

Diversity Statement

PDCO Career Resources

What is a Diversity Statement?

The purpose of the diversity statement is to demonstrate that you have some awareness of the obstacles that underrepresented and economically disadvantaged groups have confronted in their fight to access higher education. Furthermore, the diversity statement gives you, as the candidate, the chance to share with the search committee how you will use your awareness in concrete and thoughtful ways in your research, teaching, and service.

What to consider before writing

Research the university to which you are applying; try to understand why you are writing this statement, and what importance it will have with the selection committee.

- What is the university and department's mission, and what steps are they taking to provide diversity and inclusivity?
- Research the geography of the surrounding community and what the demographic breakdown of the students is. This is typically outlined in U.S. News and World Report.
- Begin to think about ways you can help the university achieve their goals, and what you personally will bring to them in terms of diversity and inclusive excellence.
- Consider writing about a personal event in your life, but do not make it the main point of your statement, as this is not something schools can legally take into account while hiring you, and is not actually the point of the statement.

In the next section, learn what to consider when explaining your own background and how it has influenced your commitment to diversity and inclusive excellence.

What will the Diversity Statement address?

In your statement, you will want to include:

- A past experience or event that helped shape or enhance your understanding of diversity and inclusion. Remember, this is just a small part of your statement.
- The specific ways in which you have incorporated elements of diversity in your teaching, research, and service.
- Plans for how you will incorporate them into your future work at the specific university to which you are applying.

To help get you started with this, you may want to consider including several of the following questions. These do not need to all be addressed, but can and should be combined in whatever way best works for your professional experience:

Johns Hopkins Medical Institute Professional Development and Career Office

<http://pdco.med.jhmi.edu/>

Make an appointment to develop a career strategy and optimize your job search tools

- How you will deal with a diverse range of students in the classroom
- How you will incorporate a diversity of voices into your teaching materials and methods
- How your personal background and experiences will influence your approach to your discipline, your research program, and your students.
- How you support students, staff, and faculty in a variety of initiatives to improve equity of access to the resources of the university.
- How you incorporate diversity into your research topics
- How you prepare students for careers in a multicultural society

Tailoring your Statement

Your statement should be tailored based on the history, geography, and mission of the institution to which you are applying.

- Take the time to research the institution, look up the demographics, and mention them in your statement.
- Does your institution cater towards a particular population, are there many international students there, or does the school seem to me more populated by local residents?
- Try to understand why this is, and if it is good for the school. If there is a well-known program or project there for a certain population, you should mention that.

Bottom Line

Be genuine when you are writing your diversity statement. You do not need to fake your experience to make an impression. Discuss why you think you are suitable to work with the students at the university, and what you will do to encourage diversity and inclusive excellence. Diversity statements are still a relatively new addition to the job application packet. As such, not every search committee has a fully developed assessment tool for the statement. Because of this, you can use the novelty of the statement as an advantage. Write an amazing statement that emphasizes your background and your record of contributions to diversity and equity and how you plan to further the efforts made by the institution.

Additional Resources

- Demystifying the Diversity Statement ([Click Here](#))
- Top tips for writing an effective diversity statement ([Click Here](#))
- Check out this forum on the Chronicle discussing the “dos” and “don'ts” of writing a diversity statement ([Click Here](#))