

## Diversity Statement

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access should be at the foundation of learning. Higher Education should accept only tolerance and compassion. I am from a rural area of western Kentucky that was racially diverse. I have lived in Central and South Texas, New York City, and traveled the world. Diversity and individual difference is what makes humankind so enthralling and enriched. I am nonbinary, and I've identified as white/Caucasian my whole life. But my great great grandfather who was a Choctaw child separated from his parents, "adopted" by a Methodist family, his stories and that aspect of his identity was erased. Over the years, I have tried to reconstruct his path, past, and ancestry, and the practice of his tribe.

Growing up, I saw a lot of injustice, prejudice, racism. This is a persistent imbalance. Knowing and caring the people I have known with diverse backgrounds has made me strive to be a better person, and to be as inclusive as possible. In 2020 as an activist, I walked and chanted with the thousands for George Floyd and too many Black Lives lost. I will try to imagine myself in the other person's shoes. Or try to see what someone really means when they are relating their experience.

Currently in South Texas, I am teaching a majority Hispanic / Latinx population in Emerging Design to build stories through their experience, and their voice. I create a safe environment for every student to show them that they are valid, that they are enough. I practice tolerance and compassion, and offer meditation as a tool in the academic life. I advocate for diversity of ideas, concepts, and disciplines, for students to explore identity. LGBTQA+, Ecology-Centered (Systems Theory), and Metaethics just to name a few inclusive frameworks that I bring, and I encourage students to bring and share their own.

For a better future,  
Jeffrey Charles Stanley | JCS