

Equity, Inclusion, & Diversity Vocab

1. **Cultural competence(y)** is the ability to interact effectively across various facets of diversity, to flex with differences. Cultural competence is what we need to be inclusive. It requires (1) being self-aware of your own culture, assumptions, values, styles, biases, attitudes, privilege, etc.; (2) understanding others' cultures, assumptions, values, styles, biases, attitudes, privilege, etc.; and (3) based on this knowledge, understanding your potential impact on others and interacting with them in a situationally appropriate way for greater effectiveness and inclusion.
2. **Diversity:** the unique differences among individuals in a group based on which we may be treated differently in society. Ethnicity is not the only way in which we are diverse as a group. There are countless visible and invisible facets of diversity. Furthermore, a person cannot be “diverse” (as in “diverse candidate”).
3. **Inclusion:** embracing, leveraging, and celebrating the strengths of our diversity and ensuring everyone feels welcomed and valued for who they are. Inclusion is not merely tolerating differences or overcoming differences to focus on “our common humanity.” Diversity is what we are, and inclusion is what we do.
4. **Equity:** An approach that ensure everyone is given equal opportunity; this means that resources may be divided and shared unequally to make sure that each person can access an opportunity. Equity takes into account that people have different access to resources because of system of oppression and privilege. Equity seeks to balance that disparity.
5. **Privilege:** The access to resources a person has, consciously or not consciously, by virtue of being part of a dominant group in society. It is the freedom from stress, anxiety, fear or harm related to your identity.
6. **System of Oppression** refers to systems of power in society that advantage certain groups over others, and include ideologies such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc. (collectively “the isms”)
7. **Intersectionality** refers to the interconnected nature of identity such as race, class and gender, and the interdependent systems of power and privilege that result from the interconnectedness. For example, a heterosexual black female-identified person may experience power and privilege differently than a queer black female-identified person or a heterosexual white female-identified person. A salient quote on intersectionality is Audre Lorde’s quote “There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

8. **Microaggressions:** Subtle, often unconscious everyday behaviors that often unintentionally denigrate someone from a historically marginalized or non-dominant group. They are small, but if experienced chronically, a person can feel, “death by a thousand tiny cuts.”
9. **Stereotypes (versus Generalizations):** Stereotypes refer to the widely held, oversimplified ideas we hold about a person based on their identity. Usually, stereotypes are based on assumptions, popular opinion, or misinformation, are generally negative, are sweeping and simple, and are often characterized by words such as “always” and “never.” Generalizations, on the other hand, are based on observable experiences within a community, are not necessarily negative, are helpful and intended to guide people in their actions, are complex, and are often qualified by words such as “often,” “sometimes,” and “may.”
10. **Colorblindness:** The process by which a person attempts to ignore the existence of race or skin color in service of seeing past race and just seeing the person. This de-emphasizing of race, however, ignores the real, lived experience of people of color in the US and ignores their experience.
11. **Race (versus Ethnicity):** Race is both a false construct that historically and currently conflates skin color and ancestry with behavior and culture. However, though race is a false construct, its existence is a widely held assumption and has real consequences for all people.
12. **People of color** include U.S. citizens who do not identify as only white or Caucasian under the current U.S. Census ethnicity categories. This is the preferred and most inclusive term, currently.
13. **Ethnicity:** A group of people that identify with one another based on shared culture.
14. **Culture:** A set of shared ideas, customs, traditions, beliefs, and practices shared by a group of people that is constantly changing, in subtle and major ways.
15. **Indigenous:** A person or group of people whose culture, identity, and often spirituality are rooted in a particular place.
16. **Class:** Class refers to how much wealth you have access to through property, inheritance, family support, investments, or other wealth not directly associated to wage earning.
17. **Socioeconomic status:** The amount of money you earn in wages each month or year. This can change rapidly.



18. **Disability:** A mental or physical difference that limits a person in everyday activities. Increasingly, disability is being discussed as a social construct, meaning that physical and mental norms are arbitrary from which we then determine what is different or what is a disability.
19. **Sex:** a term used to refer to the chromosomal, hormonal, and anatomical characteristics used to classify individual as male, female, or intersex.
20. **Gender Identity:** Refers to the internal perception of one's gender; how a person labels themselves. Gender is not what's between your legs; it's what's between your ears. There are countless ways in which people may identify themselves. Gender is a universe and we are all stars.
21. **Gender Expression:** The way that someone outwardly displays their gender through style, demeanor, and social behavior.
22. **Genderqueer:** A person's gender identity or gender expression that does not align with the gender binary (male and female)
23. **Transgender:** A person whose gender identity (and sometimes expression) does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans* is an umbrella term that refers to various different ways that people transgress gender norms.
24. **Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity (and often gender expression) matches the sex they were assigned at birth.
25. **Sexual Orientation:** the type of attraction one feels for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to.
26. **Romantic Orientation:** An affinity for someone that evokes the desire to engage in an emotionally intimate relationship.

