

E614 A SUM25 Diversity Science for Leaders

Course Summary

Diversity, equity, and inclusion have become hotly contested in the headlines, showing that these topics have become more important than ever in organizations. This course takes the position that understanding diversity and being able to address issues of bias in organizations is not a ‘nice-to-have’ leadership skill – it is a need-to-have.

Why do so many leaders get it wrong, failing to create inclusive environments for racial minorities, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other underrepresented backgrounds? Why don’t organizations make more progress on diversity given how much they talk about it? How do those who care about diversity handle resistance, backlash, and backsliding when it arises? Most importantly, what can you do to create positive change?

This course invites you to develop a deep understanding of your own and others’ social identities, and the infrastructure of bias created around those identities in a given social context, so that you can better diagnose, understand, and ultimately, address, widespread issues of inequity and discrimination in organizations today. We achieve this by:

Using the science of psychology to interrogate our sense of who we are (our social identities) and our assumptions and generalizations about other groups (our stereotypes and biases),
Taking a diversity science approach to evaluating how these get embedded into organizational procedures, processes, practices, and cultures
Evaluating interventions and evidence to determine how to effectively de-bias the workplace
Discussing these complex dynamics with expert guest speakers.

In sum, the goal of this course is to develop how you think – not to tell you what to think – about best practice for leading diversity effectively in organizations. The world needs leaders who are ready to lead complex conversations around diversity and who drive positive and sustainable change. This course will begin to equip you to do so.

Acknowledgements: This course was created due to the vision and inspiration of the late Professor Kathy Phillips (CBS), who imagined a world where teaching diversity at business schools is as core as leadership or negotiations. Carrying on her legacy, the collaborative community of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Conference led by Modupe Akinola (CBS), Zoe Kinias (INSEAD), Michael Norton (HBS), and Erin Kelly (MIT Sloan) has been essential to my developing this course. To learn more about our work together, check out: [Developing Quality Conversations about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](https://knowledge.insead.edu/responsibility/developing-quality-conversations-about-diversity-equity-and-inclusion). Insead Knowledge.

<https://knowledge.insead.edu/responsibility/developing-quality-conversations-about-diversity-equity-and-inclusion>Links to an external site.

Credit: 11

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Engage in open, growth-oriented discussions on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in global workplaces.
- Understand your social identities and values around diversity and inclusion, and why equity plays a role.
- Identify where and why bias persists in organizations and communicate the importance evidence-based strategies to address it.
- Make the case for why inclusive cultures that proactively support diversity and equity matter.
- Anticipate and address backsliding or counter-narratives around diversity.
- Lead as an effective ally or advocate to create meaningful change on the issues of diversity that matter most to you.