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Diversity Statement

Throughout my academic and professional journey, I have been deeply committed to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the spaces where I work and teach. My personal background as an international scholar from Iran and my professional experiences in both Iranian and American academic settings have profoundly shaped my dedication to creating inclusive environments that support individuals from all backgrounds to thrive.

Personal Background and Commitment to Inclusion

As a woman from Iran, my journey into academia has been marked by the challenges and opportunities that come with navigating different cultural and educational systems. Growing up in a context where opportunities for women were often limited, I developed a strong determination to advocate for equitable access to education and professional opportunities. My transition to the United States for my PhD in Economics further broadened my perspective, allowing me to experience firsthand the value of diversity in academic discourse. These personal experiences of marginalization and empowerment have fueled my passion for creating spaces where everyone, regardless of their background, feels heard, valued, and included.

Research Focus on Equity and Inclusion

My research agenda reflects a strong focus on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. For example, my job market paper, "Diversity and Retention: How Workplace Equity Impacts Teacher Attrition and Satisfaction," directly addresses systemic challenges in labor markets, particularly for underrepresented groups in the teaching profession. My collaboration on projects related to LGBT employment anti-discrimination policies and the retention of teachers in rural, hard-to-staff schools further underscores my dedication to understanding and addressing disparities. These projects not only provide evidence-based insights but also highlight the importance of inclusive policy-making in improving workplace equity.

Inclusive Teaching and Mentorship

As an educator, I am committed to creating a classroom environment where all students feel empowered to engage and contribute. My teaching philosophy emphasizes active participation and the inclusion of diverse perspectives. In my microeconomics and macroeconomics courses, I design activities where students from various backgrounds collaborate, applying concepts to real-world scenarios. For instance, in my Microeconomics course, I guide students through group work on externalities, encouraging them to explore diverse perspectives on environmental and social issues. In my Global Macroeconomics course, students analyze local and global events, such as Oktoberfest in Wisconsin and Germany or the Chinese New Year, fostering cultural exchange and encouraging them to consider economic principles through a global lens. This approach fosters cultural exchange and encourages students to consider economic principles through a global lens, while respecting and valuing diverse cultural contributions.

My students at the University of South Carolina and the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse come from diverse backgrounds. I provide them with guidance and resources to navigate the academic and research environment, ensuring they feel supported and equipped to succeed.

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Advocacy and Future Commitments

Beyond my classroom and research, I have taken on leadership roles that reflect my commitment to diversity and inclusion. As president of the Iranian Student Association at the University of South Carolina, I worked to create a welcoming environment for international students, helping them adjust to a new academic and cultural context. This role gave me a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by students from diverse backgrounds, which I bring into my work as an educator.

Looking forward, I remain dedicated to furthering the cause of diversity, equity, and inclusion in academia. Whether through my teaching, research, or service, I am committed to advocating for underrepresented groups and creating inclusive spaces where all voices are valued. I believe that fostering diversity enriches the academic community and is critical to addressing the complex challenges of our time.