research previously. The statement implies, but does not clearly articulate the barriers and challenges that underrepresented female voters face and the broader potential impact of these efforts.

This statement also describes mentoring activities, and it indicates the outcome of this work in terms of the student's acceptance to graduate school. However, such mentoring of students is integral to our job as faculty.

Overall, the candidate's contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion exceeded, but did not far exceed, the normal expectations of faculty. The primary area of these contributions is research.

[Part III: Case Study: Structural Inequalities]

During the Spring and Summer 2020, the BLM movement helped shine a light on the deep bias and exclusionary processes practiced by the gatekeeping institutions in my field. Having been a long-time benefactor of these opportunities, and having now been a part of the selection committees that are central to these practices, I have had first-hand experience on how these practices help maintain the center of power in the hands of the gatekeepers at the expense of worthy recipients who are excluded from opportunities.

I took it upon myself to address this issue directly by crafting an open letter to the institutions that I find to be most problematic. I am currently in the midst of conversations with the heads of these institutions to help them identify problems with their processes and develop solutions. What follows is an excerpt from the extensive letter I created and used to make "first contact" with these gatekeeping institutions.

"The nature of our society's structure, and the paradigms that undergird our economy and culture have allowed large, long-standing institutions to accumulate exceptional resources and influence. These, in turn, have provided support that has allowed numerous talented musicians to grow, flourish and thrive. Many of these institutions

have been so successful pursuing their mission of support that they have become the gatekeepers of opportunities, creating a monopoly on possibilities.

Change is long past due: Sustained, meaningful inclusion must be a goal for all opportunities.

Of course, there are always exceptions, but a simple perusal of the recipients of the most esteemed opportunities afforded musicians will reveal a demographic homogeneity. The vast majority are White men with a recent surge in representation of White women, followed by representation in lesser numbers of BIPOC, queer, non-binary, neuro-diverse, trans, “invisible” older persons, and people with disabilities.

Those who don’t study in elite graduate programs may develop as significant artists but, as a result, may not practice an ideological/aesthetic that endears them to selection committees. The result is that many are never afforded prestigious opportunities. One way of helping remediate this problem is to reinvent the adjudication process for selecting recipients of fellowships, commission awards, and career-based prizes.

I am trying to provide a clear guide to help create a diverse and inclusive panel so that the same diversity and inclusivity be part of the adjudication process. Creating a template for a clearly defined procedure can assure all those involved, and the general public, of a process that demonstrates legibility, legitimacy and transparency. Only then can we honestly look at our biases, try to recognize and remediate them, and act more ethically inside our system.”

Analysis and Feedback

This statement described how the candidate wrote a letter to several institutions that suggested substantial changes in the discipline’s evaluation process, efforts that fall under the category of public or professional service. The statement demonstrated a deep awareness of the structural inequalities in the profession, and what should be done to address them. While it is impossible to determine the long-term impact of these efforts, the statement clearly articulated their potential impact.

More importantly, it discussed a specific outcome of their efforts in the form of both the proposed adjudication process and the letter calling for institutions to make this change.

Devising a more equitable and fair evaluation process within one’s own department or program and launching a campaign to urge scholars at other top institutions to do the same, are contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion that far exceed the expectations of faculty. Furthermore, these actions have the potential to make a significant and wide-reaching impact.

[Conclusion]

Key Take-aways

As we conclude this module, we leave you with the following take-away points about the importance of Statements of Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and why we should take them seriously in the merit and promotion process.

While DEI Statements are voluntary, APM 210-1-d calls for us to give “due recognition” to this work.

When evaluating your colleagues’ DEI Statements, consider the specific needs or expectations of your department or program.

The consequences of not recognizing this work include

- discouraging efforts that help students succeed;
- damaging the workplace climate or contributing to an environment in which some faculty or staff feel less appreciated;
- this could, in turn, result in the university losing valued colleagues.

An effective diversity statement outlining contributions that exceed expectations, when combined with an overall strong record, could result in acceleration reflecting outstanding performance in one area of the dossier review.

Faculty in particular have a responsibility to provide fair and equitable peer review. And faculty are best positioned to evaluate each other’s contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the areas of research, teaching, and service!

“I strongly value diversity, equity, and inclusion because, as a first-generation college student from a low-income background, I understand that college can be very overwhelming sometimes and it is easy to feel like you don’t belong there historically. For your community, for your family it’s not something that’s very common, so creating an inclusive environment where students of all backgrounds can feel welcome is very important. And I feel that we should all strive to create that environment where students feel free to express themselves. And where they can feel respected and also understood, supported, and encouraged to meet their full academic potential.”

Conclusion

Acknowledging DEI contributions furthers the UC Davis Principles of Community by “serving the needs of a global society comprising all people and a multiplicity of identities,” maintaining “a climate of equity and justice,” and promoting the “open expression of our individuality and our diversity within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity and respect.” Living these Principles of Community means recognizing “that each of us has an obligation to the UC Davis community of which we have chosen to be a part.”

We hope this module has helped you better understand how to write an effective Statement of Contributions to DEI and how to evaluate your colleagues' DEI Statements for the merit and promotion review process.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this module!