



Communicating Diversity in Academia: Verbal, Written, and Action

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1

Learning Objectives

- Key skills for authentically articulating and integrating diversity in academia
- Individuals at all career stages will learn how to:
 1. Write a diversity statement
 2. Review diversity statements
 3. Consider diversity in academic searches

2

Gender Bias Experience

- Deep sea fishing with extended family
- Only 'girl' – was told by cousin I could not go
- Father took me regardless



3

When did you realize . . .






- a dimension of your identity came with privilege?
- a dimension of your identity came with extra barriers?
- your experiences were different, easier and/or harder than others?

4



5

Principles

-  Every individual adds to the diversity of an organization in some form
-  Your experiences shape your lenses which in turn shape your experiences
-  We tend to learn more from our mistakes than from our successes

6



HARVARD

THE DEREK BOK CENTER FOR
TEACHING AND LEARNING

What is a Diversity Statement?

A diversity statement is a polished, narrative statement, typically 1–2 pages in length, that describes one's accomplishments, goals, and process to advance excellence in diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging as a teacher and a researcher in higher education.

I DISAGREE

7



Penn

The main goal of a **research statement** is to walk the search committee through the evolution of your research . . .

and to show where your research will be taking you next.

. . . on how your research could benefit the institution to which you are applying.

8




The main goal of a **diversity statement** is to walk the search committee through the evolution of **IDEA journey** . . .

and to show where your **journey** will be taking you next.



. . . on how your **IDEA experiences** could benefit the institution to which you are applying.


Writing authentically about IDEAs reveals much about an individual's thought processes, level of insight and reflection, and potential for growth.

9




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10

Unaware → Aware → Accidental Ally → Advocacy






- White male science faculty
 - Believed he could not contribute to diversity
- Mentored more women doctorate recipients than other faculty
- How?
 - Becoming a father to three girls
 - Saw implicit gender bias through their lens
 - Angered him into action
 - Unaware his efforts contributes to diversity & equity!

11




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12

Unaware Diversity Officer

- Strong LGBTQ community in town
 - IF one was affiliated with university
- Very little resources or community for unaffiliated
- I was not aware until my daughter pointed it out



13

What Diversity Statement is NOT!

Mistakes of Diversity Statements

- Diversity by proxy
- Personal stories of redemption
- The exceptionalist argument

[Source: Pardis Mahdavi & Scott Brooks ASU](#)



"I'm part Cuban, part French, part Turkish, part Inuit, part Nigerian, part Cambodian, and part Polish. The Diversity Fairy sent me to you!"

14

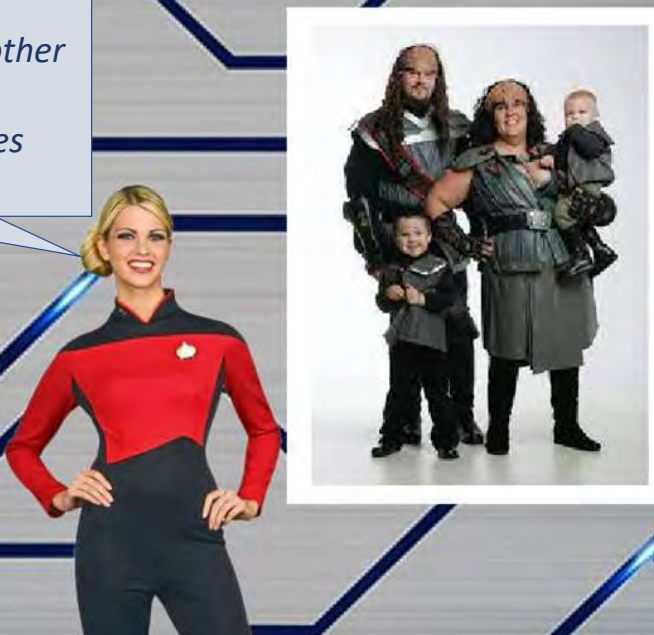
I believe every individual being deserves an equal opportunity to join Star Trek University.

That is why I am committed to increasing efforts to recruit and retain Klingons who are under-represented in my field.

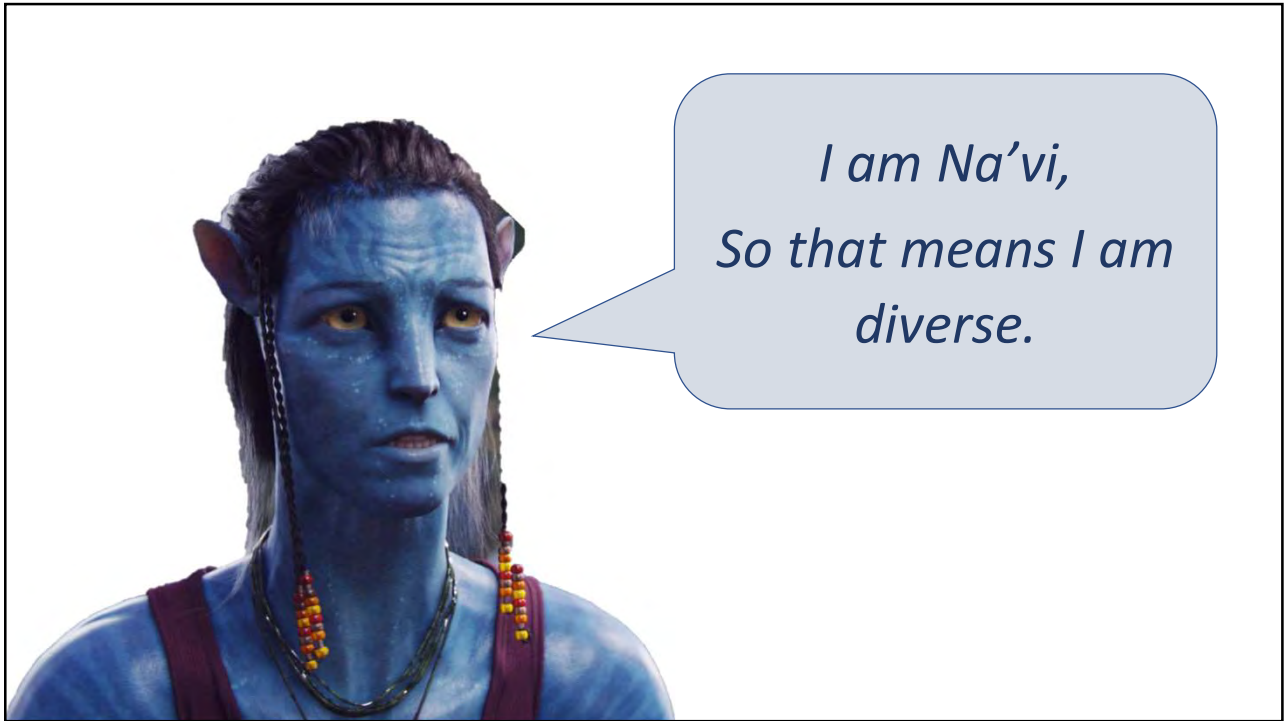


15

While I don't look like it, my great-great-great grandmother was Klingon. Thus I will add to your species diversity.



16



17



18

Set The Stage & Provide Context

- How have your experiences influenced your aspirations, goals?
- Have you changed or your thoughts and perspectives over the years?
 - What influenced or initiated the changes or further solidified your perspective?
- What changes if any have you made in strategies used to address DEI issues?
- How have these experiences influenced your teaching, research, service, professional development?
- What are some of your most memorable or disappointing setbacks encountered and lessons learned (personal or professional, or both)?
- What are some examples of DEI-related successes, and problems-solved?

19

Tie Your Story To Theirs

- How will you add to the mission of the organization you seek to join?
 - In what ways will the organization benefit from the lessons you learned along your journey?
- What areas or strengths do you perceived a need to develop for yourself?
- What are some areas in which you can help others grow?

20

How to Organize Your Statement

Chronologically?
Thematically?

Stories of
evolution

- This is your story. How is your research statement organized?
- One's Diversity Statement should be approached with the same deliberation as one's teaching and/or research statements.
- One's teaching and scholarly journeys are stories of evolution – helping the reader understand the writer's development in these realms.
- One's Diversity Statement should accomplish the same.

21

Reviewing Diversity Statements

22

Refer Back to Writing



- Same principles used to write Diversity Statements are foundation for guidelines to evaluate such statements
- NO “Have they done X much work in DEI?”
- YES “How have they evolved as a person who can relate to others?”
- NO “Do they think like I do? Will we agree on diversity and other issues?”
- YES “We disagree, but they express their disagreement with civility”

23

Diversity: Academic Searches

24

Faculty Searches

- Recruitment pointless with poor climate
 - Retention (and the fall-out) will increase
- Chicken-Egg
 - Diversity faculty to improve climate?
 - Improve climate to diversify faculty?
- Don't Do It! (Recruiting without Retention plan)
 - Lasting damage
- NOTE: Improving climate & culture helps EVERYONE!



25

Where Are You “Searching”?

- Listing/posting is NOT Searching
 - Searching requires time/effort
 - Even failed searching can create pathways & goodwill
 - Endocrine Society Transgender Research and Medicine SIG
 - American Muslim Health Professionals
 - First Generation Faculty associations
 - Indigenous Health Researchers Database
- Pedigree?
 - 5 US universities train more US faculty than all non-US universities combined (Wapman et al, 2022)
 - Why only “elite” institutions?



Dr. Christine A. Stanley

26

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If it can grow in a place bereft of resources how will it fare in a resource-rich environment?

27

Transparent & Authentic

• Who Are You vs Organizational Culture

- Candidate – will I fit?
 - Know yourself and needs & find a place to fit
- Organization – will they thrive?
 - Know what you can offer & find the person who can make the most of it



28

Transparent & Authentic

- Who Are You vs Organizational Culture



29



Thank you!
Questions??

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30