

Justine Robinson Diversity Statement

As a political scientist specializing in civil-military relations, international relations, and security studies, I recognize that intellectual rigor relies on diverse perspectives and inclusive practices. My commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is rooted in my background as a mixed-race individual fascinated by politics; however, I noticed that few people in academia who study international relations share a similar background. This lack of racial diversity motivates me to tackle the issues within a subfield where political science and international relations, significantly, have historically underrepresented certain demographic groups and non-Western thought/viewpoints. Such underrepresentation has constrained academia's collective ability to analyze political phenomena and thoroughly address complex societal challenges. My approach to DEI merges an understanding of structural barriers within academia with concrete actions to foster more equitable learning and research environments. Political science as a discipline has made strides in addressing issues of representation and inclusion, but significant challenges persist. I recognize that diversity encompasses variations in race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, geographic distribution, methodological approach, institutional affiliation, and more. Throughout my educational journey, I have gained insight into how these differences intersect with power dynamics in both academic and political contexts.

My dissertation examines how institutional structures within the United States (U.S.) military address unethical behaviors among its members while navigating how to function as a warfighting and ethical organization. This work has strengthened my commitment to interrogating systems that perpetuate exclusion and developing strategies that foster more equitable participation in both academic and policy environments.

In my teaching roles at Duke University, I have prioritized the incorporation of diverse scholarship into curriculum design. While serving as a teaching assistant for the "American Foreign Policy" and "Introduction to International Relations" courses, I actively helped the head instructor select readings that represented perspectives from scholars with diverse backgrounds and theoretical approaches. For example, I helped integrate feminist international relations scholarship, including Laura Sjoberg's work on gender and global politics, alongside traditional international relations (IR) texts. This approach helped students recognize how identity shapes scholarly inquiry and policy outcomes.

As the Graduate Fellow for the Duke Program in American Grand Strategy, I have actively worked to diversify our speaker series and student participation. I collaborated with program leadership to implement recruitment strategies for underrepresented student populations. Additionally, I advocated for including more politically diverse speakers in our event programming, ensuring that students encounter a wide range of perspectives on security issues.

My post-undergraduate work experience as an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Program Associate at the National Audubon Society provided substantial professional experience implementing organizational DEI initiatives. I co-led the Fund II Foundation Apprenticeship Program, which supports young professionals of color in environmental conservation. Additionally, I coordinated biannual Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Summits. I contributed to developing the organization's

first EDI Chapter How-To Guide, establishing best practices for incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion into chapter partnerships, programs, and culture.

As the DEI Graduate Student Representative for Duke University's Department of Political Science and a member of the DEI Committee in the Duke Graduate and Professional Student Government, I worked to address climate issues and improve departmental policies. I regularly met with faculty and administration to advocate for graduate student concerns related to inclusion and equity. Similarly, as a Graduate and Professional Student Government DEI Committee representative, I helped develop recommendations for university-wide policies that better supported marginalized student populations. These service roles have given me practical experience translating DEI principles into institutional change.

As a faculty member in the Department of Political Science, I will continue to advance DEI through the following concrete initiatives:

1. **Departmental Service:** I will actively engage in departmental and university-level DEI committees, contributing to the development and implementation of policies. I will utilize my experience as a graduate student representative to bridge student concerns with faculty and administrative perspectives.
2. **Mentorship Program:** If not already established, I will recommend and contribute to a structured mentorship program for undergraduate and graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds who are interested in international relations and security studies. Based on my experience as a coordinator for Duke's Security, Peace & Conflict subfield lab, I will propose regular opportunities for students to receive guidance on research development, publishing, and professional networking.
3. **Curriculum Development:** I will create course syllabi focused on DEI topics in political science and international security. For example, I plan to develop a course titled "Identity and U.S. Civil-Military Relations" that examines how race, gender, and nationality influence U.S. civil-military relations-based security policies and practices.
4. **Summer Program Involvement:** I will actively engage with programs similar to Duke University's Ralph Bunche Summer Institute, offering my services as an instructor or mentor for promising undergraduate scholars from underrepresented groups. This will help establish pipelines for diversifying the next generation of political scientists.
5. **Speaker Series and Workshops:** I will help organize a speaker series featuring a diverse group of scholars and practitioners in international relations and security studies. I will ensure these events are accessible to all students while creating opportunities for meaningful engagement between speakers and students from underrepresented groups.

I am dedicated to ongoing self-education about DEI best practices and challenges. By integrating DEI principles into my teaching, research, and service, I strive to foster a more equitable and inclusive political science discipline that better reflects and serves our diverse society.