

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Glossary of Key Terms**

*Diversity*: The wide variety of shared and different personal and group characteristics among human beings.

*Equity*: Takes into consideration the fact that the social identifiers (race, gender, socioeconomic status, etc.) do, in fact, affect equality. In an equitable environment, an individual or a group would be given what was needed to give them equal advantage. This would not necessarily be equal to what others were receiving. It could be more or different. Equity is an ideal and a goal, not a process. It ensures that everyone has the resources they need to succeed.

*Inclusion*: Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

**A**

*Able-ism* – The belief that disabled individuals are inferior to able-bodied individuals, leading to discrimination and oppression of individuals with disabilities

*Accessibility* – The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable by individuals with disabilities

*A-Gender ­*– Not identifying with any gender, the feeling of having no gender

*Ally –* A person of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another group

*Anti-Racism –* Being critically aware of the existence of racism and understanding how it is systemic and the policy or practice of opposing racism and promoting racial tolerance.

*Anti-Semitism –* The fear or hatred of Jews, Judaism, and related symbols.

*A-Sexuality –* Little or no romantic, emotional, and/or sexual attractions toward others.

**B**

*Bias –* A form of prejudice that results from the tendency and need to classify individuals into categories

*Bigotry* – An unreasonable or irrational attachment to negative stereotypes and prejudices

*Bi-Racial* – A person whose biological parents are of two different races

*Bi-Sexual* – A romantic, sexual, and/or emotional attraction toward people of all sexes

*BIPOC* – An acronym used to refer to black, indigenous, and people of color based on the recognition of collective experiences of systemic racism

*Black* - Any various populations that have a dark pigmentation of skin who identify as Black, including those in the African Diaspora and within Africa. Should be capitalized

**C**

*Cis-Gender –* A person who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth

*Class-ism* – Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on a difference in socioeconomic status, income, class

*Colonization* – The action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area

*Color Blind* – The belief in treating everyone “equally” by treating everyone the same; (i.e., “I don’t see race, gender, etc.”)

*Conscious Bias –* Refers to the attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level; Explicit bias

*Critical Race Theory* – Challenges the dominant discourse on race and racism as they relate to education by examining how educational theory, policy, and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups

*Culture* – Culture is the pattern of daily life learned consciously and unconsciously by a group of people

*Cultural Appropriation* – The adoption or theft of icons, rituals, aesthetic standards, and behavior from one culture or subculture by another

**D**

*Decolonize –* The active and intentional process of unlearning values, beliefs and conceptions that have caused harm to people through colonization

*Diaspora* – A historical dispersion of a group of people deriving from similar origins

*Disability* – An impairment that may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or some combination of these

*Discrimination* – The denial fair treatment by both individuals and institutions in many areas, including employment, education, housing, banking, and political rights

**E**

*Ethnicity –* A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base

*Ethnocentricity –* The emotional attitude that one's own race, nation, or culture is superior to all others

*Equality* – All people within a society or isolated group have the same status and rights regardless of their social identities

**F**

*Feminism* – The valuing of women and the belief in and advocacy for social, political, and economic equality and liberation for all genders

*Femme –* A person who expresses and/or identifies with femininity

*First Generation –* An individual, neither of whose parents completed a baccalaureate degree.

*First Nation People –* Individuals who identify as those who were the first people to live on the Western Hemisphere continent; People also identified as Native Americans

**G**

*Gay* – A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender

*Gender –* Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for boys and men or girls and women

*Gender Dysphoria –* Significant, clinical distress caused when a person’s assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify; Gender Identity Disorder

*Gender Expression –* External manifestations of gender, expressed through a person's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice, and/or body characteristics

*Gender Fluid* – A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender

*Gender Identity –* Your internal sense of self; how you relate to your gender

*Gender Non-Conforming* – People who do not behave in a way that confirms to the traditional expectations of their gender ow hose gender expression does not fit into a fixed category

**H**

*Harassment* – Unwanted conduct with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment based on their race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, age, etcetera

*Hate Crime* – A crime motivated by the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation of the victim

*Heterosexuality –* A sexual orientation in which a person is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of a sex other than their own

*Hispanic –* Describes people, descendants, and cultures of Spanish-speaking countries, including many Latin American counties and Spain

*Homophobia* – The fear or hatred of homosexuality (and other non-heterosexual identities) and persons perceived to be gay or lesbian

*Homosexual –* A sexual orientation in which a person is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same sex

**I**

*Indigenous People –* Ethnic groups who are the original inhabitants of a given region, in contrast to groups that have settled, occupied, or colonized the area

*Institutional Racism* - Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color

*Intercultural Competency* – A process of learning about and becoming allies with people from other cultures, thereby broadening our own understanding and ability to participate in a multicultural process

*Internalized Oppression (i.e. Homophobia, Racism) –* The process whereby individuals in the target group make oppression internal and personal by coming to believe that the lies, prejudices, and stereotypes about them are true

*Intersectionality* – An approach largely advanced by women of color, arguing that classifications such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another

*“-Isms” -* A way of describing any attitude, action or institutional structure that subordinates (oppresses) a person or group because of their target group. For example, color (racism), gender (sexism), economic status (classism), older age (ageism), religion (e.g., anti-Semitism), sexual orientation (heterosexism), language/immigrant status (xenophobism), etc.

**L**

*Latinx/o/a/e –* Used to describe people and cultural of Latin American descent

*Lesbian –* A woman who is attracted to other women

*LGBTQIA+* - An inclusive term for those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual

**M**

*Marginalized* – Excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community

*Micro-Aggression* – The verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, insults, or belittlement, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon discriminatory belief systems

*Model Minority* – Refers to a minority ethnic, racial, or religious group whose members achieve a higher degree of success than the population average, typically measured in income, education, crime rate, and family stability. While individuals employing the Model Minority trope may think they are being complimentary, in fact the term is related to colorism and its root, anti-Blackness

*Multi-Racial* – An individual that comes from more than one race

**N**

*National Origin –* The political state from which an individual hails; may or may not be the same as that person's current location or citizenship

*Non-Binary –* People who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman

*Non-White –* Used at times to reference all persons or groups outside of the white culture, often in the clear consciousness that white culture should be seen as an alternative to various non-white cultures and not as normative

**O**

*Oppression -* Results from the use of institutional power and privilege where one person or group benefits at the expense of another

**P**

*Pan-Sexual –* The potential for sexual attractions or romantic love toward people of all gender identities and biological sexes

*Privilege* - Unearned access to resources (social power) only readily available to some individuals as a result of their social group

**Q**

*Queer –* An umbrella term that can refer to anyone who transgresses society's view of gender or sexuality

*Questioning* – A term used to refer to an individual who is uncertain of their sexual orientation or identity

**R**

*Race* – A social construct that artificially divides individuals into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly skin color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation or history, ethnic classification, and/or the social, economic, and political needs of a society at a given period of time

*Racial Equity* – Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.

*Racial Profiling* – The use of race or ethnicity as grounds for suspecting someone of having committed an offense

*Racial Trauma –* Racial Trauma or race-based stress, comes from dealing with racial harassment, racial violence, or institutional racism

*Racism* – Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on a difference in race/ethnicity

*Religion -* A system of beliefs, usually spiritual in nature, and often in terms of a formal, organized denomination

**S**

*Safe Space –* Refers to an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule or denial of experience

*Sex* – Biological classification of male or female (based on genetic or physiological features); as opposed to gender

*Sexism* – Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on a difference in sex/gender

*Sexual Orientation* – One’s natural (not chosen) preference in sexual partners

*Social Justice –* A broad term for action intended to create genuine equality, fairness, and respect among peoples

*Social Identity* – A person’s sense of who they are based on their group memberships. Each person has multiple social identities associated with varying degrees of privilege

*Social Oppression* – When one social group, whether knowingly or unconsciously, exploits another group for its own benefit

*Stereotype –* A form of generalization rooted in blanket beliefs and false assumptions, a product of processes of categorization that can result in a prejudiced attitude, uncritical judgment, and intentional or unintentional discrimination

*Systemic Racism* – Complex interactions of culture, policy, and institutions that create and maintain racial inequality in nearly every facet of life for people of color

**T**

*Tolerance -* Acceptance, and open‐mindedness to different practices, attitudes, and cultures

*Token-ism –* Hiring or seeking just to have representation such as a few women and/or racial or ethnic minority persons so as to appear inclusive while remaining mono-cultural

*Transgender/Trans –* An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term transgender is not indicative of gender expression, sexual orientation, hormonal makeup, physical anatomy, or how one is perceived in daily life.

*Transphobia* – Fear or hatred of transgender people; can exist in LGB and straight communities

*Two Spirit* – An umbrella term for a wide range of non-binary culturally recognized gender identities and expressions among Indigenous people

**U**

*Unconscious Bias* – Social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness; Implicit bias

*Undocumented –* A foreign-born person living in the United States without legal citizenship status **V**

*Veteran Status* – Whether or not an individual has served in a nation's armed forces (or other uniformed service)

**W**

*Whiteness –* A broad social construction that embraces the white culture, history, ideology, racialization, expressions, and economic, experiences, epistemology, and emotions and behaviors and nonetheless reaps material, political, economic, and structural benefits for those socially deemed white

*White Fragility* – Discomfort and defensiveness on the part of a white person when confronted by information about racial inequality and injustice

*White Privilege –* White Privilege is the spillover effect of racial prejudice and White institutional power. White privilege is the ability to grow up thinking that race doesn’t matter. As a member of the dominant group a White person has greater access or availability to resources because of being White. Privilege may be less recognizable to some White people because of gender, age, sexual orientation, economic class or physical or mental ability, but it remains a reality because of one’s membership in the White dominant group

*White Supremacy –* The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazis, white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and “undeserving.”

**X**

*Xenophobia –* Hatred or fear of foreigners/strangers or of their politics or culture

Sources:

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

<https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/DEIGlossary>

<https://www.pacificu.edu/life-pacific/support-safety/office-equity-diversity-inclusion/edi-resources/glossary-terms>

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