

Diversity Philosophy

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I believe in fostering a diverse and inclusive learning environment. My life experiences have shown me the privilege I have, such that I try to listen, learn, and incorporate the lived experiences of individuals from all backgrounds. Throughout my time as a graduate student and teacher, I have learned the power of compassion and listening, particularly when trying create a stronger community and promote learning.

As a graduate student I helped foster a greater sense of community for students from all backgrounds. Talking with students, professors, and the department head, I started a graduate student seminar series which provided students a professor and judgment free environment to practice presentation skills before giving conference or job market talks. This enabled foreign students to gain additional experience presenting materials in a friendly and welcoming environment for feedback or experience. I pushed for the graduate seminar to be incorporated into the Economics Graduate Student Association, and the seminar series continued after I stopped running it.

Secondly I was chosen to be a peer mentor for the first year of a student from an underrepresented minority group. This involved monthly meetings to discuss how the program was going, and aiming to provide advice both for a fulfilling life as a graduate student as well as success in the program. While much of the economics program is very structured, I often listened to thoughts, complaints, and concerns at different states of completion while sharing my own experiences.

A major change in teaching philosophy came to me while teaching Introduction to Microeconomics. I thought it was good to create examples for class from a mix of the real world and media. However after handing out a "Harry Potter" themed assignment, only to realize that many of the students of color did not understand what I was asking due to not reading or watching any Harry Potter media. They were confused with the specifics of the language. I realized the error, and moved to examples that were more generalized, or asked students to think of examples from their own life.

By the end of my time teaching, my office door was constantly open and usually full of students who wanted and appreciated the extra hands on time I was willing to provide. Many shared their hopes of completing their degree, transferring schools, or outside of school life with me. Their stories, concerns, and thoughts convinced me to change and augment how I taught throughout the semester, and leaves my mind and heart open for all the students to come.