

Diversity Statement

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Alongside doing impactful research, creating and nourishing spaces for diversity and inclusion is absolutely crucial for the long term health and success of Computer Science as a field. As such, I am committed to, whenever possible, enacting practices that place inclusiveness and cultural understanding at the forefront of my job as an instructor and mentor. My primary strategy is to recognize where and when hegemonic norms and assumptions are prevalent, and replace them with culturally expansive alternatives.

All language is political. The presence of hegemonic language in classrooms and mentorships manufactures a viewpoint that is likely to alienate any groups who do not perceive this language as “neutral”. For example, there are a plethora of masculine-coded, ableist, and anti-Black terms historically used in CS vernacular, such as the use of adversaries being “he”s, the concept of “blinding” cryptography, or the concept of a “master” Git branch. While seemingly simple to address, these terms arise from anthropomorphic metaphors that are deeply embedded in how we talk and think about computing, and thus require deeper introspection than a “find-and-replace” attitude. **Throughout all of my teaching, I will work to analyze these metaphors to detect and remove harmful power dynamics.**

While it is important to fight implicit biases in what we say and teach, it is also crucial to be aware of diversity in terms of material resources. Any teaching strategy which assumes financial wealth, particular academic backgrounds, or a lack of extra-academic responsibilities is virtually guaranteed to result in exclusion. In addition to finding the sufficient funding and resources to support my students, **I will emphasize a practice of rest and self-care in my research group.** Burnout is a very real problem in CS, and the students who are most likely to escape burnout, in the absence of support to practice meaningful self-care, are those with the sufficient resources to do so. In effect, burnout is an amplifier for existing inequity in the field; thus, we need to be vigilant to prevent it.

In addition to the above strategies, **I will make a concerted effort to recruit students from diverse backgrounds early in my career.** By creating a diverse research group — and fostering a culture of mentorship between junior and senior students — I hope to create an inclusive social environment that supports a self-reinforcing cycle of representation.

Finally, **I will actively participate in DEI initiatives, both at my institution and in the broader community.** This includes serving on DEI committees, mentoring and assisting undergraduates from underrepresented groups to apply to graduate school in CS, organizing outreach programs in high schools, and participating in mentoring workshops for underrepresented groups at conferences.