Statement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are values I actively integrate into my teaching, research, and service. Everyone has their unique experiences and backgrounds that comprise who they are as an individual, and I strive to validate and respect these different backgrounds in all aspects of my work. Throughout my experiences in academia, it is impossible to assume that the same instructional methods will work for all of my students, or that a psychological process is the same for everyone or even a majority of people in a population. Because of this, I strive to enact specific strategies to help others become aware of and address DEI issues but also to give equal opportunities to my students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, in my classes and my research.

Inclusive Teaching Practices

My overall approach to addressing DEI in my classroom is to focus on understanding who my students are and how I can adapt my teaching methods to their unique needs, values, goals, and strengths. Throughout my teaching experiences, I have become more familiar with the different barriers students face depending on their culture, socioeconomic status, generational status, and physical or mental health conditions that are not always compatible with the traditional classroom structure. The classroom model where a teacher gives a lecture and expects students to take notes and ask questions independently is not always ideal, and following this structure fails to address many of my students' needs. For example, for one course I taught in-person, some students had to drive multiple hours just to attend class, so I worked with these students to arrange a way for them to attend remotely while still engaging with the course material. Another feature I have added to my course is a short survey at the end of each lecture to let students ask questions or provide comments on the material in a private format. Students may have a variety of reasons why they do not feel comfortable speaking in class in front of their peers, but providing them with another avenue to ask questions or reflect on the course material allows all students to be engaged. As part of my active effort to integrate more inclusive teaching practices in my classroom, I strive to dismantle barriers such as these to ensure there are equitable opportunities for all students in my course.

I also work towards ensuring my course materials are updated with contemporary, inclusive research that branches out from the typical Eurocentric topics and spotlights underrepresented topics. For example, when I taught Close Relationships, "convivial collectivism" is not usually included as a topic. However, I typically have a large number of Latinx students in my classes, and past research has demonstrated the theoretical and practical importance of convivial collectivism for Latin American cultures and distinguishing between different types of cultural orientations (e.g., Campos & Kim, 2017; Krys et al., 2022). Therefore, I wanted to enrich my course with lectures and activities featuring updated cultural research that would resonate with my students. Outside of what I am able to include in my lectures and reading assignments, I also have curated a library of research articles, based on what students have requested or research I still think is important to learn about, such as readings that go deeper into convivial collectivism, LGBTQ+ samples, and intercultural relationships. I also am continuing to learn about other techniques I can incorporate into my class by attending seminars focused on inclusive teaching practices at the Center for Innovative Teaching, Research, and Learning (CITRAL) Community of Practice, where we meet throughout the quarter to discuss

contemporary pedagogical techniques that promote DEI in the classroom and collaborate with other graduate students to learn from others' perspectives about how to implement these techniques.

Outside of the classroom, I am also a mentor in the ACCESS Grads program, a mentoring program in UCSB's Psychological & Brain Sciences department to guide undergraduates who are interested in attending graduate school in psychology or related fields. ACCESS Grads has a particular emphasis on assisting students from an underrepresented background, including first generation students, transfer students, and international students. As a mentor for ACCESS Grads, I have learned much about how to support the needs of those who do not have the same advantages of other students, and how to help them become familiar with academia and thrive in research. The UCSB undergraduate student population is particularly diverse, with 34% first generation students, 21% transfer students, and 11% international students. UCSB is also proud to be a Hispanic-serving institution, with 28% of students identifying as Chicanx or Latinx. As a graduate educator, I share UCSB's goal to actively support students with backgrounds that have been systematically disadvantaged in academia. It brings me joy to share my knowledge with students from all backgrounds and walks of life, but also to learn about their unique experiences and perspectives. For example, a past mentee I had, who was an international student, was interested in pursuing clinical psychology because she wanted to help other people of their culture, where seeking support, particularly for one's mental health, is discouraged. She also realized her culture was not the only one where seeking support may be difficult, so she was also interested in developing programs to assist people of multiple cultural backgrounds. Even in cases where I do not share the same background as my mentees, I (and my mentees) value the strengths we have gained through our specific life experiences, and how that shapes us into the scholars we become.

Current Research

Understanding and respecting diversity in psychological science is an inherent component of my research. My research seeks to understand how people from different cultural backgrounds navigate and benefit from their close relationships. For example, my current studies focus on exploring how individualistic and collectivistic cultures (European- and Asian-American cultures) differ in their social support needs and behaviors. This line of work will be the foundation for exploring other cultural dimensions in the future. For example, research has demonstrated that we cannot consider all collectivistic cultures to be the same, and there are important distinctions within collectivism, such as between harmony collectivism (exemplified by East Asian cultures) and convivial collectivism (exemplified by Latin American cultures; Campos & Kim, 2017). The theoretical framework (Wu, Kim, & Collins, 2021) and paradigm I developed in my dissertation can be applied to examine how different cultural values influence perceived responsiveness and other relationship processes, thus contributing to the growing literature on culture and relationships. With my future research, I want to apply this framework to cultures and samples that have been underrepresented in psychological science, such as Black/African-American samples, distinguishing between East, South, and Southeast Asian samples, LGBTQ+ samples, and different SES backgrounds, to name a few.

I also want to learn more about research on underrepresented samples from researchers who come from these backgrounds. For example, I am currently collaborating with Dr. Belinda

Campos, an expert in Latin American culture and health psychology, who has conducted a vast amount of research on the strengths of convivial collectivism and familism that are central to Latinx culture. We are conducting research focusing on convivial collectivism and how it differs from harmony collectivism, and the need to specify different types of collectivism. While harmony collectivism and (East) Asian samples are commonly studied in cultural research, less attention has been paid to convivial collectivism and Latinx samples and how they are unique from other types of collectivism. I greatly value collaborating with, and learning from, other scholars whose diverse perspectives and areas of expertise have made my research program stronger and more gratifying. I intend to incorporate diversity not just with this project but as part of a broader research program with the objective to shed light on the role of different cultures in close relationships processes. I also want to include my students in this process and encourage them to conduct their own multicultural research. For example, two of my honors students have or are completing honors theses that look at cultural processes (one on social support processes for bicultural individuals, another on how culture determines when we consider a romantic partner's family as our own kin). I am excited when my students have their own interests they want to pursue not only for their own growth as researchers but also for the contributions they make to help diversify the field.

Future Initiatives and Giving Back to the Community

Incorporating DEI-related strategies into my teaching and research is an ongoing pursuit with ample opportunities to grow and improve my practices to be more inclusive. Outside of my teaching and research, I already attend DEI-related workshops or department town halls to learn from my fellow colleagues. For example, one of our department town halls involved a presentation on the current representation and perceived climate of the department, from undergraduate students to graduate students to staff and faculty, what were the attitudes of people in the department about diversity, and to what extent people felt they belonged in our department. As a result, we discussed further steps we as individuals and as a whole department could initiate to improve diversity in the department.

I would love to take what I have learned in these workshops and present these findings at future institutions, or use this information to supplement or create new groups to promote DEI, such as starting a group similar to ACCESS Grads and connecting underrepresented students with faculty and/or graduate students in a mentorship relationship. As a faculty member, I will continue to implement the strategies I have highlighted and more to promote inclusivity in my classroom and my lab. I will continue to follow up-to-date research not only for my own work but also to share with my students. I would also love to mentor students specifically who have been underrepresented in Psychology, such as McNair scholars, or in collaboration with the IDEA committee, organize talks discussing DEI issues (e.g., barriers keeping underrepresented students from progressing into higher education) or workshops to teach actions people can take (e.g., inclusive teaching practices), backed by psychological research and how to harness what we know about psychology to promote and maintain diversity and inclusion.

Throughout my experience in academia, embracing diversity has only become more important to me because I understand the importance of seeing someone like oneself represented in research or as part of the department faculty. Although I do not have a background that is underrepresented in educational settings, my culture is often not represented well in topics taught

in the classroom. Despite this, my personal experiences have helped me empathize with students with a similar background as me. For example, when students want to learn about or conduct research that involves a culture we share, I notice that our conversations are more lively, and students are more willing to ask questions or share their thoughts when they perceive that I understand what they are going through. I have also seen how deep individualistic assumptions run in research and the classroom, and I try to challenge these assumptions and demonstrate that just because a student has not been well represented in academia, does not mean that they do not have their own strengths that help them succeed. In my teaching, research, and service, I want to support students and their needs and give all students the most fair and equitable opportunities for success.