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CDP Program Spring 2026

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Artifact 2: Positionality Statement: Critical Vulnerability as Praxis (Part 1)

1. Which parts of your identity are most important to you in academia? Why do you find them important?

In the context of academia, my gender identity and status as an immigrant are really important to me. In my specific field, cis men still hold the power and often question the scholarly endeavors of women scholars based on the “importance” of the work, which can be frustrating. As an international student, there are a lot of restrictions I experience regarding academia, such as being eligible to certain grants that are often restricted to U.S. citizens and the current political context which makes the lives of international students more precarious, like Texas and Florida cutting programs to fund the H1-B visas that we require to work here post-graduate school.

2. Which parts of your identity are challenged within academia? What have they taught you about navigating academia?

For me, my whiteness has definitely been challenged the most during my time in academia. Having grown up in a rural German town, there was no contextualizing of racial dynamics in my education, so I have been working on catching up on understanding them. Particularly as a white scholar in academia, I have sought out the challenges on this piece of my identity to better understand the structures of white supremacy and anti-Blackness, which has allowed me to be a better scholar and person. In learning about these structures, I am better able to

understand the dynamics of my discipline of organizational communication and who to build alliances with to make the field a better place. In addition, I have been better able to understand how my whiteness then situates and privileges me in the field.

3. Which parts of your identity inform your approach to teaching? How can you draw strength from these identities?

My gender and class identity really influence my teaching of organizational communication. Since I grew up working class with a single mother, I want students to better understand the perspectives of people who experience different socioeconomic realities, especially in the context of CU Boulder students. Regarding my gender identity, I also want students to better understand the experiences of women, trans, and gender-diverse individuals better instead of simply focusing on the cis-man experience that the field of organizational communication privileges.

4. What are some personal experiences that have impacted your teaching?

I started receiving very bad grades in seventh grade due to many circumstances which lasted until I moved to the U.S. at 16. During this time, I was seen as a great disappointment and failure by my family and friends, which has definitely changed the way I approach teaching. Because of this, I think that I have a lot of empathy with students that start slacking because I know what it's like to have a hard time. Consequently, when students approach me about personal issues, I always do my best to accommodate them.

5. What are some personal experiences that have taught you a lesson(s) about teaching?

I had an uncomfortable encounter while teaching in my MA program where a male student tried to intimidate me for asking him a question during class. It has definitely taught me a lesson to be more careful with students to make sure something like this does not happen again. However, it made it difficult for me to correct students when they say questionable things since I am scared of potential conflict and getting into the same situation again.

6. What elements of dialogues do you hope to engage with through teaching?

I want to learn how to facilitate dialogues about potentially controversial topics without giving students the ability to validate violent positions.

7. In what ways do certain parts of your identity inform your approach to implementing dialogue (or parts of dialogue you hope to engage with) through teaching?

I have rarely implemented dialogue thus far because of the concerns voiced in question 5 and 6. I fear that because I am a woman, some students may not take me seriously when facilitating these dialogues, especially because my classrooms are at least 50% male students. That's why I want to learn how to navigate potential conflict in these dialogues before trying to implement them so it does not backfire.