The Business Communication Program (BCOM) is a women-led teaching and service unit of the Eller College of Management at the University of Arizona. According to the University’s website, we are a Land-Grant university and the first four-year public university in the state of Arizona to be federally recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). As a research intensive land-grant HSI, the University of Arizona is committed to responsively meeting the educational needs of our vibrant and increasingly diverse student population.

As BCOM faculty within this context, we engage almost every student who passes through the Eller College, including those in lower division, upper division, graduate, executive, and online platforms. In every course and on every platform, we endeavor to weave a crucial thread through the student experience: that a student’s own authentic voice, guided by an accurate understanding of their audience, is key to unlocking that student’s agency and professional credibility.

The recent emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement and crimes against other minority groups have brought historic systems of oppression into sharper focus. Additionally, the global health crisis brought on by SARS-CoV-2 has also made us acutely aware of how these systems continue to disproportionately harm minoritized groups and individuals of lower socio-economic status—acknowledging that minoritized groups are often disproportionately represented among the economically disadvantaged. The fact that this document only came about in the middle of simultaneous crises further emphasizes the deep and insidious legacy of systemic oppression.

We recognize that not all students’ voices are equally heard. As a community of student-serving faculty who have not always recognized our own privilege, we are faced with urgent and conflicting realities. In this environment, Eller’s BCOM program is both uniquely positioned to assist and acutely challenged to improve our learning environments in ways that are safe, welcoming, and affirming. Therefore, we will meet this moment by committing to concrete and specific actions that will better serve our community and our students. We do so, guided by The Eller Way:

- Integrity: Do the right thing 100 percent of the time.
- Excellence: Consistently surpass ordinary standards.
- Innovation: Creatively anticipate and leverage change.
- Determination: See challenges as opportunities.
- Inclusion: Create a community where everybody thrives.

Our commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion follow on the next two pages. Eller’s BCOM program makes the following concrete and specific commitments to ourselves as a program, to our students, and to the Eller College community as a whole. While we classify our efforts in distinct spheres of influence in the following sections, we expect that there will be overlap between how each group benefits from our intentional individual, student-focused, team, and institutional efforts.
Individual and Student-Focused Efforts

As professionals whose primary function is the education of students, we commit to the following:

- **We will educate ourselves to become anti-racist and anti-oppression educators** by participating in specific trainings – such as Safe Zone, FirstCats, Veteran Alliance or LinkedIn Learning courses – to continuously improve. By the end of the next academic year, every member of the team will have successfully completed at least one relevant and meaningful training.

- **We will continue to promote a culture of honest and respectful feedback with our students to help them realize how they are perceived in the workplace in how we...**
  - give and receive feedback
  - signal to students that we listen to and engage with them in meaningful conversations
  - make ourselves accessible so that students feel comfortable approaching us

- **We will model for our students how they should ideally expect to be treated in the workplace and give them communication tools to advocate for themselves.** As business educators, one of our core values is to better prepare students to lead 21st century organizations as beacons of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our understanding of and ability to serve as role models will be informed in part by the education and DEI trainings to which we have committed.

- **We will continue to respect students’ agency to articulate their personal story, goals, and professionalism.** Students have the power to explore and tell their personal stories, establish their goals, and craft their own professional persona as appropriate to the business contexts in which the students plan to engage.

- **We will provide students with tools and opportunities to integrate their identities and experiences into their professional personas.** We honor each student’s individualism and right to be themselves. We acknowledge that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to training for professional persona and will allow for diversity of thought and persona presentation in assignments and activities.

- **We will foster learning environments in which all our students see themselves represented.** We recognize that representation matters and marginalized or minoritized groups have not always felt a sense of belongingness because they have not seen people like themselves reflected in course materials. We will diversify the names we write into assignment prompts, select case studies that are written by women and people of color, and recruit diverse teams of preceptors and teaching assistants.

- **We will speak up and take appropriate action when we hear or observe instances of racism, classism, misogyny, misandry, xenophobia, homophobia, hate speech, or microaggressions.** We will be upstanders, not just bystanders in our classrooms, hallways, and greater Eller community. We understand that small actions can have big impact, and we will speak up and call out bad behavior when we encounter it.
Business Communication Program Efforts
As a program, we commit to the following:

- **We will develop a common understanding of our own individual and institutional systems of bias and inequity, and we will adopt a common language to achieve this goal.** We take responsibility for our own learning and growth by reaching out to and engaging with student groups to deliver at least one teaching clinic per semester on DEI issues.

- **We will continue to develop more equitable systems for evaluation and coaching of written communication skills.** We are sensitive to the fact that students arrive at Eller from very diverse backgrounds and with diverse learning styles, and therefore benefit from feedback that is tailored to their needs. We will create an internal task force to continuously examine our methods of evaluation and coaching in order to support students better.

- **We will implement a standing meeting agenda item related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.** At the start of every program and sub-team meeting, we will take time to highlight successes and/or challenges related to how we have supported or struggled to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in our classrooms and with each other.

- **We will continue to cultivate a culture of honesty and respectful feedback on our faculty teams.** As a team, we have created an environment of trust in which we coach each other on how our words and actions may be perceived as microaggressions. We will continue to help each other be more mindful and supportive allies across boundaries.

- **We will increase the diversity of our faculty team.** We will post open positions to a wider range of sites to improve access to a more diverse pool of potential candidates. We will actively network with peers in our fields to build relationships to expand our pipeline of potential candidates. We will continue to advocate for compensation commensurate with the value we bring to our students and that will attract the highest caliber of faculty.

- **We will advocate for more equitable systems of evaluating instructor effectiveness for the purposes of compensation and promotion.** As a team that is majority women, we recognize the historical and systemic pay inequality of women and people of color, and we acknowledge the growing body of evidence that student evaluations are inherently biased against women and people of color. We will seek alternative methods of evaluation that are more equitable and accurately capture faculty member contributions to student learning.

The preceding commitments are made in good faith and with the knowledge that we may not always get it right. However, we are obliged to make sincere efforts to do better by our students and each other. We remain dedicated to fulfilling our duty as educators to serve all of our students with equity and inclusivity, and we will do so by adhering to The Eller Way.
Appendix

This appendix offers useful campus resources, relevant definitions, and common acronyms used or referred to in the preceding document.

University of Arizona Resources (https://diversity.arizona.edu/student-centers)
Each of these student centers and campus entities serve historically marginalized or minoritized groups and provide a wealth of resources to support students and colleagues who are members of these respective groups.

- African American Student Affairs - http://aasa.arizona.edu/
- Asian Pacific American Student Affairs - http://apasa.arizona.edu/
- Adalberto and Ana Guerrero Chicano and Hispanic Student Affairs - https://chsa.arizona.edu/
- Campus Health - https://health.arizona.edu/
- Disability Resource Center - https://drc.arizona.edu/
- Immigrant Student Center - https://immigrant.arizona.edu/
- LGBTQ Student Center - https://lgbtq.arizona.edu/
- Native American Student Affairs - http://nasa.arizona.edu/
- Women & Gender Resource Center - https://wrc.arizona.edu/

Relevant Definitions
The following definitions are relevant to the discussion of the topics included in this document.

- Diversity: includes the ways in which people differ
- Equity: the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people and reducing barriers that prevent full participation by some grounds
- Inclusion: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, valued
- Microaggressions: brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups
- Minoritized: an adjective used to describe people who are not in a majority group that acknowledges the historic systems that have actively harmed members of those groups
- Misogyny: dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women
- Misandry: dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against men
- They: non-gender specific pronoun that is increasingly accepted as grammatically correct for singular use for individuals who identify as transgender, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming

Common Acronyms
The following acronyms are emerging or commonly accepted shortcuts in the discussion of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Color: a relatively new approach that is considered more inclusive than just POC
- DEI: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; some common variations on this theme include
  - DI: Diversity and Inclusion
  - DIB: Diversity, Inclusion, and Belongingness
  - IDEA: Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access
- LGBTQ+: An umbrella term that covers Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Asexual, and other people who are marginalized on the basis of their gender or sexual orientation