

Diversity Statement
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From my experience teaching at a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), to teaching underrepresented economics students through the American Economic Association (AEA), and collaborating with indigenous colleagues in New Zealand, I am comfortable working alongside people from a variety of backgrounds. I believe being able to meet the needs of a diverse group of students is necessary in promoting equity in higher education.

My experience with diversity started at the University of New Mexico (UNM). UNM is a HSI with a relatively large proportion of American Indian students. Many of my students faced obstacles that I never encountered during my undergraduate studies. As an example, I had one student in my Mathematics for Economists course who crossed the border into Ciudad Juárez every other weekend to bring his family groceries. At one point, he had an emergency and informed me that he needed two weeks off to help his family. Clearly, he was integral in his family's support system. As such, although attendance in the class was mandatory, we forged an agreement that I would excuse his absences if he could email me assignments on time—a deal which he honored. This was an eye-opening experience which reinforced my belief that one should always give students the benefit of the doubt, because it is difficult to fully understand the unique challenges they are dealing with.

For two summers I assisted teaching courses for the AEA Summer Training Program. This program targets talented undergraduates from minority groups interested in studying economics at the graduate-level. Participants were generally of color and from all over the United States and Puerto Rico. I worked closely with these students, delivering a handful of lectures, helping them with their coursework, grading their work, and providing hands-on help with their end-of-the-program conference presentations.

In another very different classroom experience, I taught a survey course in economics at a national, for-profit, private university to supplement my meager income as a graduate student. Students were very different from others I had taught. Nearly all my students were nontraditional—generally older, many using the GI Bill to fund their studies. Many were quite conservative and skeptical of any government intervention in markets. This led to lively debate and required me to prepare special exercises and readings to try to help them relate more personally to the study of economics. My strategies were effective, as students increasingly engaged as the course progressed. Because many of my students were combat veterans, I became accustomed to providing special accommodations on a regular basis.

Lastly, I have spent three years as a postdoctoral fellow at Auckland University of Technology. This experience opened my eyes to the unique challenges faced by indigenous persons in New Zealand. Rightly so, there is an ethos present in New Zealand which prescribes, “by us, for us” regarding academic research. This is visible in output. In a recent paper focused on Māori and Pacific Peoples, we take several pages to give context on how to properly contextualize statistics for the indigenous. Overall, my research itself directly addresses diversity and privilege. Whether looking at income gaps in college completion, achievement gaps at HSIs, the wage assimilation of migrant workers, or skill deficits in the Māori and Pacific population, there is, and will continue to be, a focus on the underprivileged.