

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

Da Gong

As a researcher and educator in the field of economics, I acknowledge the importance of tackling broader issues surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The constrained access to resources, whether financial or educational, can pose barriers to students' success. Consequently, as an educator, it becomes my responsibility to cultivate an environment that actively confronts and dismantles these challenges, thereby fostering equal opportunities for all students.

With the rise of AI and increasing demand for statistical and programming skills in the job market, it's crucial to ensure that students from marginalized backgrounds have access to up-to-date quantitative training. I serve as an instructor in programs such as [Data Science Pathways](#), a collaborative initiative centered on data science and programming. This fellowship program aims to engage students from diverse backgrounds, including those from community colleges and 4-year institutions. Within this role, I conduct workshops on Introduction to R Programming and Statistical Inference. In addition, I am deeply committed to supporting underrepresented students in STEM fields through my role as an advisor in the [MacREU](#) and [GradSlam](#) programs. I assisted students with their research design and data presentation skills. Witnessing the growth and success of students from marginalized backgrounds ignites a strong sense of pride, as I know that I've played a meaningful role in their academic and professional development.

My dedication also extends to my role as an educator. Having worked at UCR, which ranks No. 2 in social mobility among all universities and stands out as one of the most diverse universities in the University of California system, I have found that the commitment to representing different cultures and backgrounds has shaped my professional journey, enabling me to cultivate a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment. For students who express concerns about their performance, I maintain an open-door policy, encouraging them to connect with me during office hours or via email, assuring them of my unwavering commitment to their success. I've incorporated accommodations into my grading system, providing an opportunity for improvement by allowing a higher grade on the cumulative final exam to replace the lowest score on midterm exam(s). Acknowledging the diverse needs of students, I outline resources for psychological counseling and disability support in the syllabus. In instances where students face challenges due to health conditions, such as hypersomnia, I demonstrate flexibility by granting extensions and offering assistance to students navigating course withdrawal processes, therefore no harm to their transcript. I implement measures such as renaming "Office Hours" to "Student Hours", acknowledging the potential unfamiliarity of the term for first-generation college students. Additionally, I am conscious of gender inclusivity by including my pronouns next to my name in the syllabus. Moreover, I integrate DEI considerations into the very beginning of our academic journey together by including a section in the introductory survey that provides students with an opportunity to share aspects of their identity and lived experiences. This not only helps me tailor my teaching to align with their backgrounds and preferences but also reinforces the idea that every student's unique perspective is valued in our learning community.

In my research contributions, I focus on issues that disproportionately affect underrepresented groups, particularly in the context of traumatic experiences and disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic. My research explores the effects of disasters and policies, considering heterogeneous impacts

across gender and other demographic factors. For instance, in my job market paper, I investigate the impact of famine experiences on trust, shedding light on the unique challenges faced by rural residents. Furthermore, my research delves into the gender-specific effects of policies, such as examining the consequences of China's zero-COVID policy on the academic performance of children aged 6 to 15, revealing differential outcomes based on gender and noncognitive skills.

My dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion is manifested through my teaching, programmatic contributions, and research efforts—all geared towards establishing an inclusive and supportive academic environment for students.