Writing a Diversity Statement (DS)

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Caveat Lector:
These are my personal conjectures and opinions and may have zero coupling to reality
As in every other writing task, ask these two questions first:

1. Who’s the audience? (admissions committee [adcomm])
2. What do they want to know? / What do I want to tell them?

Why would an adcomm ask for one?
Find out information that they cannot ask for legally
- identify members of minority groups
- identify “underrepresented” applicants (e.g., gender, disability)
Gauge your sensitivity to inclusiveness; predict how you will interact with others
Get another (truer?) measure of your writing skills
Most are marked “optional”

Why would you want to write one?

• Allows you to focus your SOP on physics and research and move personal details into a separate document
• Gives you another chance to sell yourself
• Gives you another chance to showcase what you’ve learned in P496 to set you apart from the other 692 applicants
• May qualify you for special financial support or increase your admit chances
Seems to be a bifurcation of DSs

How admitting you will increase the department’s diversity
- ethnic background/minority status
- gender (if underrepresented)
- physical disability
- first-generation grad student

How you value diversity; will you contribute to inclusiveness?