



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

I have always approached student learning as an inclusive practice. Within the collaborative art form of theatre, many people, perspectives, and personalities join as a team to bring dramatic literature to life.

I appreciate the fundamental need to recognize and provide a space to observe the voice of all populations. As a longtime member (and former board member) of the Michigan State University (MSU) Gay and Lesbian Faculty and Staff Association, I have created opportunities for underrepresented populations to assemble, share, and influence. For example, as the former Chairperson of the MSU Department of Theatre, I connected with a variety of student populations to form the first Student Advisory Board for Diversity and Inclusion (advisory to the Chairperson) to support and promote the ideals established by the MSU Office for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (IDI) and firmly believe our differences are assets. In addition to chairing the MSU College of Arts & Letters' Inclusive Practices Committee, I have received eight different IDI Creating Inclusive Excellence grants with colleagues from across MSU to support various multidisciplinary activities ranging from employing the performing arts for language acquisition to developing sensory-friendly performances for neurodiverse audiences. To strengthen diverse voices, we must first honor and encourage the participation of all voices.

My dedication to advancing inclusive excellence in my undergraduate teaching and creative work is mirrored in my graduate teaching, which is dedicated to preparing well-rounded artists and leaders for a career as a professor or administrator at major colleges and universities throughout the United States. I include diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging statements in my THR 834: Professional Aspects and ACM 892: ACM Seminar classes to help fulfill this mission. Together, we address how artists' or managers' professional skills, experience, and willingness to engage in creative and scholarly activities can enhance campus diversity and equity efforts and relate to their future as academic professionals.

My experience mentoring various students, faculty, academic staff, and community outreach initiatives can be witnessed throughout my career related to the engagement of student assistants on professional designs and my commitment to outreach and community engagement with my THR 492: Senior Seminar and ACM 471 ACM Seminar students.

In addition to the over 30 different classes that I have taught at MSU (undergraduate and graduate), I have designed dozens of MSU productions that engage students from a diverse community of majors and interests to embrace the Department of Theatre's mission to promote drama and theatre as civilizing agents within society. In 2015, this commitment to inclusion and diversity was recognized with an Excellence in Diversity Team Award from the MSU Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives for our production of *60/50 Theatre Project* in connection with Project 60/50 at MSU. The Michigan Educational Theatre Association recently recognized my dedication to inclusive excellence in the arts with the Standing Ovation Award in honor of those who create positive and lasting change by leading with optimism and light in 2021. In 2022, I received an Ashland University Special Achievement Award in honor of an alum who has proven leadership abilities, excelled in their chosen field, and has given faithful service to the community.

Throughout my career, I have promoted and advanced inclusive excellence as a collaborative endeavor. My experiential learning expertise has prepared students to be engaged citizen leaders within their chosen careers. My experience in creating curriculum and educational opportunities across MSU and peer educational and professional institutions has been a resource for others to develop diverse and inclusive practices and activities dedicated to enhancing the undergraduate experience. My ability to connect students, alumni, faculty and staff, national/international scholars/artists, and donors has also been a hallmark of my academic career. As an educator, I am dedicated to enriching the undergraduate experience through strategic partnerships and continuously helping others advance inclusive excellence.