

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

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From the first day I started my undergraduate study at McGill University, I realized that I am a minority. I was raised in Hong Kong and Cantonese is my mother language. From my appearance, I have no difference from other Asians. Among international students, there are big groups of Korean, Japanese, and Mandarin speakers. Nevertheless, Cantonese native speakers are rare. I understand the loneliness when the minority is segregated from other peer groups.

The loneliness shapes my teaching methods. For example, my students are requested to send me a group photo with 3-5 students and the price of a small coffee before the second class. Students tend to formulate the peer group with students sitting nearby, not with students of the same race. Moreover, we usually play a broad game of Monopoly within the same group in the fourth class. These activities help students make friends with one another in the first two weeks of the semester. My teaching features class exercises: I give class exercises in almost every class. Although I did not request students to interact within the same group, they tend to discuss the exercises and help one another within the group throughout the semester. Meanwhile, I like to walk around the classroom to help out students during the time of class exercises. In particular, I like to walk to the back of the classroom to help students in the last row because these students are often the ones who lack cares. My teaching methods try not to leave any students alone; I believe the minority may not easily be marginalized in my classes.

I also pursue diversity in my examinations. I understand that every student is unique in his or her strength and weakness. Different cultural and educational backgrounds may cultivate different strengths and weaknesses. For example, Asian students tend to be strong in hard skills—qualitative skills, whereas students from North America are good at soft skills—quantitative skills. Therefore, I create three parts in each of my examinations: (i) definition, (ii) computation, and (iii) essay-type economic analyses. The first part requires students to answer the definitions of economics terminologies. While the computation part favors those who are strong in qualitative skills, students with strong quantitative skills perform better in the essay-type economic analyses. I believe the design of my examination could help contribute to diversity, leaving no one behind.

Although I am not requested to pursue diversity in my teaching, I value diversity and I turn it into actions in my classes. I believe I will continue to pursue it in the years to come.