

DEI in Academic Hiring

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As white, cis-gender, female, U.S. citizens, we recognize that our perspectives are shaped by white supremacy in this culture. There is tremendous work to be done at academic institutions. We offer these thoughts and suggestions to move higher education to be more inclusive and equitable moving forward. We welcome suggestions and additions/subtractions to this document to improve ourselves and the resource here (email us or add a comment).

Demonstrating Commitment to DEI in Academic Job Applications

When applying to an academic job, you may be asked to submit a written statement about your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Sometimes this statement is called a Diversity Statement or a DEI Statement. This statement tends to be a 1-2 page document that describes your experience in, commitment to, and vision for diversity, equity, and inclusion in a university or college setting. The institution and department are typically concerned with ensuring that faculty hires have experience and vision regarding the teaching and mentoring of a diverse student population and have a desire and ability to support the institution in fulfilling its mission statement and goals in creating a diverse and inclusive environment for all learners and scholars.

Alternatively, a job advertisement may request that you weave this information throughout your application portfolio. In this case, you would be expected to address your commitment to and experience with DEI in a cover letter and the relevant statements such as a research statement and teaching statement.

How do you write a DEI statement?

In preparation for writing a statement, you may want to reflect on your background and experience and consider:

- Pedagogical practices (curriculum, climate, pedagogy) you may use to foster an inclusive learning environment for students with diverse backgrounds
- Personal experiences, identities, and backgrounds that shape your perspective, behavior, and actions about and toward others
- Past contributions to DEI initiatives through scholarship, service, community and professional engagement, in addition to teaching, advising, and mentorship of students
- Activities you hope and desire to engage in as a faculty member that would address diversity, equity, and inclusion

Additionally, it is useful to consider your audience. Do a bit of research, reach out to the chair of the search committee, and try to find out more information about the institution's commitment to DEI and how those commitments translate into actions:

- Institution-wide statement regarding its mission and commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Department-level statement regarding its commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Institution or departmental policies, campus initiatives, and programming currently in place to put their commitment in action (e.g., tenure & promotion policies, office for DEI, etc)

It is important to recognize that there is going to be variation between institutions in how the DEI statement is used in the hiring process. Requiring a DEI statement as part of a job application does not necessarily mean that that experience and vision is valued by the individuals on the search committee or that the department has cultivated a climate in which marginalized students, faculty, and staff feel as though they belong and are valued.

A successful faculty application (whether in a dedicated statement or woven throughout) honestly¹:

¹ Authenticity is key to this statement. You may have some idea of what the committee is wanting to see but if the statement reads as performative, it will be counterproductive to your DEI goals and efforts. No

1. Demonstrates awareness of structural barriers that limit access to educational opportunities
2. Outlines past experience of working with people with diverse backgrounds and experiences and advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice
3. Concretely describes what you plan to do as a faculty member to support DEI and belonging among the learning community, department, and wider institutional community
4. Follows the instructions provided in the job ad (if applicable).

Most importantly, there is not a single right way to demonstrate your commitment to DEI, but describing values with concrete actions that reflect **you** often results in the strongest statement.

Resources

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Department of Statistics, [job advertisement](#)

[UNC Writing Center](#)

[She Geeks Out Blog](#)

[How to Write a Diversity Statement](#), Pomona College

one has everything figured out and we all are going to make mistakes. Own your mistakes and how you've learned from them.

