

## Diversity & Inclusion

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A commitment to diversity and inclusion is more than a check-list or part-time activity. Complete engagement requires a constant, personal commitment and a desire to always do more. In my experience with diverse workforces, I have tried to consistently improve my mindfulness and impact, generate awareness and dialogue, and reinforce core academic principles through open, honest, and compassionate communication.

My previous industry experiences as a consultant allowed me the opportunity to work with a very diverse group of people. From a boardroom in Atlanta one day, to the shop floor in Tijuana the next, I learned that it was imperative to tailor my message and delivery to each audience with an understanding of and sensitivity to each of their cultural, historical, and personal backgrounds. This unique life experience has given me a broader, global education that I bring to the classroom.

While my graduate school education did not require training in pedagogical concepts or cultural awareness, I felt it was necessary to undertake several initiatives to actively improve upon my commitment to reaching historically challenged groups. I completed, for example, the “Brown Bag Pedagogy Series” seminar session from the Applied Economics Department, which brings in different speakers each month to lead interactive groups on various teaching related topics. Currently, I am working towards a certificate from the Center for Teaching and Learning at Oregon State University. This certificate requires participation in seminars ranging from “Supporting Diverse Learners through Culturally Responsive Teaching” to “Creating Equitable & Culturally Inclusive Environments,” and has taught me to become more familiar with ideologies that help guide my interactions with students. For example, the cultural diversity model (over the cultural deficit model) reminds me that students from different backgrounds may have unique challenges compared to other students. As an instructor, it is my role to acknowledge these challenges exist and to find a way to impact the student regardless. I have altered the delivery of curriculum by allowing students to select high level topics of interest (e.g. “Economics of The Great Barrier Reef”), I have added classroom games (e.g. Prisoners Dilemma) and I have made myself available outside of office hours to provide one-on-one instruction with students. The changes to the delivery of curriculum were designed to give students ownership of their education to spur greater involvement. While the additional one-on-one time was most heavily utilized by a student who was uncomfortable with English in a classroom setting. Each class and each cohort will be unique, requiring a continuous attention to the varying challenges that will arise.

Given the complex interactions of policies, I believe it is a vital for economists to answer questions on efficiency and equity (i.e. societal injustice). My work includes the examination of disamenities that may arise from state marijuana legislation, which may disproportionately impact lower income residents. In my research on tsunami protection infrastructure, I look at differences in mortality across demographic elements. Economists should strive to answer these questions in all areas of inequity: social, environmental, health, and beyond. My future research will continue to evaluate environmental degradation, while being mindful of potential injustice concerns.

Finally, I have served as a volunteer mentor for incoming PhD students for the last two years. This involves meeting students to discuss anything from coursework to classroom anxiety. I enjoy the opportunity to listen and share experiences in a cathartic and educational forum. I look forward to the opportunity to continue mentoring activities for undergraduate and graduate students from all backgrounds. I am committed to inclusive excellence within the classroom, through my research, and within the community.