

## **Department of Communication Difference and Equity Statement**

Respect for difference and equity is a foundational value in the Department of Communication. We embrace the power of difference as we strive to create classrooms, scholarship, mentoring relationships, and working environments that push past a surface commitment to diversity to foster a true sense of belonging in our Departmental community. The Department of Communication also seeks to prepare scholars and professionals to bring such values into future educational and career spaces. To do so, we strive to promote equity by eliminating barriers and obstacles produced by individual and institutional discrimination.

Diversity- and equity-related challenges faced by communication scholarship and professional fields include inequitable representation in research and inequitable representation of diverse identities in course content. The number of faculty and students from underrepresented groups provides us with another challenge. Other issues include critiques of uninterrogated representation of difference in media and limited workforce diversity in related professions.

The Department of Communication seeks to address these challenges and strives to demonstrate institutional commitment to difference and equity by:

- Actively recruiting a diverse student body, including through nontraditional pathways
- Providing an array of coursework at the undergraduate and graduate level that investigates the relationships between communication, power, and identity categories such as race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, age, citizenship status, and disability
- Sustaining a diverse student body through mentorship, staff support, and student groups at the graduate and undergraduate levels
- Hiring and retaining a diverse faculty and staff who reflect the populations we serve, including by:
  - Asking faculty and staff job candidates to summarize how they envision working with diverse populations, including qualifications and/or attributes they would bring to the job in that regard
  - Providing regular training and workshops on equity and working with diverse populations
- Supporting and engaging an active Diversity Committee composed of faculty, staff, and students
- Forging productive relationships with difference and equity-focused groups on campus, including GO-MAP, OMA/D, and RSOs that engage with underrepresented populations of students
- Integrating difference and equity-related knowledge and skills into learning experiences inside and outside the classroom. These areas include:
  - Identifying the patterns and power of representation in media
  - Identifying patterns and power in intergroup and interpersonal communication
  - Building partnerships with community organizations focused on difference- and equity-related initiatives

- Public scholarship that foregrounds difference and equity
- Conducting reciprocal, community-engaged research in areas that have a positive impact for diverse populations
- Valuing difference and equity work in our hiring, evaluation, and promotion of faculty and staff

We thank the [UW iSchool](#) for inspiration for the format of this statement.