Diversity Statement

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In my pursuit of a tenure-track assistant professor role, I am deeply committed to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion within the academic community. My philosophy is rooted in the belief that a diverse educational environment enriches learning experiences, fosters creativity, and prepares students to thrive in a global society.

As an international student pursuing my academic journey in the United States, I have experienced first-hand the richness that diverse perspectives bring to education and research. Navigating through cultural differences has significantly shaped my understanding and appreciation of diversity. This unique intersection of cultures has not only broadened my perspective but also presented challenges and learning opportunities. Overcoming language barriers, adapting to new educational settings, and bridging the gap between different cultural expectations have all been integral parts of my journey. These experiences have not only been transformative on a personal level but have also deeply influenced my approach to teaching, research, and collaboration.

In the following sections, I will introduce my past experiences, ongoing practices, and future plans in three aspects of teaching, research, and service.

1 Teaching and Mentorship: Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment

At the core of my teaching philosophy lies a commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment, drawing from my experiences mentoring female students and international students. These experiences have taught me the importance of understanding and addressing the unique challenges faced by students from diverse backgrounds. In my mentorship, I prioritize creating a space where all voices are heard and valued, particularly those that are often underrepresented in academic discourse.

One concrete example of my approach is how I assist students with language barriers. Recognizing that language can be a significant hurdle, I have implemented practices such as offering additional explanations in simpler terms, providing written summaries of key points, and encouraging peer support in group activities. This not only helps non-native English speakers grasp complex concepts but also fosters a collaborative learning atmosphere. Furthermore, I tailor my teaching methods to the varying needs of my students. For instance, I have redistributed time and resources in my curriculum to accommodate students who are less familiar with certain tools or methodologies. This flexible approach ensures that all students have the opportunity to fully engage with the material at their own pace.

Looking forward, I am dedicated to continuing these practices and expanding them further. I plan to develop specialized workshops that focus on overcoming language barriers in academic settings and to collaborate with institutional programs that support diversity in learning. My ultimate goal is to create a classroom environment where diversity is not only acknowledged but celebrated, and where every student has the tools and support they need to succeed.

2 Research: Fairness in Autonomous Driving

My commitment to diversity extends into my research endeavors, particularly in the realm of autonomous driving technology. I plan to expand my research focus to address the critical issue of fairness in autonomous driving systems.

For instance, if an autonomous vehicle's detection system is trained primarily on data that lacks sufficient representation of diverse populations, it can lead to biased algorithms that are less effective in recognizing pedestrians from underrepresented groups. This not only poses a significant safety risk but also reflects broader issues of equity and inclusivity in technological development.

Through the work, I intend to influence the broader field of AI and machine learning, promoting ethical considerations and diverse data practices. My objective is to ensure technological advancements in autonomous driving are developed with a keen awareness of their societal impact and inclusivity.

3   Service: Supporting International Students

Drawing from my own journey as an international student, I have developed a deep understanding of the challenges faced when studying in a foreign country. To contribute meaningfully to the international student community, I have initiated and plan to expand a range of support services and outreach programs.

My experience navigating complex administrative processes has equipped me to offer practical guidance to fellow international students. For example, I have provided tutorials on managing crucial paperwork like CPT/OPT applications for internships. I also help international students address everyday challenges such as tax filing and housing. These tutorials not only demystify the legal aspects of studying abroad but also empower students to pursue their academic and professional goals with confidence.

Looking ahead, my commitment to supporting international students is unwavering. I plan to establish a more formalized support system within the university, potentially through a website posting useful tutorials and a helpdesk answering questions on demands. This initiative would foster a sense of community and belonging among international students.

4   Concluding Remarks

Throughout my academic journey, my experiences as an international student have deeply informed my commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through my teaching philosophy, research on autonomous driving fairness, and dedicated support for international students, I have strived to contribute to a more inclusive academic environment. As I move forward in my career, I remain dedicated to advocating for equity, supporting diverse student communities, and ensuring that our academic institutions are places where all students, regardless of their background, can thrive and succeed.