

## Contributions to Diversity



Diversity is a defining feature of California's past, present, and future. Increasing diversity to better reflect the population of California is fundamental to UC's mission as a public institution and imperative to achieving its full potential.

According to the UC Diversity Statement, diversity refers to "the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more."

One way in which UC Merced supports the university's commitment to advance diversity and equity is by promoting best practices for faculty recruitment. These include broadening the candidate pool, agreeing on criteria to judge all applicants before the search begins, guarding against biases in decision making, and treating all candidates respectfully and equally.

At UC Merced, we believe that our differences — of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, abilities, and more — enhance our capacity to achieve the university's primary mission of research, teaching and public service. UC Merced is proud to serve the most ethnically and culturally diverse student body among all University of California campuses. In the fall of 2014, 46% of our undergraduate students were Latino, 25% were Asian, 6% were Black, and 14% were White. Because of our diverse student population and our location in the Central Valley, contributions to diversity take on particular importance at UC Merced.

University policy states that a candidate's race, gender, ethnicity or other personal characteristics may not be considered in the evaluation of academic appointments. However, search committees can consider past or proposed contributions to diversity as part of the overall review process.

### **What is the purpose of the Contributions to Diversity Statement?**

According to University of California Academic Personnel Policy (APM), to preserve and foster the quality of UC as one of the nation's leading public institutions, peer review committees are expected to evaluate the contributions of all faculty in view of the critical need for equity and excellence.

UC Merced requires that faculty candidates submit a statement on their past contributions to diversity and/or equity and future plans for continuing this effort as part of their application for an academic appointment.

*"In addition to research, teaching, and general professional and public service, service contributions that promote diversity and equal opportunity are encouraged and given recognition in the evaluation of the candidate's qualifications. Examples include, but are not limited to, developing strategies for the educational or professional advancement of students in underrepresented groups; efforts to advance equitable access and diversity in education; and activities such as recruitment, retention, and mentoring or advising of underrepresented students or new faculty."* -- [APM 210-1-d](#)

The purpose of the statement is to identify candidates who have professional skills, experience, and/or willingness to engage in activities that would enhance campus diversity and equity efforts.

## **Are there any Guidelines for Writing a Statement?**

The Contributions to Diversity Statement should describe your past experience, activities and future plans to advance diversity, equity and inclusion, in alignment with UC Merced's mission to reflect the diversity of California and to meet the educational needs and interests of its diverse population of students in the Central Valley. Some faculty candidates may not have substantial past activities. If that is the case, we recommend focusing on future plans in your statement. A more developed and substantial plan is expected for senior candidates.

### **Past Experience:**

Describe past experiences or background that has made you aware of challenges faced by historically underrepresented populations.

### **Past Activities:**

- *Mentoring Activities:* If you mentored students, postdocs, staff or faculty from underrepresented groups, describe the specific context and objective of the mentoring, including your personal efforts. Include details that may be relevant, including the number of people who benefited, duration, and outcomes (i.e., success and progress of mentees during and after mentoring, including employment, educational success, etc).
- *Committee Service:* If you served on a committee or board that focused on diversity, equity, climate and/or inclusion, describe the committee's accomplishments and your role in helping achieve them. Include your position on the committee, its duration, and other relevant details.
- *Research Activities:* If any of your past research effort specifically contributed to diversity, equity and inclusion, describe the work and any impact or positive outcomes it has had on the university or broader community.
- *Other Activities (e.g. recruitment/retention/teaching/community):* Describe the activity and its context (e.g. a specific conference or organization, student retention or outreach activity, course development to reach a specific group, outreach to a local school, or work with a diversity-related non-profit). What was your role and personal effort? How did these activities relate to campus needs?

### **Planned Activities:**

The first step is to gather information on activities you would like to pursue while at UC Merced and how they might fit into the research area, department, campus, or national context. You may consider but are not restricted to current or ongoing campus activities.

For each proposed activity, describe the role you envision having and what you would like to accomplish in the next two to five years. Who would you like to engage in your efforts, and how would you plan to engage them? Be as specific as possible, but realistic in terms of your effort and time commitment.

## **Are there any examples and resources?**

There are many examples of activities that contribute diversity and equity, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Service that increases the participation of historically under-represented groups in science, engineering, arts, humanities, education, social sciences, medicine, management and other fields. This

could include involvement in outreach, tutoring, or other programs designed to remove barriers facing women, minorities, veterans, people with disabilities or other individuals who are members of groups that have been historically excluded from higher education.

- Teaching, advising, and/or mentoring of students who are under-represented or under-served in higher education.
- Development or use of pedagogies that address different learning styles and/or learning disabilities.
- Research that contributes to understanding the barriers facing women and under-represented minorities in higher education or that otherwise contributes to diversity and equal opportunity, including artistic expression and cultural production that reflects culturally diverse communities or voices under-represented in the arts and humanities..

### **How are Statements Considered?**

Candidates may be evaluated on their past and/or planned contributions to diversity during the selection process. The search committee, Dean, and Academic Senate will view the Contributions to Diversity Statement in combination with the entire application file.

Once a member of the faculty at UC Merced, contributions to diversity are recognized through the file review process.