

My social justice commitments are informed by experiences as a member of a transnational family as well as by intersectional, transnational, and borderlands feminist thought and activism. I have developed these lenses through experiences speaking multiple languages and negotiating across race, gender, nationality, and culture within my own family, as well as through my research, teaching, activism, and service. As an educator, I apply the skills developed through these experiences toward the cultivation of relationships and spaces in which dominant knowledges are decentered and those founded on care, dialogue, and social justice, can take root and grow.

My sole-investigator research has examined domestic violence (DV) policy, research, and practice across international settings. Through a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of culture in international development research publications, I examined how development organizations' Western gaze constrained knowledge about DV in Nepal. My dissertation responded to these constraints by examining Nepali service providers' constructions of DV as well as the family and community strategies used to address it. In the future, I will explore community approaches, including transformative justice approaches, to address DV and other forms of gender-based violence both in Nepal and in the U.S. These include community strategies that support the immediate safety and long-term well-being of survivors and their families, that engage men in anti-violence initiatives, and that hold those who have used violence accountable. Such strategies are an important alternative to criminal punishment, which has disproportionately harmed communities of color, as well as communities marginalized by class and caste.

As a teacher, I decenter dominant perspectives and promote the generation of knowledge in community. I have taught students who are diverse in terms of gender (including trans- and non-binary students), race, age, experience, economic background, abilities, nationalities, and documentation status, and I recognize the strengths that each of my students brings to our work together. I support all students by setting and communicating clear goals for the course, and planning learning activities that scaffold up to the skills that students are expected to demonstrate by the end. I encourage students to integrate course learning with their own personal and professional observations. I bring in diverse scholarship and examples and seek to co-create environments in which students can learn with and from one another. Finally, I realize that students are differently affected by discrimination and violence, trauma, COVID-19, court rulings, work and caregiving responsibilities, and social policies, and I have found that gently checking in with students if they miss a class or assignment goes a long way to maintaining a relationship and helping them to stay on track with the class.

I have been involved in organizing and service that reflects my commitments to social justice, including serving on several committees related to social justice and diversity. A formative act of service and solidarity in my life took place after the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal, when I worked alongside the Nepali Student Association to channel our fears for loved ones to raise funds for direct relief for earthquake affected villages. In the future, I look forward to developing deep ties to social movements in my new home that advocate for policy efforts that support social justice and well-being for violence survivors, caregivers, and families.