

Evaluator Guide

Statement on Contributions to Lehigh University's Principles of Our Equitable Community

Purpose

Lehigh University is an educational and research institution committed to developing the future leaders of our changing global society. As a university with this fundamental goal, we follow [‘The Principles of Our Equitable Community’](#). These core principles affirm the inherent dignity in all people, celebrate the richness contributed to our lives by our diverse community, lead us to confront and reject discrimination in all forms, and affirm academic freedom and each person's right to think and speak in ways that are consistent with their personal beliefs while maintaining respect, civility, and sensitivity toward others.

Lehigh University is committed to recruiting and retaining an excellent faculty who can contribute to our community in ways that uphold these Principles, advance inclusive excellence, as well as help to achieve our strategic goals. Related to the Principles and as articulated in the University's Inspiring the [Future Makers Strategic Plan](#), building *A Lehigh For Everyone* is a foundational strategic initiative: “Lehigh will be a place where everyone feels valued.”

Requesting a statement about an applicant's contributions to the Principles of Our Equitable Community (A “Contributions Statement”) is not required by the University. However, doing so in the job ad indicates our commitment to these core principles and *A Lehigh for Everyone*. A Contributions Statement further offers a chance for applicants to articulate how their knowledge, experiences, and skills have prepared them to contribute effectively to a learning and research community. Candidates may also describe how these principles would guide contributions to their discipline and society at large.

The statement could describe their:

- Knowledge of factors and practices that foster individual thriving and contribute to healthy, respectful collective cultures;
- Understanding of how historical and contemporary systems shape both barriers and opportunities for members of different groups;
- Awareness of how varied identities, viewpoints, and experiences can enrich research and learning
- Past experiences, skills, or efforts such as professional development, approaches to managing a research team, outreach, classroom practices, or organizational change activities; and/or
- Future plans for supporting Lehigh's Principles of Our Equitable Community in the context of the position and Lehigh's resources, goals, and infrastructure (for example, through teaching, mentorship, being a role model, research, leadership, community engagement, and/or ongoing professional development).

How to Evaluate the Statement of Contributions to Lehigh's Principles of Our Equitable Community?

Once a search decides to request a Contributions Statement, the first step should be to develop evidence-based criteria and a rubric similar to other position expectations, creating a shared internal understanding of the criteria, which will guide equitable assessment of the evidence in each application. The criteria and evaluation should focus on how someone would do their job, their qualifications, not their personal beliefs. We also recommend that you share with candidates the [description of the purpose of the statement](#). Your job ad and other materials should provide sufficient context about how the department, center, college and/or university embody the Principles so that applicants can craft a vision that ties directly to those goals.

The statement should be reviewed in the same way other aspects of the application are: thoughtfully, and with an eye to evaluating the applicants' past experiences and future plans. The statement should be reviewed as an integral part of an application package so that we can build a holistic assessment of each applicant's readiness to meet all of the goals of the advertised position; it is not read as an afterthought. This enables

evaluators to select scholars who meet the agreed to expectations for a sophisticated, feasible and concrete concept of how to contribute to the University's Principles of our Equitable Community.

Evaluators should seek continuity and consistency between this statement and the other application parts (the Contributions Statement serves as a spotlight, illuminating activities and information contained within the CV and other submitted materials), and later, by responses to interview questions. Concrete examples and plans applicable to their new role can be gleaned from the statement, CV, and subsequent interviews together with their application. In this fashion, the statement should be reviewed with the same rigor as other aspects of a candidate's application—as a tool to enhance understanding and make meaning from forms of evidence across the entire applicant dossier. Stronger applicants will have multiple examples from undergraduate through their current career stage and indicate some knowledge of and plans to connect with existing initiatives or infrastructure at Lehigh. The candidate's potential, effort, initiative or leadership and creativity should all be considered in the context of the individual's career stage.

While a statement could reveal some facets of an individual's lived experience that inform the content of the statement and professional activities, the review focuses on the criteria related to being hired into the position. These statements should not be used to attempt to discern a candidate's race, color, national origin, sex, religion or other protected characteristics, and such demographics must never be a factor in evaluation or decision-making during hiring. Reviewers will typically give greater weight to demonstrated skills, knowledge, and past efforts and/or detailed future plans as opposed to general expressions of support for the Principles.

This Sample Rubric is a starting point; your rubric should clarify the evidence basis for each rating, align those types of evidence with your rating scale, and be used consistently for each applicant.

(Basic Rubric, 5 = EXCELLENT 1 = STATEMENT ONLY; Modify and/or consult with OIE&B and ADVANCE)

	Rate 0 - 5	Evidence for Rating
Knowledge & Understanding: Exhibits thoughtful engagement with the Principles of Our Equitable Community and A Lehigh for Everyone. For example, a strong statement may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an evidence-based grasp of how elements of the Principles (e.g., cultures of belonging and inclusion, diversity, academic freedom, respectful dialogue, etc.) are associated with student success and/or research excellence • Demonstrate knowledge of historic and contemporary shortcomings in higher education and/or their discipline (e.g., how systems shape barriers and opportunities for members of different groups, how limitations on academic freedom affect innovation, etc.) • Demonstrate an understanding of best practices for fostering healthy interactions and environments (e.g., how to cultivate respectful dialogue, free expression, spaces of mutual belonging, etc.) and inclusive excellence. 		
Experiences & Past Efforts: Exhibits a track record and, ideally, measurable success in activities related to the Principles of Our Equitable Community and A Lehigh for Everyone. Past activities could include efforts, experiences, or skill development related to fostering environments of belonging and inclusion, challenging discrimination, reducing barriers for members of historically underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, cultivating healthy interactions, respectful dialogue, freedom of expression, etc. in domains such as mentoring, research, teaching, outreach, or policy change. Strong statements will describe concrete prior contributions and a record of commitment.		
Future Plans: Articulates specific plans to contribute to the Lehigh community in ways that uphold the Principles of Our Equitable Community and advance A Lehigh for Everyone through their teaching, mentorship, being a role model, research, leadership, community engagement, or ongoing professional development. Plans could include involvement with existing campus programs, development of new activities, curriculum development, pedagogical innovation, involvement with national or off-campus organizations, etc. Strong plans will indicate some knowledge of existing initiatives or infrastructure at Lehigh and balance ambition with feasibility.		