

The economics profession has long suffered from underrepresentation of many key players in the economies we study. Without these voices, the questions we ask as a field are narrower and the answers we obtain do not benefit from valuable feedback. Improving diversity of perspectives in the field is thus crucial for the creation of knowledge. One margin of improvement focuses on the composition of faculty hires, accepted graduate students, or undergraduate majors. However, each of us plays a role in creating an environment in which economists from different backgrounds will thrive, and improved representation cannot be successfully accomplished without this. My personal goals for contributing to this environment are in three major areas: teaching, professional relationships, and research.

Teaching

When I think about the relationship between DEI and the classroom, one personal experience comes to mind. I spent a semester abroad during undergrad and I took one economics class in which I was the only international student. This was the most challenging undergraduate class I took because in addition to the academic material, I had to adapt to a new style of teaching, different institutional norms, and another language. Everyone was friendly to me, but I was too shy to make friends with my classmates and studied alone, which made learning much more difficult. This experience has shaped how I view the connection between personal identity and culture and the classroom. When students feel isolated, they face higher barriers to learning.

As a teacher, I try to alleviate this sense of isolation in several ways. First, I am conscientious about the examples I use in class. I try to avoid very specific pop culture references that may detract from learning if students either do not understand or do not relate to them. I use a variety of names and pronouns in the questions that I write. I also make an effort to cite research by a diverse set of authors. Next, I encourage class participation in multiple avenues. Some students will feel comfortable asking questions when they are confused, but most will not. In my discussion sections I used anonymous quizzes to gauge students' understanding, which solicited many more responses than asking students to give an answer aloud. I also try to create opportunities for students to talk with one another. One strategy that David Miller took in his intermediate micro class that I thought was effective was randomly assigning students to optional study groups at the start of the semester, with the hope that this would lower the barrier to interacting with classmates. Finally, I always try to empathize with the position my students are in. When applicable, I offer personal anecdotes and reassure them that things do not need to come easily for them to have a place in this field.

In addition to my strategies as an instructor, I believe part of offering an inclusive economics program at the department level includes ensuring that resources are available to help students learn equitably. Last year, I participated in a pilot program in my department to provide tutoring to first-year PhD students who were having difficulty keeping up with the coursework. This type of programming is crucial to diversity and inclusion efforts because every student who was accepted to this program deserves to be here. Providing additional learning resources to those who need them reaffirms that they are important and worthy of investment.

Professional relationships

Making connections with other economists that I can relate to on a personal level has been important for making me feel comfortable in this profession. I have been fortunate to build professional and

personal relationships with many women at my stage of the career ladder. Some of these relationships happened spontaneously with coworkers at the Federal Reserve or classmates in graduate school. Others came about in more targeted settings, like a 2018 Graduate Student Summit for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Berkeley or the AEA Summer Economics Fellowship program. As I am grateful for these relationships, I also recognize that others may not have the luxury of connecting with many economists who share their identity in their classes or other professional interactions.

As a professor, it will be important for me to stay informed about opportunities for my students to have these interactions, through mentorship programs, conferences, or other events. I do this through reading the CSWEP, CSMGEP, and CSQIEP newsletters, checking social media periodically, and sharing information with my own network of economists. Providing information on opportunities for connection can alleviate some of the search costs for my students and also make them feel more welcome in the department and the profession more broadly.

I also have experience organizing such events. In the 2018-19 academic year, I was one of the coordinators for the women in economics group in my department. We had several goals for this group. We wanted to ensure that the department climate was welcoming for all students, provide programming where students could get advice from women in the field, and create a social space for women to interact across cohort lines and with faculty. We also worked with our counterparts in the undergraduate program for several events. One of these events was watching a video from a conference organized by the Sadie Collective to promote community and mentorship for Black women in economics. Too often, intersectional identities get lost in the conversations around women in economics and I think it is important to recognize the additional burden placed on these women and amplify their voices.

Research

Representation is important and I hope that as a woman in macroeconomics I can inspire other young women to explore this field as well. Personally, I can point to several specific memories of seeing other women present their research that influenced my own decision to study macro. I look forward to the opportunity to mentor students and give them opportunities to participate in the research process.

In the questions I choose to study, I am strongly motivated by topics related to inequality. I hope that the papers I write will help to further our understanding of how differences across groups permeate through various aspects of the economy and how we can address them.