

Diversity Statement

Ruichun Liu
Gies College of Business, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

My commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is deeply rooted in my personal experiences and academic pursuits. Growing up in a small town in China, and later moving to Beijing for my undergraduate studies, I experienced firsthand the transformative power of diversity. This exposure to a melting pot of cultures, both within China and globally, has profoundly shaped my understanding of the world and the value of diverse perspectives. As a first-generation college student, I am particularly sensitive to the educational and social barriers that can hinder academic and professional progress.

As an international student and minority in the United States, I have become acutely aware of the challenges and barriers that diverse populations face. This awareness has strengthened my resolve to foster an inclusive environment in all my professional engagements, particularly in teaching and research.

Teaching and Mentorship

In my role as an instructor for International Marketing at the University of Illinois, I implemented a teaching philosophy that emphasizes inclusivity, interactive learning, and the use of cutting-edge technology to support diverse learning styles. My classroom is a microcosm of global interaction, where I integrate international case studies and diverse cultural perspectives to enrich students' learning experiences. I strive to create a supportive classroom atmosphere where every student, regardless of their background, feels valued and empowered to excel. My approach has been validated by positive student feedback and a high overall course rating, reflecting my effectiveness in creating an engaging and inclusive learning environment.

Research Contributions

My research also addresses issues related to DEI. For instance, my paper entitled "How E-Scooters Impact Shared Mobility and Consumer Safety" reveals the dual impact of e-scooters; while the entry of e-scooters improves economic activity, it adversely impacts consumer safety and other forms of micromobility. Importantly, the effects are heterogeneous by the age and racial composition of a neighborhood; the benefits of e-scooters are attenuated and their downsides are aggravated in neighborhoods with relatively higher older population and people of color, revealing important asymmetries in the impact of e-scooters.

Service and Community Engagement

Beyond the classroom and research, I am deeply committed to service roles that actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. I have assisted three minority students with their applications to graduate programs, providing guidance and writing recommendation letters to support their educational advancement. Additionally, I served as the Doctoral Student Ambassador during the 2023-2024 academic year. I actively organize seminar luncheons, as

well as activities for Ph.D. students, with a keen consideration of different cultural backgrounds. These events are designed not only to enhance academic collaboration but also to ensure that all participants feel valued and included, regardless of their cultural origins. By creating spaces that acknowledge and celebrate diversity, I aim to foster a more inclusive academic community.

Future Commitments

Looking forward, I am committed to continuing my efforts to integrate DEI into my teaching, research, and service. I believe that by fostering an environment that embraces diversity and promotes equity, we can better prepare all students to succeed in a globalized and interconnected world. My goal is to contribute actively to the mission of DEI both within and beyond the university community.