

Diversity Statement

Bruce M. Mackh, PhD

At every institution at which I've been employed, I've worked to create an internal culture that supports access, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for all stakeholders, whether faculty, staff, students, or administrators. I've worked with equal dedication to creating an educational climate where every student is known by name and need and where inclusive pedagogies provide equitable academic experiences: supporting students and meeting their needs where they are while promoting a student-centered student-ready mindset.

Having served on diversity committees at each institution where I've been employed, I've observed the institutional tendency to create attractively worded statements and superficial displays of support. However, these are not enough. Proof of an institution's commitment to ADEI does not exist in mere words, but in its hiring data, discrimination claims statistics, salary tables, retention numbers for faculty, staff, and students, diversity policies, and data regarding its leaders' public actions against discrimination and racism. Our collective and institutional actions must not only align with our public support for ADEI but serve as evidence of this commitment, or even the most eloquent policy is rendered nothing more than empty words.

I believe our goal should be even more audacious: to create a culture where difference is permanently woven into the fabric of our institutions, both in higher education and in society at large. To this end, I have advocated for action on matters of diversity in my books and other publications. As a few examples:

- *Pivoting Your Instruction* (2021)
 - Historical patterns of college admissions favoring white students and the evolution to a more accurate reflection of the US population (p. 15-16)
 - The effect of implicit bias on teaching and learning (p. 19, 25, 38, 89, 145, 238)
 - Promoting diversity and global learning (repeated throughout Ch. 5 Adapting High Impact Practices Across Instructional Models, p. 210-256)
 - Creating a culture of care (Chapter 6, p. 263-282)
- Mentorship: the New Master-Apprentice Model in Higher Education, *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice* (Dec. 2020)
 - Mentoring diverse students (p. 84-88)
- *Higher Education by Design* (2018)
 - Theories and practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion (p. 33-39)
 - Teaching for diversity, equity, and inclusion (p. 192-202)

In addition to advocacy for ADEI within my scholarship and demonstrated commitment to these principles in my teaching and curricular development, I recently wrote a proposal to create the "IDEA LAB" that will be permanently housed in the library of Chadron State College.

IDEA LAB PROPOSAL

Associate VP of Teaching & Learning

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The acronym *IDEA* stands for:

- Inclusion
 - Diversity
 - Equity, and...
 - Access

The IDEA LAB – housed in the CSC King Library – would be a brave and safe place for diverse and underrepresented students, faculty, staff, and others to learn, meet, research, and study—to foster community and solidarity. Additionally, it would be a dedicated and permanent space to cultivate a culture of care and spread the message of inclusivity.

Located near the Teaching, Learning, and Professional Education Center, the IDEA LAB will be able to access the TLPEC and its electronic assets to serve its mission.

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce M. Mackh, PhD
Associate Vice President of Teaching & Learning

The IDEA Lab’s purpose is to foster an institutional culture where we build connections and promote inclusive leadership practices, creating new norms for belonging, engagement, equity, social justice, and both cognitive and social inclusion. To this effort, I bring my current research into psychological safety, dependability, structure, clarity, and meaning as identified by Google’s Project Aristotle. I also bring my commitment to the ideals I demonstrate throughout my engagement in curricular design, teaching, and faculty development, including:

- Allyship must be renewed every day and is the bare minimum expectation.
- Access and inclusion are a starting point, but the proof is reflected in fostering a genuine sense of belonging.
- Inclusive pedagogies must be indelibly interwoven into our teaching.
- Efforts to decolonize the curriculum cannot cease.
- Establishing a culture of care across the institution, throughout every academic and administrative unit, and in each classroom is crucial.
- Institutions must support educators in establishing rapport, approaching students with empathy, compassion, and respect, and maintaining a student-centered, student-ready philosophy that rejects deficit-minded attitudes and focuses on helping students fulfill their potential.
- Each of us must take responsibility for our actions, behavior, and biases, striving towards personal transformation.
- Together, we are stronger and more effective in recognizing the need for change and bringing systemic transformation from a “good idea” to a new reality.

These are the commitments I strive to honor every day and seek to foster in others. Furthermore, I am firmly dedicated to the principles of inclusive leadership.

Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advocate for change and speak out against bias and racism • celebrate differences • cultivate innovation • drive engagement • establish climate of psychological safety • instill trust • integrate diverse perspectives • manage conflict • optimize talent • produce results • promote inclusion and belonging • tolerate ambiguity

Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adaptability • authenticity • collegiality • composure • confidence • courage • curiosity • humility • openness to differences • optimism • persuasiveness • self-awareness

Bias, inequity, intolerance, prejudice, and racism are deeply rooted in the human psyche. As institutions of higher education, we must accept the challenge of confronting these flaws and liabilities, countering them by example, through advocacy, and most of all, by educating all stakeholders – administration, faculty, staff, and students – that we do not just aspire to a higher standard but are relentlessly determined to achieve it. It will not happen overnight, but it *will* happen if people like us take up the mantle of change and dedicate ourselves to this noble cause.