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New annual award celebrates inclusive education practices

The Accommodated Learning Centre at the University of Lethbridge is pleased to announce the first recipient of its new Inclusive Education Award.

Callista Chasse, a professor in the Faculty of Health Science's Addictions Counselling program, is recognized for the exemplary practices she uses to enrich learning experiences for students with disabilities.



“Callista was nominated by her students as she has demonstrated engagement and practices that are actively supportive and inclusive in her teaching and we are delighted to recognize her commitment with this award,” says Dawn Vickers, manager of the U of L’s Accommodated Learning Centre.

Those who nominated Chasse said she creates a “very inclusive teaching environment” and is “adamant about using person-first language.” One student described her as a very informative teacher who states objectives clearly.

“She makes the classroom a safe and welcoming environment and is very open,” said another student. “It made me feel comfortable to approach her.”

“I am honoured and moved to be the recipient of this important award from the Accommodated Learning Centre recognizing the value of inclusive teaching,” says Chasse. “I had the good fortune of being taught and mentored by some outstandingly inclusive faculty during my own post-secondary journey and I work hard to integrate similar practices as an educator.”

She has found students feel empowered to engage in deeper learning when they are seen as valued members of the learning community and invited to contribute their own ways of knowing and understanding the world in a way that allows for critical thought.

“In my experience, inclusive practices in the classroom are good for all students, not only those who identify as needing accommodations,” Chasse says. “With this belief guiding my teaching, I employ various modes of content delivery, flexible and diverse assignment formats, and attempt to provide a respectful, caring and safe environment for students to engage.”

“Faculty and staff all play an important role in fostering inclusive and equitable experiences for students with disabilities,” says Vickers. “By creating a culture of support, respect and open communication, instructors help students to feel more encouraged, valued and included in the University community.”

The Inclusive Education Award was created to acknowledge professors and instructors who recognize the value of diversity and are responsive, adaptable and collaborative in accommodating learning needs. They demonstrate caring, compassion and empathy by promoting a classroom culture that is welcoming, respectful and inclusive and by adapting their teaching methods and content using universal design principles. Incorporating a universal design for learning framework provides all students, and especially those with disabilities, more opportunity to have a positive and successful post-secondary learning experience.

To view online, visit [Inclusive Education Award](#).

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