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Dear Dr. Lee,

Please find below a description of the ways in which the MA Program in Philosophy will comply with the Diversity and Inclusion Requirement set by the Graduate School in the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A.

The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A requires that the following topics be incorporated into graduate education at Virginia Tech:

**Topic 1:** The Virginia Tech Principles of Community as they apply to the value of human diversity and inclusion.

**Topic 2:** The impact that personal actions and words have on self, others, and communities--university, national, and global--in which we live; issues of privilege, bias, power, prejudice, and discrimination; concepts of multiple personal, social and cultural identities.

**Topic 3:** Available avenues of redress and our shared responsibilities as active by-standers.

**Topic 4:** The process of individual introspection required both to understand one's own forms of implicit or unconscious bias and to create inclusive environments.

In addition, departments are encouraged to address additional topics, as are appropriate to their specific academic unit:

**Topic 5:** Inclusion and Diversity in a global context; institutional and government policies affecting immigration, accessibility, affordability, and related matters.

**Topic 6:** Historical perspectives on diversity and the impact of traditions of privilege on the development of the discipline represented by the particular academic unit; inclusive pedagogy.

**Topic 7:** Effective strategies for inter- or intrapersonal conflict resolution; pathways to individual reconciliation of unconscious or implicit bias.

The Master of Arts program in Philosophy aims to fulfill the Diversity and Inclusion Requirement as follows:

1. **Departmental Orientation.** Every first-year Philosophy MA student will be required to participate in a half-day long departmental orientation prior to the start of the semester. This orientation is co-led by the Department Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, and one additional faculty member, and includes a discussion on how to maintain an inclusive and supportive department climate. In addition, students receive pedagogical training that explicitly addresses issues of diversity and inclusion. Students will also be given a copy of the Virginia Tech Principles of Community, which they will discuss, and will be provided with resources regarding: departmental and college dispute resolution, the university policy on harassment, discrimination and assault, and on campus resources for equity-related issues.. **(Topic 1, Topic 3)**
  
2. **Seminar on Inclusion and Diversity.** Every first-year Philosophy MA student is required to participate in an hour-long session led by a regular faculty member on matters of inclusion and diversity. This session takes place in their first semester in the program. During this session, students talk about issues of diversity and inclusion and are given a handout that includes strategies for promoting inclusivity in the classroom and within the department. Students will reflect on the ways in which issues of privilege, bias, power, and prejudice can impact their ability to feel comfortable participating in a philosophical community. They will also discuss strategies for creating inclusive environments and intervening fruitfully in situations involving discrimination. **(Topic 2, Topic 3, Topic 4, Topic 7)**
  
3. **Coursework.** Starting in AY 2022/23, all MA students will be required to complete *PHIL 5004: Graduate Proseminar in Philosophy*. This three-credit course introduces students to many of the foundational texts in contemporary analytic philosophy, as well as many of the skills that they will need to successfully continue on in the discipline. This course includes units on both the philosophy of race and feminist philosophy. Students will explore philosophical issues related to race, sex, inclusion, oppression, and diversity by reading texts by authors like Kimberle Crenshaw, Sally Haslanger, Bernard Boxill, Patricia Collins, and Charles Mills, among others. **(Topic 6)**
  - a. In addition, the following other courses also regularly address issues related to diversity and inclusion:
    - i. *PHIL 5344—History of Ethics*: Examination of the work of selected figures representative of important positions in the history of ethical theory from the Classical Age to the modern period. **(Topic 6, depending on course content)**
  
    - ii. *PHIL 6224—Distributive Justice*: Influential contemporary theories of distributive justice. Social, political, ethical, and cultural dimensions of distributive questions. Utilitarianism, liberalism, libertarianism, pluralism, multiculturalism, autonomy, rights, needs, (global) egalitarianism, and (global) poverty. **(Topic 5)**

- iii. *PHIL 6324—Advanced Topics in Ethics and Political Philosophy*: A seminar closely examining a topic or group of topics in moral, social, or political theory. Such issues as the foundations of ethics, practical reason, the concept of 'virtue', political obligation, the bounds of moral and political community, paternalism, liberty, and privacy will be explored. Views considered may include moral realism and antirealism, contractarianism, egalitarianism, libertarianism, and communitarianism. **(Topic 5 and/or 6, depending on course content)**
  
- b. Many of our courses run under the course code *PHIL 6014: Special Topics in Philosophy*. In recent years, many of these special topics seminars have included themes relevant to inclusivity and diversity. Students are notified of what topics will be covered in *PHIL 6014* well in advance of course selection. **(Topic 5 and/or 6, depending on course content)**

**Ongoing Communication.** The Director of Graduate Studies will continue to regularly notify MA students of conferences, activities, workshops, and events related to inclusivity and diversity. MA students will be strongly encouraged to participate in these events. If funding is required to attend and/or participate in these events, the Director of Graduate Studies will endeavor to help students secure it. **(Topic 2 and 4)**

- 4. **Graduate Handbook.** The Graduate Handbook will contain a statement on the University's Policy on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Assault, as well as a statement of the Virginia Tech Principles of Community. **(Topic 1)**
  
- 5. **Extracurricular Support.** The Philosophy Department provides, and will continue to provide, funding and faculty support to 'Minorities and Philosophy', an international organization that has a chapter at Virginia Tech. The 'Minorities and Philosophy' group meets regularly to discuss issues of diversity in philosophy, read philosophical texts written by underrepresented philosophers, and hold community-building social events. **(Topic 2, 3 and 4)**

Kind Regards,



Jordan MacKenzie,  
Assistant Professor of Philosophy  
Director of Graduate Studies