

Diversity Statements

for a Faculty Job Search

WHEN ARE DIVERSITY STATEMENTS USED?

Diversity statements are an increasingly common part of faculty applications at a wide range of four-year and two-year institutions. Diversity statements requested as part of fellowship applications are different from those used to apply for faculty jobs.

WHAT IS A DIVERSITY STATEMENT?

A diversity statement is an explanation and illustration of your commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education, particularly in your field.

Higher education continues to be shaped in part by practices of discrimination and exclusion that can make it unwelcoming to students and faculty from marginalized groups. Many institutions are working to address these challenges, and diversity statements are one way they assess your understanding of these issues, your potential to contribute to their initiatives, and your ability to meet the needs of a wide range of students.

Diversity statements are typically 1-2 single-spaced pages. They should explain the ideas that guide your efforts and describe what you have done and plan to do to make your field, institution, and/or community more inclusive. The strongest diversity statements include specific examples of strategies you have used to put your ideas into practice as a teacher, mentor, researcher, volunteer, or in other professional roles.

TIPS FOR WRITING A DIVERSITY STATEMENT

- Think of writing a diversity statement as a professional development opportunity. This is a chance to learn more about these issues, reflect on your past actions, and make plans to have a strong impact as a faculty member.
- Understand barriers to inclusion and opportunities for diversity in your field and in higher education broadly. Read publications like *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* and relevant reports from your national scholarly associations.
- A diversity statement is not the same as a personal statement. When including personal experiences, focus on how they influence your work as an academic.
- Consider multiple dimensions of diversity: race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, immigration status, national origin, gender.
- Don't only address teaching. Consider also discussing service (e.g., recruitment, retention) and/or research (e.g., outreach, mentoring, research group management).
- Avoid platitudes. Go beyond "Diversity is important" to explain why and what specific actions you take to foster it.