

Diversity Statement for Lucas Granholm (He/Him/His)

I grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota, which gave me the opportunity to be raised alongside diverse populations and to see the benefit of multiple cultural perspectives in the classroom. I was fortunate to attend a school district that embraced diversity and actively sought to provide students with a broader perspective on their surroundings. While I identify as a cisgender white male, I recognize the privilege I have received and focus my energy on using this privilege to help elevate the voices of others. To better serve an increasingly diverse student population, I recently completed the University of Minnesota's Equity Certificate Hosted Online (ECHO) program, which provided in-depth training in inclusive pedagogy and student support.

I am fortunate to have started my teaching career at the University of Minnesota Morris (UMM), the liberal arts college within the University of Minnesota system. By percentage, UMM is the most diverse school in the University of Minnesota system and has given me the opportunity to work alongside and grow as an educator among a diverse group of students. Additionally, UMM is a Native American Non-Tribal Serving Institution, where 33.6% of students are Indigenous. Because of this, I have the privilege of participating in events through the UMM Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) office, which helps further my personal and professional development as an educator and allows me to serve as an effective ally in the drive for social justice. Additionally, I am currently enrolled in the Equity Certificate program run by the University of Minnesota. This training provides me with the tools to be a more effective educator while helping to uplift underrepresented student communities.

In observing the canon of Western theatre, it is undeniably white. In my coursework, I strive to find playwrights and historians who break this trend. In my Fundamentals of Design course, I choose plays that uplift marginalized voices, such as *The Thanksgiving Play* by Larissa Fasthorse. This play tackles the problematic approaches to the celebration and artistic representation/appropriation associated with Thanksgiving. Not only is this an approachable play for young designers to analyze, but it also sparks strong conversations among students about their understanding and prior education of the holiday during the analysis phase of the process.

Lighting design is at the forefront of my research, and I take my role seriously. As a Lighting Designer, it is my responsibility to help emphasize the story's mood and emotion through the medium of light. This goes beyond the practice of simply illuminating the stage. Early in my career, I was taught that a good lighting design is meant to make the actors look good. I take this to heart and keep that ideal at the forefront of my design philosophy. Throughout my process, I pay close attention to each individual actor and how my lighting enhances the true depth and color of their features and skin tones.

In my work as Program Director of the Minneapolis Green Theatre Alliance, we have worked to include workshops that promote DEI initiatives. As an organization, we believe that we cannot have climate justice without ensuring everyone has an equitable place at the table.

It is clear that the University of Michigan's Theatre program is seeking to address historically problematic issues with underserved populations, as stated: "The Department of Theatre and Drama provides students with a stimulating blend of intellectual rigor, professional experience, and cultural diversity in an intimate and supportive atmosphere....amplifying traditionally underrepresented voices both on stage and behind the scenes." I strongly align with this mission, as I have seen time and again that diverse backgrounds and varied perspectives not only benefit the production, but the process leading to the final result is drastically improved when we step outside our own bubbles.

I am continually working to ensure that my lectures as an instructor are accessible for a variety of accommodations so that students can receive the content in ways that work best for them. I work closely with the disability accommodations office as well as the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion office on my campus. My hope would be to utilize these resources at your campus to make a greater impact on an even broader range of students.