DIVERSITY STATEMENT
Adam Bouyamourn

I am British and Moroccan. Ethnically, I am Arab and Amazigh/Berber, the indigenous people of the Maghreb. My father was an immigrant to the United Kingdom. He was born in Beni Mellal, Morocco, to nomadic parents with facial tattoos denoting their tribal affiliation. We spoke French and English at home. Neither of my parents completed high school education, and I am a first-generation college student.

I was homeless as a teenager, an experience that significantly affected my personal and political development. For many years, I experienced physical and mental health problems as a result. A decade of therapy, plus personal training and physical rehabilitation, has since enabled me to live a good and meaningful life.

I am both affected by, and concerned about, disability in professional contexts. I have seen a number of examples of professors using their discretion to disregard the legitimate medical needs of students. I am aware that disability can be both visible and invisible.

I am an international student, which has given me some experience of the US immigration system, and some of the distinctive challenges accompanying this. There is precarity built into the status of the "nonimmigrant alien".

I lived and worked as a journalist in the United Arab Emirates for three years, where I covered the political economy of the Gulf states. This involved interviewing both Nobel Prize winners in Economics and migrant workers in labor camps.

In Computer Science, I participate in the affinity groups North Africans in NLP and Queer in AI. In the Political Science department at UC Berkeley, I am a member of "Black Bears, Brown Bears (Bx4)", the affinity group for students of color in our department.

I have served on a departmental search committee, and a PhD admissions committee as a graduate student diversity representative. In the latter role, I had a specific impact on who was admitted to our PhD program, which has historically had noticeable biases in its recruitment towards a 'certain kind' of applicant, using heuristics that were outdated, and not informative of academic potential.

Recruitment is a tangible area where I hope to have positive impacts in the future: I strongly believe that diversity of background contributes to intellectual diversity, and preempts groupthink.

As a teacher, I strongly believe that there is something interesting in every perspective, and that as instructors (and students) we should continually challenge ourselves to act with interpretive charity. Good listening is a vital skill.

It is important to me to be a constructive, professional, and helpful colleague. No researcher is an island: I want to build healthy collaborative networks with peers, and, eventually, to be a generous and supportive mentor to graduate students. I want to be generous and gracious with feedback.

Being a good community member is an active process. I spend a considerable amount of time reflecting on my own behavior: it is important to me that I act in ways that reflect my values.