

Diversity Statement

Jonathan Gingerich

A commitment to diversity runs throughout my teaching, research, and academic service.

In teaching, I strive to provide a welcoming environment for students of all backgrounds. I do so both through my management of classroom discussion and the construction of my syllabi. The value of philosophical discussion in the classroom can be compromised when a small handful of students do all of the talking, so I manage discussions to encourage a wide variety of students to participate. For instance, I preferentially call on students who have not yet participated in class discussion, or who have done so less than other students. I also encourage students to respect each another as full participants in a philosophical dialogue. If a student says something that another student later repeats as though it were a novel point, I intervene to recognize the earlier contribution. On my syllabi, I include readings like Marge Piercy's feminist science fiction novel, *Woman on the Edge of Time*, to make experiences of disability and mental illness visible. I also assign as many materials as possible written by women and authors of color. Assigning these texts legitimizes the viewpoints of students who feel that their experiences are not shared by white, male authors and helps students whose perspectives are better represented in the traditional philosophical canon to see how their assumptions may not be universal.

Outside of the classroom, I have worked to address the underrepresentation of women and people of color in philosophy as a profession. I encourage talented students from underrepresented groups to consider graduate school in philosophy, while also acknowledging the challenges that they may face. Through UCLA's Minorities and Philosophy chapter, I have mentored minority philosophy majors, and I started UCLA's Feminist Theory Reading Group, which offers an opportunity to discuss a type of philosophy that speaks to many students' experiences but that is often absent from philosophy curricula. The group provides a space for reflection on the roles of gender and race in the profession of philosophy and has encouraged undergraduates from underrepresented groups to pursue philosophy as a major or career.

My research addresses issues of diversity in its examination of types of inequality that analytic political philosophy has not traditionally focused on. For instance, while much political philosophy focuses on political and economic inequalities, my recent research builds on feminist critiques of liberalism to examine cultural inequalities and explores ways in which race and gender impact citizens' ability to participate in creating and consuming culture.

Achieving diversity also requires working at the institutional level. At UCLA, another philosophy graduate student and I worked for several years with the student-workers union, the philosophy department, the campus labor relations office, and the Title IX office to redesignate one of the bathrooms in the philosophy department as an all-gender restroom. The redesignation of this bathroom in 2016 made the department more welcoming to gender non-conforming graduate students and majors. Additional work that I undertook with the union and the labor relations office led UCLA to adopt a new campus-wide policy on gender inclusive restrooms, effective in 2018, that ensures greater access to all-gender restrooms not just in the philosophy department but for all students and staff.