

## Diversity Statement

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People of color, women, first-generation and nontraditional college students, LGBTQ folks, people with disabilities, and international students are among those who face significant barriers in access to and representation within the field of sociology. I personally define “diversity” as a commitment to actively seeking out these underrepresented and marginalized voices and perspectives in the academic community in order to do better social science. In addition to my research interest in diversity – as a sociologist of inequality and a scholar of race, class, gender, and intersectionality – diversity is also a guiding principle for my pedagogical, professionalization, and mentoring practices. Diversity is thus a core institutional value that I seek at my future academic home.

In my teaching, I emphasize inclusivity and diversity in a few key ways. At the beginning of every course I teach, I ask students to fill out [a brief questionnaire](#) with their preferred names, pronouns, and anything else they’d like me to know about them and how they learn. I find that this helps them feel welcomed and valued from day one. To foster diversity in the classroom, I often use small-scale interactive settings where I assign groups or pairs in a way that disrupts racial and gender homophily. I also make a point to actively include diverse voices on my syllabi. For example, I include work by W.E.B. DuBois on my unit on classical social theory, alongside the canonical writings of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim.

In terms of mentoring and professionalization, I have drawn on my own experiences of being the first person in my family to attend graduate school and of being a woman in an often male-dominated field. These experiences have led me to seek out opportunities to improve this sometimes-chilly climate for others by, for instance, participating in a working group for first-generation graduate students. In addition, I successfully applied for a professionalization grant from Duke University to develop a three-part gender and professionalization series, “Strategies for Promoting the Success of Women in the Social Sciences.” This series included faculty panels with women at various stages of their careers, and involved 78 total participants from 9 different departments across the university. Faculty and students reported that the series helped raise awareness and initiate conversations for both men and women about gendered issues related to work/life balance, networking & mentoring, and teaching & presentation styles.

I am currently co-teaching a course, Gender & Math, which seeks to improve the STEM pipeline for female and non-gender-binary students. The program for this course is based on my research about women’s underrepresentation in science and math fields (see my 2015 *Economics of Education Review*, 2016 *Social Currents*, and 2016 *Social Problems* publications on this topic). In addition to continuing my research in this area, once I am a faculty member I also plan to

continue developing professionalization and mentorship programs for women and first-generation students. I welcome the opportunity put my research on diversity into practice so that I can do my part to foster a more equitable and inclusive academic community.