

As a researcher, a teacher, and a community member, I have sought to use my position and resources to promote diversity and inclusion, and I am committed to making this a priority in my future careers.

Research with Marginalized Communities

A core part of my research is understanding how security and privacy violations cause disproportionate harms to certain populations and working to address these harms. **My research has produced tangible benefits to the communities I work with**, such as online self-defense workshops for older adults and training materials for customer support agents to better serve survivors of tech abuse. Additionally, **I view research as an opportunity for advocacy against existing stereotypes and biases**. For instance, a key point I make in my research with older adults is to shift the attention from age to other factors such as digital literacy in understanding individual older adults' vulnerability to privacy risks. This perspective helps challenge the ageist view that older adults are "falling behind" and lack proficiency in technology use, whereas in reality this is a diverse and fascinating population with meaningful insights to contribute.

Even as academic researchers start to work with marginalized communities to advance justice, there is a real risk of perpetuating oppression and exploitation in doing such type of research especially under the "publish or perish" culture. In my research, **I work to incorporate ethics, care, and respect into my interactions with my participants**. Understanding the power differentials between researchers and participants, I provide ample space for participants to opt out of activities, take breaks, or skip questions. For participants who share personal stories with painful details, I seek to be an active listener and provide a comforting environment by acknowledging their trauma experience while expressing my appreciation for their resilience.

In bearing witness to participants' trauma, researchers might further experience secondary traumatic stress, compassionate fatigue, or burnout. As a faculty member, **I am committed to provisioning proper care for myself and my students in engaging with marginalized communities**. For example, I will foster support groups (with or without my presence, depending on my students' preferences) where individual researchers can openly discuss their secondary trauma and heal together. I will also connect my students with experts who can provide need-based professional counseling and training with concrete tips on self-regulation and self-care. To make this happen, I will start with checking out organizations in my academic institution that are already offering similar services to students and employees. I will also include a budget for counseling services as part of my grant applications especially for topics that are likely to trigger secondary trauma.

Inclusive Teaching and Mentoring

The pursuit of diversity and inclusion is a central component in my everyday teaching and mentoring practices. Among the 13 students I have mentored in research, nine are women, nine are racial minorities in the US, and three are international students. As I list these numbers, I also want to avoid facilitating the tokenism culture where privileged faculty members work with students from underrepresented groups to advance their own agenda without investing in students' growth. **I value little actions that can provide opportunities and create a supportive environment for students from underrepresented groups**. For instance, I seek to strike a balance between providing practical advice as well as emotional support and encouragement. I am transparent about my own failings and difficulties, hoping that doing this opens a space for empathy and connection even though everyone has their unique struggles. I also recognize that even with best intentions, I am likely to make mistakes at some point, but it is important that I learn from my mistakes and positively contribute to my students' experience and development in the end. As a faculty member, **I will continue educating myself about structural issues within society through reading, organizing & attending workshops, and listening to my students** so that I can continue improving my everyday practice with thoughtful diversity & inclusion considerations.

As graduate school could be full of challenges, **I view peer mentoring as a great way to share my experiences and connect with other students**. Within my advisor's lab, I co-organize regular social events and work-together sessions among students. I have also become a 'go-to person' in the lab for other students seeking input on research design and methods. Within our department, I have served as a panelist at several information sessions for Ph.D. students to provide advice (e.g., on navigating advisor-advisee relationships and completing program milestones). Additionally, I have regular meet-ups with students outside of my university who work in the same research field to share dissertation progress and career opportunities. Through these activities, I have built a solid network in which my

peers and I not only exchange valuable knowledge and resources, but also share a safe space to openly talk about our struggles and find reassurance. With peer support empowering me through graduate school, as a faculty member, **I am committed to facilitating peer support among my students.** This starts with creating a lab environment that fosters collaboration and discourages toxic competition. For example, I will work with my students to develop guidelines for building respect and civility, such as by encouraging the use of “Have you considered...” rather than “This is wrong” when providing feedback. I will also help my students expand their own peer network and repertoire of resources, such as by involving them in external collaborations and by introducing them to my contacts in industry for internship opportunities.

A big part of my diversity efforts is **recognizing systemic barriers that prevent certain groups of individuals from accessing resources and using my privileges to address them.** Working as a co-chair for the 2021 Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS) poster session, my colleagues and I paid special attention to diversity (e.g., in terms of gender, race, level of experience, and represented academic institution) in assembling the poster jury and calling for submissions. Knowing that junior students need more amplification and recognition of their research, I prioritize recommending stellar junior students who are ready to take on the task of reviewing. Along these lines, **I am committed to using recruitment as an opportunity to fight structural inequities as a faculty member.** In addition to hiring students with diverse strengths and backgrounds, I will work to reach students from underrepresented groups and encourage them to apply in the first place, such as by reaching out to historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU) and academic institutions in developing nations and by hosting Q&A sessions to answer questions from prospective applicants.

Advocacy for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion

Beyond traditional research and teaching settings, **I cherish opportunities to promote diversity and inclusion through advocating for institutional changes.** Together with three other Asian graduate students, I wrote an op-ed in the Michigan Daily¹ in response to the university leadership’s insensitive statement on the Atlanta shooting in March 2021 that killed six women of Asian descent. In the op-ed, we highlighted how Asians and Asian Americans have been historically subjected to exclusionary policies, episodic violence, and the divide-and-conquer “model minority” stereotype; such systematic racism is the root cause of the surging anti-Asian hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also suggested tangible actions that the university leadership, faculty, and staff can incorporate into everyday practices to address anti-Asian racism, such as learning to pronounce Asian names correctly and expressing interest in Asian traditions. Our message has stirred vibrant discussions across our school, the university, and a broader audience on social media; over 30 faculty members and students have followed up in our school’s internal email threads to share personal stories, provide resources, and show solidarity.

The examples I share above represent my overall belief that **building diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) requires active, intentional, and ongoing efforts beyond symbolic actions.** Going forward, I will continue interrogating and improving my practices of engaging marginalized communities in research and pursuing outcomes that can positively impact their lives. In addition to working with students of diverse backgrounds, I will continue learning and practicing skills for inclusive teaching and mentoring in my everyday work. I will further look for opportunities to advance DEI goals and efforts within my department, my university, and my larger research communities to make scalable impacts beyond my students.

¹<https://www.michigandaily.com/opinion/op-eds/an-open-letter-to-the-u-m-community/>