

**Committee on Affirmative Action and Diversity
University of California, Santa Cruz**

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DIVERSITY STATEMENT GUIDELINES

Background: Valuing Diversity at the University of California

The University of California is committed to serving a student body and hiring faculty and staff who reflect the diversity of the State of California; responding to the needs of a diverse society; as well as maintaining principles of equity and inclusion. As stated in UC Regents Policy 4400:

“The diversity of the people of California has been the source of innovative ideas and creative accomplishments throughout the state’s history into the present. 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, and geographic region, and more. ...Because the core mission of the University of California is to serve the interests of the State of California, it must seek to achieve diversity among its student bodies and among its employees. The State of California has a compelling interest in making sure that people from all backgrounds perceive that access to the University is possible for talented students, staff, and faculty from all groups. The knowledge that the University of California is open to qualified students from all groups, and thus serves all parts of the community equitably, helps sustain the social fabric of the State...Diversity should also be integral to the University’s achievement of excellence.”

Further, the University of California Academic Personnel Manual policy governing faculty appointment and advancement (APM 210) was amended effective July 2005 so that faculty contributions to diversity would receive recognition and reward in the academic personnel process. While University policy states that a candidate’s identity, including race or gender, may not be considered in selection for student or faculty appointments, the University also recognizes that to attract excellent faculty who will contribute to the University’s diversity imperative, written statements articulating this contribution are vital. An excerpt from the policy states:

The University of California is committed to excellence and equity in every facet of its mission. Teaching, research, professional and public service contributions that promote diversity and equal opportunity are to be encouraged and given recognition in the evaluation of the candidate’s qualifications. These contributions to diversity and equal opportunity can take a variety of forms including efforts to advance equitable access to education, public service that addresses the needs of California’s diverse population, or research in a scholar’s area of expertise that highlights inequalities. (APM 210-1-d)

Contributions to Diversity Statements

Diversity statements typically do one or more of the following: 1) give examples of a candidate’s past contributions to diversity, 2) demonstrate an understanding of the particular diversity and equity related issues and needs in a candidate’s field, or in higher education more generally, and/or 3) discuss the candidate’s vision for how they might make contributions to diversity in the future.

If a candidate has not yet made substantial past contributions, we recommend focusing on demonstrating an understanding of issues and/or future vision. In terms of the latter, a good first step is to gather information on activities—on campus or beyond—they would like to pursue while at UCSC, and then to describe how and in what ways they might participate in these.

Examples of what might be included

To aid applicants in preparing these statements, CAAD lists here some examples of what “contributions to diversity” might mean. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but rather is intended to illustrate how wide-ranging these contributions might be.

1. Context and broader understanding:

Prior to discussing one’s particular contribution to diversity, or future vision, it can be helpful for candidates to provide some context, and ‘state the problem’ these contributions aim to address. Thus we encourage candidates to use the opening of their statement to demonstrate an understanding of the broader issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their own field, and/or in higher education more broadly. This could include, for instance, discussing the particular barriers facing women, under-represented groups, and first generation college students in their field.

Such context can be particularly helpful if the candidate will be describing work with numbers of people from particular demographic groups. Such numbers are most meaningful after establishing the degree to which these groups are underrepresented in a given field, and/or their degree of underrepresentation at particular levels or ranks (graduate student, assistant professor, etc.)

2. Service-related Contributions:

Candidates might engage in multiple types of service to increase participation in higher education by historically under-represented groups and/or first generation college students. For instance:

- K-12 outreach to demographic groups that are underrepresented in a candidate’s field or higher education more broadly.
- Serving as an advisor to programs such as Women in Science and Engineering, SACNAS or other equivalent programs in all disciplines;
- Exceptional record mentoring students and junior faculty from groups underrepresented in a candidate’s field or in higher education
- Efforts to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion within departments, divisions, or professional societies

3. Teaching-related Contributions:

Candidates might engage in a range of teaching activities that enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom and on campus. This may include:

- Significant experience teaching and mentoring students who are first generation college students and/or under-represented in higher education; for example:
 - teaching at a minority serving institution;
 - record of success advising women and minority graduate students;
 - experience teaching students with disabilities

- Developing curriculum, teaching tools, course content, and/or pedagogy focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion. For example:
 - designing courses or curricula to address diverse learning styles
 - developing effective teaching strategies for groups underrepresented in higher education or that meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students
 - bringing diverse voices into your curriculum and the “cannon” in your field

4. Research-related Contributions:

Candidates might conduct theoretical or applied research that addresses questions of equity, diversity, and/or inclusion. This may include:

- Research specifically on the barriers facing women and underrepresented groups in science and other academic disciplines; for example:
 - studying patterns of participation and advancement of women and minorities in fields where they are underrepresented;
 - studying socio-cultural issues confronting underrepresented students in college preparation curricula;
 - evaluating programs, curricula and teaching strategies designed to enhance participation of underrepresented students in higher education;
- Applied or theoretical research that contributes to broader understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion. For example:
 - research that engages or challenges categories of race, class, and gender
 - research that addresses health disparities, educational access and achievement, political engagement, economic justice, social mobility, civil and human rights;
 - artistic expression and cultural production that reflects culturally diverse communities or voices not well represented in the arts and humanities;
- Collaboration with researchers who are underrepresented in one’s field as a means of bringing in new perspectives and epistemologies

5. Other Contributions: Outside Experience and Competencies

Candidates may have life and educational experience, outside work experience, and/or cultural competencies and communication skills that can contribute to broader diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. For example, a candidate may have or display:

- understanding of the barriers facing women, under-represented groups, and first generation college students in higher education, as evidenced by life experiences and educational background
- drive and motivation to persist and succeed in their careers in spite of barriers in higher education that were directly experienced;
- creative and critical skills that come from a non-traditional educational background
- communication skills and cross-cultural abilities to maximize effective collaboration with a diverse community of campus and external colleagues;

Candidates may have participated as students, postdocs or faculty in academic preparation, trainings, or other programs designed to remove barriers facing women, veterans, people with disabilities, first generation students, etc., and thus have first-hand knowledge of the challenges for groups who are particularly underrepresented in a candidate’s field on in higher education.