

Ayanna F. Brown, Ph.D

CURRENT POSITION: Erikson Institute-Vice President for Strategic Growth
& Partnerships & External Affairs

LEADERSHIP STATEMENT: I am a visionary and strategic higher education leader and scholar committed to advancing institutional excellence through collaboration, innovation, and systems-level thinking. With three decades of experience in the field of education, I have worked across public and private institutions, including nonprofits, developing impactful initiatives, supporting institutional change, and community growth. My leadership at both local and national levels has consistently focused on building capacity to improve the lives of youth and communities, which are pillars represented in my research and praxis. I have an in-depth understanding of the field of education and work to build and execute systems and programming that reflect community interests while expanding opportunities that champion new possibilities. My scholarship, teaching, and service ground my leadership in understanding people alongside impact, where cross-sector partnerships and cultivating sustainable relationships are accomplished within collaboration and innovation. My portfolio reflects the importance of the intersections between systems-building, theory, and praxis. I am astute at working with board members, institutional leaders, and faculty while stewarding external relationships, including policy leaders and government. I aim to align with institutional values and strategic priorities while deepening purposeful and intentional critical analysis to advance measurable goals while creating progressive lanes for innovation.

EDUCATION:

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| 2008 Ph.D. | Vanderbilt University Interdisciplinary degree in Language, Literacy and Sociology Dissertation Title: Constructing "Race" Through Talk: A Micro-ethnographic investigation of discussions of "race" among African American secondary students |
| 1998 M.Ed. | Vanderbilt University Peabody College Curriculum and Instructional Leadership Thesis Title: Establishing Family in the Classroom: An Investigation of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy |
| 1996 B.S | Tuskegee University Secondary Education-Language Arts Magna Cum Laude |
| 1995 Summer Pre-Bacc. | Columbia University- Teacher's College Graduate Courses in Education Leadership (6.0 credits/ 2 courses) Graduate Studies Consortium with HBCUs, Ivy League, and The Southern Education Foundation (SEF) |

LEADERSHIP IN POSITIONS HIGHER EDUCATION

Erikson Institute

2025- Present

Inaugural Vice President for Strategic Growth & Partnerships & External Affairs Erikson Institute (Presidential Appointment) & Tenured Professor

Led institution-wide efforts to strengthen Erikson's visibility, partnerships, enrollment, and revenue streams. Impact portfolio includes:

Institutional Growth & Revenue Diversification

- Led a comprehensive growth strategy aligned with strategic priorities to increase professional learning in collaboration with our Office for Sponsored Projects and Research (OSPR)
- Expanded tuition-generating opportunities (e.g., employer-funded education, executive education, and collaborations with community colleges locally and nationally)
- Collaborated with Finance and Academic Affairs to ensure alignment of resources, ROI, and outcomes, including analysis of course curriculum and credit production.

Strategic Partnerships & External Engagement

- Developed criterion and communication strategies for partnership engagement
- Cultivated partnerships with higher education, philanthropy, corporations, non-profits, and government
- Strengthened articulation agreements, dual-degree programs, and workforce pipelines
- Advanced Erikson's visibility and influence in policy spaces related to early childhood, workforce development, mental health, and clinical services.

Enrollment & Executive Education

- Developed key tenets, core activities, and measures for Erikson's Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP), to include implementation strategies
- Oversaw enrollment strategy development across academic and professional programs
- Initiated the revision and expansion of the Department of Policy and Leadership to align with a new vision for emerging leaders collaborating across the institution on a scalable model to increase accessibility and opportunity.
- Developed initiatives to improve decentralized enrollment management structures to increase collaboration, data governance, and use of data to increase student enrollment.
- Increased yield activities improving conversion throughout the enrollment funnel.

Marketing & Visibility

- Directed institutional branding, marketing, and digital engagement strategies
- Promoted thought leadership, public campaigns, and institutional storytelling
- Aligned messaging and communications with Erikson's identity and values
- Developed marketing strategies to leverage Erikson's faculty expertise and alumni impact in the field.
- Increased institutional visibility through brand awareness campaigns optimizing faculty expertise

Cross-Functional Leadership

- HLC Reporting, Strategic Enrollment Planning, and Credit Production
- Led successful RFP and contract negotiations with external consultants

- Partnered across Academic Affairs, Enrollment, Advancement, Operations, and
- Initiated and implemented improved student-centered communications with Student Affairs
- Increased institutional accountability for communications and collaboration
- Advised the President and Board on institutional growth and strategic opportunities
- Led and supported innovation initiatives aligned with community needs

2023-2025

**Associate Vice President for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI), Ombuds, & Title IX Coordinator
Tenured Professor**

- Advised the Executive Team and contributed to the overall strategic discussions and leadership of the institute.
- Developed institute-wide reflective practice and communication circles to support community growth and improvement.
- Increased staff engagement and improved institute morale, initiating and leading the inaugural One Erikson whole institute two-day professional learning and community building orientation.
- Developed curriculum auditing processes for whole institute curriculum and courses
- Launched the inaugural JEDI Council, bringing together faculty, staff, and students in a representative council
- Increased community, staff, and partnership engagement with the JEDI Speaker Series
- Develop the inaugural Ombuds office providing professional, confidential conflict resolution and mediation for faculty, staff, and students
- Led compliance processes for faculty, students, and staff related to Title IX
- Documented State reporting and led Title IX investigations
- Served as direct advisor to the President on institutional needs and supports to improve culture and climate.

2024-2025

Interim Director of Doctoral Education

- Ensured the doctoral program maintains high academic standards
- Collaborated, evaluated, and prepared final documentation for the successful approval of the doctoral program to ISBE.
- Oversaw curriculum requirements, qualifying exams, and dissertation processes
- Monitored program outcomes (completion rates, time-to-degree, placement)
- Served as the main point of contact for doctoral students
- Advised on academic progress, research direction, and professional development
- Worked with faculty to provide reflective and supportive feedback and check-point status reviews
- Tracked student progress and maintained records
- Enforced departmental and graduate school policies
- Prepared reports for the department or graduate school consortium to support doctoral student progress
- Managed funding allocations (stipends, fellowships, assistantships)
- Coordinated course scheduling with Registrar and served as liaison to partner institution

Elmhurst University

- 2019-2023 **Coordinator of the Middle Level English Language Arts Major**
- Developed the MELA Course Program and Sequencing for Major
 - Created programmatic measures for student professional learning outcomes
 - Aligned curriculum with Illinois State Standards and NCTE Professional Learning Standards
 - Organized professional learning placements
 - Tracked student progress and checkpoints
 - Improved communication between individuals or groups in conflict
 - Helped surface misunderstandings and support constructive dialogue
 - Tracked patterns of concerns (without identifying individuals)
 - Highlight emerging risks, trends, or systemic problems within the organization
- 2018-2023 **Elmhurst University Ombudsperson (Elected)**
- Worked directly with the VPAA and Dean on communications and trend data reporting
 - Provided a safe, private space for individuals to discuss concerns
 - Helped people clarify issues, explore options, and decide next steps
 - Used informal conflict resolution techniques (e.g., coaching, mediation, shuttle diplomacy)
- 2016-2019 **Associate Chair of Curriculum & Professional Development,
Department of Education**
- 2015-2016 **Chair- Elmhurst College Integrated Curriculum (ECIC)**
- Led and coordinated university-wide collaboration on general the education curriculum.
 - Coordinated course proposals review, including assessment plan, alignments to standards, and outcomes.
 - Facilitated decision letters
 - Conducted University-wide trainings on course proposals

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

American Education Research Association (AERA)

- 2026-2027 National Program Co-Chair, (Presidential Appointment)
- 2025-2028 Minority Fellowship Selection Committee (Presidential Appointment)
- 2023-2024 Division K Co-Chair for Section 9 Initial Teacher and Teacher Educator Preparation
- 2022-2023 Division G Co-Chair for Section 3: Languages, Literacies, and Representations
- 2020-2022 Division G Secretary & Director of Communications (Elected)

2007-2010 Division G Newsletter Editor (VP of Division Appointment)

National Council of Teachers of English

2025-2028 Chair for the Committee Against Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English.

2023-2026 Trustee of the Research Foundation

2020-2023 National Council of Teachers of English National Webinar with Invited Scholars and Authors for Black History Month

2021-2022 Juneteenth National Collaboration and Community Activism with Penguin Random House Books, Summer 2021-2022

2020-2022 Cultivating New Voices Mentor of Early Career Faculty (Executive Director Appointment)

2020 Invited Appointment Literacy Educator Today Task, 2020

2020 Appointed to the Annual Program Planning and Review Committee

2013-2014 National Council of Teachers of English Assembly for Research Chair and Conference Coordinator (Elected); Coordinator and Host of Mid-Winter Conference

2012-2013 Associate Chair for the Assembly for Research National Council of Teachers of English (Elected)

2010-2013 Standing Committee on Research

2009-2010 National Language Collaborative (formerly identified as the Commission on Language)

2009-2010 Secretary National Council Teachers of English Assembly for Research Secretary (Elected)

2003-2006 National Commission on Reading, 2003-2006

2003-2006 Assembly for Research Newsletter Co-Editor for the

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

2017 Founding Member The World Congress of Applied Linguistics on Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Publications

- Pinto, M.B., Hong, H., **Brown, A.F.**, Bloome, D. (in press) Reading comprehension as jazz practice. *Talking Points, Volume* (Issue), XXX
- Watson, V., Smith, P. & **Brown, A.F. (Eds.)** (2024). Diasporic Tellings of Race, Literacies, Joys, and Geographies in the Lives of Black African Immigrant Youth. *Special Issue in Research in Teaching English*
- Watson, V. W. M., Smith, P., & **Brown, A. F.** (2024). Editors' introduction: Diasporic tellings of race, literacies, joys, and geographies in the lives of Black African immigrant youth. *Special Issue in Research in Teaching English* pp. 133–154.
- Brown, A.F. & Bloome, D. (2020). Deconstructing and reconstructing language, race, and power relations in a secondary classroom in the United States. *Revista Linguagem em Foco*. V.11,2,46-62.
- Brown, A.F. (2018). "Beautiful, also, are the souls of my people:" Literacies within and without. *Voices from the Middle*. National Council of Teachers of English
- Brown, A.F., Bloome, D., Morris, M., Power-Carter, S., & Willis, A.I. (2017). Classrooms conversations in the study of race and the disruption of social and educational inequalities. In Fisher, M.T. & Souto-Manning, M (Eds.). *Disrupting inequality through education research: Review of Research in Education*. 41, 1, 453-476
- Brown, A. F. & Tuck-Lively, J. (2012) "Selling the farm to buy the cow": black names and racialized consequences narrativized within African American communities. *Journal of Black Studies*, 43,6, pp.667-692.
- Brown, A.F. & Copot, H. (Fall 2012) Deconstructing "race" in (re)constructing change. *Council on Undergraduate Research*, 32, 5, p. 30.
- Brown, A.F. (December 2011) "Descendants of 'Ruth': Black girls coping through the 'black male crisis.'" *The Urban Review*, 43, pp. 597-619.

Edited Books

- Brown, A.F. (2022) (Editor). *Racial literacies informed by the sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts for youth*. National Council of Teachers of English.
- William-White, L., Muccular, D., Muccular, G., and **Brown, A.F.** (Eds.). (2013). *Critical consciousness in curricular research: Evidence from the field*. NY: Peter

Lang

Books

Bloome, D., **Brown, A.F.**, Hong, H. & Pinto, M.B. (in press). Reading comprehension as intertextual practice: Building meaning together. Routledge.

Book Chapters

Bloome, D., **Brown, A. F.**, & Pinto, M. B. (2026). Reading comprehension as social practice(s) in social events. In S. E. Israel (Ed.), *Handbook of research on reading comprehension* (3rd ed.). Routledge. **Brown, A.F.** (2023). Race. In L. M. Barker, D. Gorlewski, J. Gorlewski, & C. Miller (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of English Language Arts Education* (pp. 191-197). Brill.

Brown A.F. (2022). What constitutes literacy in a society organized by race? Racial literacy as an intellectual imperative. In A.F.Brown (Ed.), *Racial literacies informed by the sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts for youth*. (pp. 8-17). National Council of Teachers of English.

Brown A.F. (2022). Racial literacy considerations for instruction. In A.F.Brown (Ed.), *Racial literacies informed by the sociopolitical and sociocultural contexts for youth*. (p. 113). National Council of Teachers of English.

Bloome, D., **Brown, A.F.**, Kim, M.Y, & Tang, R. (2019). Languaging Personhood in Classroom Conversations and Literacy Practices. In Beach, R. & Bloome, D. (Eds.). *Social Worlds: Retheorizing The Teaching And Learning Of Literacy And The Language Arts*. Routledge

Brown, A. F. (2018). Culturally relevant pedagogy. In Lubniewski, K., Cosgrove, D. F., & Robinson, T. Y. (Eds.). *Supervision modules to support educators in collaborative teaching: Helping to Support & Maintain Consistent Practice in the Field*. Pp. 39-54 Information Age Publishing.

Brown, A.F. (2013) We will understand it better by and by: Sojourning through Racial literacy. In L. William-White, D. Muccular, G. Muccular, and **A.F. Brown** (Eds.). *Critical consciousness in curricular research: Evidence from the field*. New York, NY: Peter

Bloome, D., & **Brown, A.** (2013). "All That Jazz": Classroom Reading as Intertextual Practice. In *Language, Ethnography, and Education* (pp. 132-148). Routledge.

Tuck-Lively, J. & **Brown, A.F.** (2013). Grandma's Brer Rabbit wasn't the fool you so admire: Teaching to Oppose the Conveniences Blackness Affords Whiteness In L. William-White, D. Muccular, G. Muccular, and A.F. Brown (Eds.). *Critical consciousness in curricular research: Evidence from the field*. New York, NY: Peter Lang

Bloome, D. & **Brown, A.F.** (2011) Classroom reading and “All That Jazz,” in Grenfell, M. (Ed.) *Language, Ethnography, and Education*. New York: Routledge.

Brown, A.F. (2010). “Just because I am a Black male doesn’t mean I am a rapper!”: Sociocultural Dilemmas in Using “Rap” Music as an Educational Tool in Classrooms. In Alridge, D. (Ed.) *Message in the Music: Hip Hop, History, and Pedagogy*. Tapestry Press: PA.

Brown, A.F. & William-White, L. (2010). We are not the same minority: The tales of two sisters. In Robinson, C. & Clardy, P. (Eds.) *Tedious Journeys: Autoethnography by Women of Color in Academe*. Peter Lang, USA.

Bloome, D., Carter, S., & **Brown, A.F.** (2010). Studying literacy practices in classrooms using critical discourse analysis: From the bottom up. In Miller, sj & Kirkland, D. (Eds.). *Change Matters: Critical Essays on Moving Social Justice Research from Theory to Policy*. New York: Peter Lang.

Brown, A. F. (November, 2005). Using Hip-Hop in Schools: Are we appreciating culture or rapping rap? *The Council Chronicle*. Retrieved March 10, 2010. <http://www.ncte.org/magazine/archives>

Richards, H., Artiles, A.J., Klingner, J., **Brown, A. F.** (2005). Equity in special education placement: A school self-assessment guide for culturally responsive practice. Form A. National Center for Culturally Responsive Education Systems. Retrieved May, 4, 2012. www.nccrest.org.

Richards, H., Artiles, A.J., Klingner, J., **Brown, A. F.** (2005). Equity in special education placement: A school self-assessment guide for culturally responsive practice. Form B. National Center for Culturally Responsive Education Systems. Retrieved May, 4, 2012. www.nccrest.org.

Richards, H., **Brown, A.F.**, & Forde, T. (2004). Addressing Diversity in Schools: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. National Center for Culturally Responsive Education Systems. Retrieved March 10, 2010. www.nccrest.org

On-Line Journals

Brown, A.F. (2021). Literacies as equitable practices: Turning lesson plans inside-out. *Walking the Talk: Voices for Educational Equity*, 17, 2, pp. 16-23. <https://center4success.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Voices-for-Educational-Equity-v17-2-November-2021.pdf>

Invited Blogs

Brown, A.F. (2021). A great reward. National Council of Teachers of English.
<https://ncte.org/blog/2021/10/a-great-reward/>

Invited On-line National Talks

Brown, A.F. (2022). Moderator for the African American Read-In. “Because Claudette,” featuring author Tracey Baptiste and Illustrator Tonya Engel.

Brown, A.F., Cooks, J., Parker, K., Perry, T. (2021) “Literacies as freedom tickets: Black caucus reflect on the texts that set them free. National Council of Teachers of English.

Invited Book Review

Perry, T., Zemelman, S., Smith, K. (2022) *Teaching for racial equity: Becoming interrupters*. Stenhouse Publishers

Published Interviews:

Brown, A. F. (in press). On Epistemology in Researching the Teaching and Learning of Literacy, Literature, and the Language Arts: Interview with David Green

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

GRADUATE TEACHING EXPERIENCE & PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Erikson Institute Graduate Courses: Teaching and Learning (E497); Dissertation Seminar Special Topics in Research (E590 & E 591)

Elmhurst College Graduate Courses: Diversity Issues in Education (MTL- 596), Culturally Relevant Curriculum & Instruction (MTL 567), Building Academic Literacies for Professional Educators License (EDU 521), and Language and Academic Literacies in K-12 Classrooms: Assessment and Intervention (CSD 516)

Dissertation Committee Member:

Nicole Misra, University of Missouri- Illinois
Duane B. Davis, University of Illinois Chicago
Claire Donavon-Scane, University of Illinois Chicago

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Elmhurst University: Sociocultural Foundations in Education (EDU 104), Secondary Education Building Academic Literacies in K-12 Education (SEC 421), Race & Equity in American Education (EDU 331)

Vanderbilt University: Secondary Education English Language Arts, Methods, Reading Across the Content Area, and Reading Methods

INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES (Graduate and Undergraduate)

Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD 516); 21st Century Chicago Honors Lecture Race and Equity in the City (Honors 404); Environmental Racism Honors Lecture (Honors 404).

GRADUATE TEACHING AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP

2003-2005 Vanderbilt University Peabody College: Equity in Schools

COLLEGIATE SUPERVISORY EXPERIENCE

- Fall 2021 Field & Clinical Placements for Middle Level ELA Majors (MELA)
- 2015-2017 Elmhurst University Secondary Education Student-Teaching Supervisor
Field supervising secondary education student-teachers in middle level and high school English courses. Monitoring co-teaching lesson planning and instructional assessments. Collaborating, reflecting, and instructional feedback processes with clinical instruction

PUBLIC EDUCATION TEACHING & LEADERSHP EXPERIENCE

- 2000-2004 Metro Nashville Public Schools & Vanderbilt University
Imagine College/Project Grad/
Scholarships Coordinator at Pearl Cohn High School
- 1996-1999 Metro Nashville Public Schools
7th Grade Language Arts Teacher

LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN K-HIGHER EDUCATION

- 2020-2023 President of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society of Elmhurst University
- Summer 2021 Inside-Out” The Center“Literacies as Equitable Practice: Turning Lesson Plans
- 2021- 2022 Winthrop Harbor Schools
Culturally Responsive Foundations and Racial Literacy Instructional Leadership
Winthrop Harbor, Illinois (Grayslake Region)
- 2021-2023 Lake County Technical High School
Content Area Literacies and Professional Development for Vocational Educational Instructors

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| 2021-2023 | Lake County Regional Office of Education Professional Development Consultant Culturally Relevant Teacher and Leadership Institute |
| Summer 2020 Fall 2020 | Elmhurst University Faculty Retreat “Resisting the Instructional Caste System at Predominantly White Institutions” |
| Summer 2020 | Elmhurst NOYCE NSF Grant Lecture “The Relevancy of Literate Practices in STEM Pedagogy: A Case for Texts” |
| Summer 2020 | University of Illinois Chicago School of Public Health “Advancing Health, Advancing Racial Justice” |
| Summer 2018 | The Center for Success in High Needs Schools Culturally Responsive Education and Racial Literacies: Pedagogies that Matter |
| Winter-Summer 2014 | Golden Apple Foundation Scholars’ Leadership in edTPA Preparation and Readiness |
| Summer 2010 | North Central College Professional Development Workshop on Developing Reading Instruction for Pre-Service Summer Scholars |
| Fall 2008-2017 | Associated Colleges of Illinois/Summer Institutes for Educators of Tomorrow- Ongoing professional development of state educators on issues of race, equity, and culturally responsive education. representing the experiences of children of color. |

RESEARCH GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

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| Fall 2022-2027 | US Department of Education's Office of Elementary Education The Great Lakes Equity Center Award: 50K |
| Spring 2022-2027 | National Science Foundation: Noyce Grant Promoting Inclusiveness and Diversity in STEM Education (PRIDE) Co-Principal Investigator Award: 1.3 million |
| Spring 2020-Fall 2021 | National Science Foundation: Noyce Grant Recruiting Elmhurst STEM Undergraduates for Lifelong Teaching (RESULT) Co- Principal Investigator Award: \$122,893.00 |
| Spring 2017 | Andrew K. Prinz International Fellowship Discussions of Race in the United States and Brazil: Experiencing racial history in the presence of inequality |

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| | Award: 5K |
| Spring 2017 | Mentoring Research Grant Public Policy Research Center at University Missouri- St. Louis Award: 2K |
| Summer 2014 | Primary Investigator Qualitative Coding and Racial Literacy Faculty-Student Collaborative Research Grant Undergraduate Student: Michael Meadows Award: 3K |
| Fall 2013 | Race to the Top III Teacher Education Program Redesign Grant Co-Principal Investigator Award: 6K |
| Summer 2011 | Teaching Hispanic Children’s Literature in Elementary and Middle Schools Elmhurst College Interdisciplinary Course Development Grant Award: 6K |
| Summer 2009 | Primary Investigator Deconstructing ‘race’-talk in college level student writing Faculty-Student Collaborative Research Grant Award: \$6.5K |
| Summer 2008 | Primary Investigator “Using Sociolinguistic Methods to Examine Discussions of ‘Race’ in Secondary Classroom Settings.” Faculty-Student Collaborative Research Grant Award: \$6.5K |
| Summer 2001- 2002 | Teacher Researcher and Consultant Spencer Research Grant Vanderbilt University Peabody College |
| Fall 1999 | Teacher Research and Consultant on Intertextuality Spencer Research Grant Vanderbilt University Peabody College |
| 1999-2001 | Teachers as Leaders Initiative (TaLI) Southern Education Foundation Vanderbilt University |

KEY SKILLS

- HLC Accreditation writing and document
- Institutional Messaging & Marketing
- Project Management

- Impact Report Development
- High-Level Communication
- Contract Negotiations
- Grant Reviews
- Tenure & Promotion Portfolio Review
- Faculty/Staff Hiring
- Enrollment Management Leadership
- Public Speaking/ Communication
- Title IX Compliance
- Scholarship Production and Research Methods
- Mentoring
- Curriculum Auditing
- Program Evaluation
- State Level Budget Contracts

PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS AS REVIEWER OR EDITORIAL BOARDS

Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood
 Cognition & Instruction
 International Journal of Qualitative Research in Education
 Research in Teaching English
 Reading Research Quarterly
 Journal of Black Studies
 Urban Education

*A list of National and International research presentations can be provided upon request.

**A list of K-Higher Education Curriculum and Development projects can be provided upon request

***References Available Upon Request