



Welcome to Inclusive Teaching at DU!

Blog · [Inclusive Teaching Practices](#) · June 3, 2020

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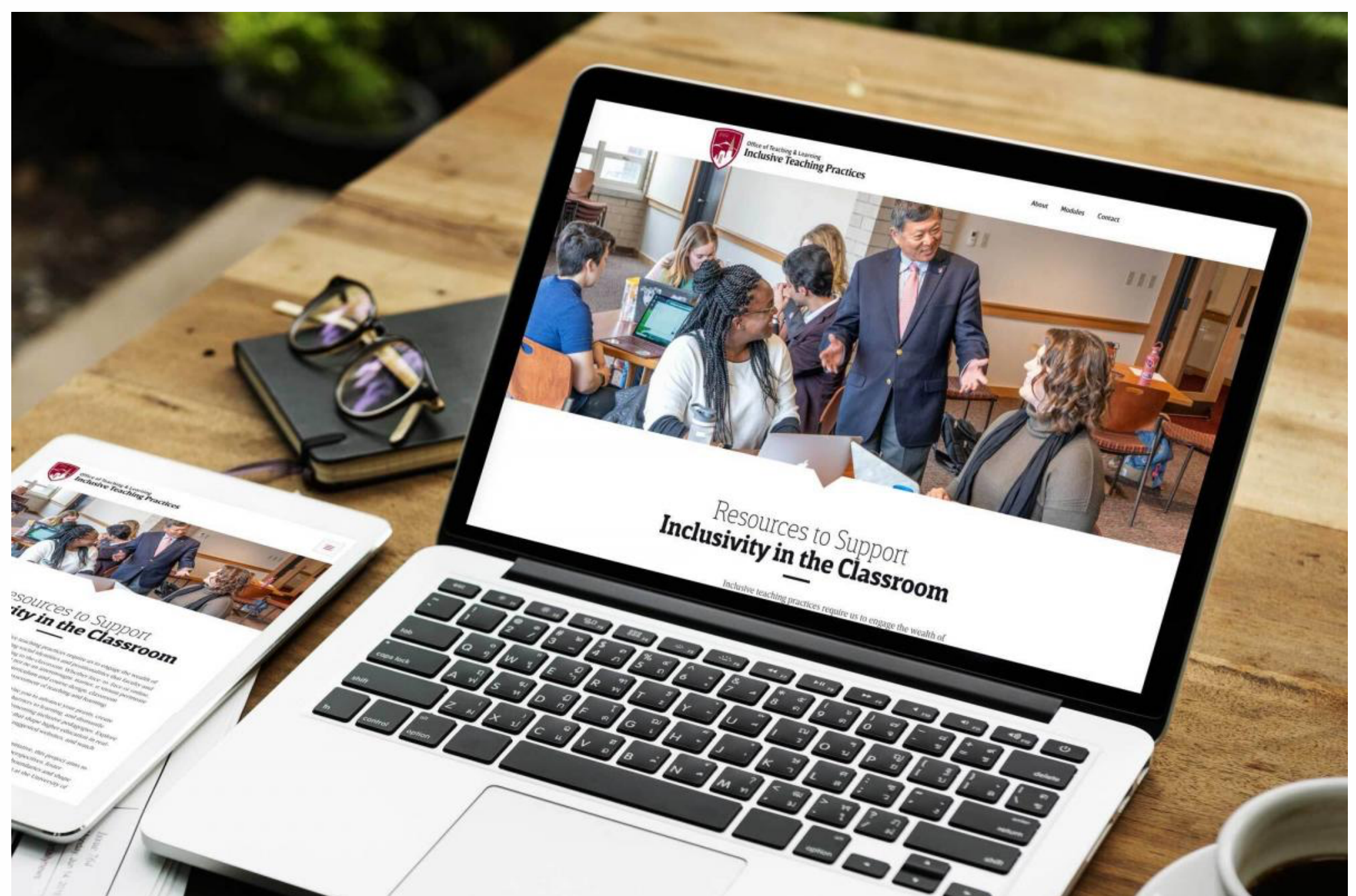
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When I began working on the content modules for the Inclusive Teaching Practices website in 2017, our nation painfully grappled with daily affronts to the rights and freedom of its people. While longstanding racism has long been experienced by people of color, its impact on others became ever more accessible via technicolor videos shared on social media. The collective pain grew, the voices in the videos seared into our collective memory, and the heaviness of the moment became crippling for many university faculty, students, staff, and administrators. In this context, we in higher education became hyper-vigilant in topics such as calling-in versus calling-out, examining intent versus impact, and learning about the insidious ubiquity and impact of microaggressions. Requests for pedagogical approaches that faculty members could use to address the tangible tensions in their classrooms grew. In my first year at the University of Denver, I gave 47 talks, workshops, and individual sessions. All were by request of department chairs, deans, and faculty.

Alongside brilliant colleagues, I stood in community and unison in my unwavering commitment as an educator to honor students for who they are, who they've been, and who they aim to become. A critical mass grew on our campus, and faculty members engaged with the difficult topics that, for far too long, had been deemed irrelevant to their disciplines or teaching. Faculty Learning Communities on Critical Pedagogy, White Fragility, and Trans* in College filled up in less than 24 hours. I began to create waitlists for these programs, and email lists of countless faculty members whose dedication to excellent and inclusive teaching came to the forefront of their praxis.


As we launch this inaugural website to make your teaching more inclusive and equitable, our nation is convulsing. I want to remind all who interact with it, and who contribute content, that this is a labor of love. This website represents countless hours of community work, of listening to what faculty members need, what they have been missing, and what they want to learn. It is saying to the numerous students who came to my office after word of mouth spread that my position existed: "I hear you, I see you, and I care about you." Undergraduate and graduate students shared painful anecdotes of a curriculum that never validated their existence. They had the courage to speak of unaddressed microaggressions in classroom discussions, of historical trauma, and the emotional as well as the physical toll of racial battle fatigue.


I write these words following several nights of protests, riots, and rallies demanding justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and the countless men, women, and children who have fallen victim to police brutality. Like many around the country, I inhabit the porous boundaries of higher education with a heavy heart but an unbroken commitment to inclusive education.

To all the University of Denver faculty members, I welcome you to a new era of teaching and learning. To educators elsewhere, I invite you to join our vibrant community. The time for lip-service is over, and our students need us to value their whole selves and protect their wellbeing. Today, I invite you all to begin reimagining your teaching in service of our shared values and commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all that we do. Today, our country requires us all to stand together in practice, not just in sentiment.

Welcome to Inclusive Teaching at DU!

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