Philosophy - As an educator, mentor, and researcher, I am committed to fostering an inclusive environment that provides opportunities for learning and collaboration. My philosophy of inclusivity is rooted in the belief that excellence in both teaching and research emerge when individuals from diverse perspectives are empowered to collaborate and share their insights and experiences. In the classroom, in research, and across the university community, I strive to build an inclusive environment that values diversity and ensures everyone has a voice.

Inclusive teaching – In my teaching, I prioritize creating a welcoming and supportive environment where all students can succeed. As a teaching assistant at the University of Minnesota, I worked with diverse student groups in both foundational and upper-level biology courses, where I emphasized hands-on, experiential learning opportunities that encouraged collaboration and critical thinking. In this setting, individual students were challenged with new experimental and quantitative approaches, such as using microscopy or conducting analyses in R. By structuring group activities, I helped students learn from each other's experiences and perspectives, creating an environment where they collectively overcame challenges and sup-ported one another's growth. I facilitated this dynamic by fostering open communication and guiding students in collaborative problem-solving. Moving forward, I plan to continue this approach by teaching courses that emphasize active group participation and foster a classroom culture that values diverse perspectives for solving complex ecological problems.

Inclusive research – Creativity and collaboration are at the heart of science. In my research, I strive to create an inclusive and collaborative group environment where multiple perspectives are valued. Through my experience supervising undergraduate and graduate students in both fieldwork and computational research, I have learned that research is most effective when diverse viewpoints and experiences contribute to problem-solving and innovation. This collaborative style of research is particularly important in the domains of global change ecology and invasion science, where the scale and complexity of problems demand interdisciplinary perspectives. I aim to continue fostering a collaborative research environment and help students recognize that their individual contributions are crucial to the success of broader research goals.

Broader community – Inclusivity at a university extends beyond the classroom and lab. My experiences chairing committees to match students and mentors at the University of Minnesota taught me the importance of connecting students with professionals and peers who can support their academic and career growth. In one instance, I mentored a first-generation undergraduate student in horticulture who continued their academic career in graduate school. Similarly, I have seen firsthand how academic and professional networks can empower students to pursue their career goals with confidence. I hope to continue facilitating this role at Virginia Tech by connecting with student mentoring organizations and outreach programs to guide and inspire the next generation of ecologists, especially those from underrepresented communities. I plan to engage with groups and initiatives that promote diversity in STEM and help students navigate their academic journeys. I believe that fostering these connections not only benefits individual students but also enhances inclusivity in the broader university community.