

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Glossary

Words have different meanings in different contexts. This partial glossary of terms ensures a common understanding of how words are used in our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts at UWM.

Ally. Someone who acts in the interest of an individual, or a group that is not their own (in terms of racial identity, gender, faith identity, sexual orientation, etc.). Allies acknowledge disadvantage and oppression of groups other than their own; take risks and action on their behalf; commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

Anchoring. A form of bias where a decision is made based upon minimal information. For example, determining if an applicant is qualified based upon a personal characteristic, such as name, address or professional memberships.

Bias. A form of prejudice that results from our tendency and need to classify individuals into categories and base our actions on these categories. Typically, biases are formed on stereotypes.

Bigotry. Intolerant prejudice which glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups.

Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). Term used to highlight the unique relationship to whiteness that Indigenous and Black (African Americans) people have, which shapes the experiences of and relationship to white supremacy for all people of color within a U.S. context.

Cisgender. A person who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth.

Color Blind. The belief that everyone should be treated "equally" without respect to societal, economic, historical, racial or other difference. No differences are seen or acknowledged; everyone is the same.

Collusion.

When people act (secretly or openly) to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression.

Confirmation Bias – the act of seeking information that supports your view point while rejecting information that opposes your beliefs.

Cultural Appropriation. The non-consensual/misappropriation use of cultural elements for commodification or profit purposes—including symbols, art, language, customs—often without understanding, acknowledgment, or respect for its value in the original culture. In some cases names or symbols are used in ways that are factually inaccurate and cause emotional harm and broad misunderstanding.

Cultural Competence. The state of having and applying knowledge and skill in four areas: awareness of one's own cultural worldview, recognition of one's attitude toward cultural differences, realization of different cultural practices and worldviews, and thoughtfulness in cross-cultural interaction. Over an extended period of time individuals and organizations develop the wisdom and capability to: examine critically how cultural worldviews influence perceptions of power, dominance and inequality, and behave honorably within the complex dynamics of differences and commonalities among humans, groups and systems.

Cultural Pluralism. Recognition of the contribution of each group to a common civilization. It encourages the maintenance and development of different life styles, languages and convictions. It is a commitment to deal cooperatively with common concerns. It strives to create the conditions of harmony and respect within a culturally diverse society.

Cultural Racism. Those aspects of society that overtly and covertly attribute value and normality to white people and whiteness, and devalue, stereotype and label People of Color and/or people of minority ethnicities and nationalities as "other," different, less than or render them invisible.

Culture.

An integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that is both a result of, and integral to, the human capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. It is dynamic and changes with time.

Discrimination. The unequal treatment of members of various groups, based on conscious or unconscious prejudice, which favor one group over others on differences of race, gender, economic class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, language, age, national identity, religion, and other categories.

Diversity. Individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, linguistic or other affiliations).

Dominant Identity. Identities through which one holds power or is seen as the norm.

Equality. A state of affairs in which all people within a specific society or isolated group have the same status in certain respects, including civil rights, freedom of speech, property rights and equal access to certain social goods and services.

Equity. Crafting solutions that meet the needs of different groups based on their histories and access to resources—outcomes oriented (different than equality or sameness; deals with specificity). Equity is inherently not balanced—deliberately and intentionally so to lead to the outcome of fairness by taking into account "different starting places."

Student focused equity: The creation of opportunities for historically underserved and underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion. Employee focused equity: The creation of opportunities for historically and presently undeserved and

underrepresented populations of employees (faculty, staff, and students) to have equal access to professional growth opportunities and resource networks that are capable of closing the demographic disparities in leadership roles in all spheres of institutional functioning.

Equity-mindedness. A demonstrated awareness of and willingness to: address equity issues among institutional leaders, faculty, staff and students; take stock of the contradictions between the ideals of democratic education and the social, institutional and individual practices, as well as policies, expectations and unspoken rules, that contribute to persistent inequalities in outcomes among different groups; and acknowledge the socio-historical context of exclusionary practices, racism and the effect of power asymmetries on opportunities and outcomes for those who are underserved, underrepresented or marginalized.

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.

Feminism. The advocacy of women's rights on the group of equality of the sexes.

Hetero-sexism. The presumption that everyone is, and should be, heterosexual.

Implicit Bias. Negative associations expressed automatically that people unknowingly hold and that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions; also known as unconscious or hidden bias.

Inclusion. The active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege, and build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces and opportunities to flourish for all.

Individual Racism. The beliefs, attitudes and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can occur at both a conscious and unconscious level and can be both active and passive.

Inequity. Policies or practices that perpetuate inequality, uneven access, and uneven outcomes.

Institutional Racism. Refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes and opportunities for different groups based on racial discrimination or render particular groups and individuals invisible.

Intercultural Competency. This is 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. The key element to becoming more culturally competent is respect for the ways that others live in and organize the world and an openness to learn from them.

Internalized Racism. The situation that occurs in a racist system when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominated group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors. It can lead to Imposter Syndrome, which may limit an individual's participation or career advancement.

Intersectionality. The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Intergroup Bias. Refers to a form of favoritism toward one's own group or having a lower standard set for your group over another.

Micro-aggressions. 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.

Oppression. The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society.

People of Color. Used primarily in the United States as a blanket term to describe any person who is not white; the term is meant to be inclusive among non-white groups, emphasizing common experiences of racism. Many groups prefer different terms for their communities.

Patriarchy. A hierarchical-structured society in which men hold more power.

Positionality. Refers to one's position in a social structure, often in relation to others.

Power. Formal: based on one's title or position. For example, faculty members have power over students and administrators hold power staff, which can lead to various forms of discrimination or favoritism. Informal: based on one's privilege, control, access, ability to decide.

Prejudice. A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on stereotypes that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Privilege. Having access and power that may be earned or unearned by virtue of race or gender.

Race. A socially constructed category of identification based on physical characteristics, ancestry, historical affiliation, or shared culture. Socially constructed BUT has real impact on all major life outcomes and experiences.

Racial Equity. The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity is no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When this term is used, the term may imply that racial equity is one part of racial justice, and thus also includes work to address the root causes of inequities, not just their manifestations.

Racism. Interpersonal level: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior. Systemic: a doctrine or

political program or set of policies based on the assumption of racism and designed to execute its principles. In the United States, systemic racism privileges Whiteness and is designed to uphold the superiority of Whiteness.

Scapegoating. The act of blaming an individual or group for something when, in reality, there is no one person or group responsible for the problem. It targets another person or group as responsible for problems in society because of that person's group identity.

Sexism. Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on a difference in sex/gender; usually by men against women.

Social Justice. Social justice constitutes a form of activism, based on principles of equity and inclusion that encompasses a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Social justice involves social actors which have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and society as a whole.

Stereotype. A generalization rooted in blanket beliefs and assumptions, a product of processes of categorization that can result in a prejudiced attitude, uncritical judgment, and intentional or unintentional discrimination. Stereotypes are often created as cognitive shortcuts. Typically negative, but they can also be positive.

System of Oppression. Conscious and unconscious, non-random, and organized harassment, discrimination, exploitation, discrimination, prejudice and other forms of unequal treatment that impact different groups.

Tokenism. Having presence without meaningful participation. Often the result of an attempt to meet a stated quotas but not valued.

Tolerance. Acceptance, and open-mindedness to different practices, attitudes, and culture; does not necessarily mean agreement with the differences.

Trans Misogyny. The negative attitudes, expressed through cultural hate, individual and state violence, and discrimination directed toward trans women and transfeminine people.

Transphobia. Fear or hatred of transgender people; transphobia is manifested in a number of ways, including violence, harassment, and discrimination. This phobia can exist in LGB and straight communities.

White Fragility. Refers to discomfort and defensiveness on the part of a white person when confronted by information about racial inequality and injustice.

White Privilege. The unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

White Supremacy. A power system structured and maintained by persons who classify themselves as white, whether consciously or subconsciously determined; and who feel superior to those of other racial/ethnic identities. It is a historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and individuals of color by white individuals and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.

This glossary was adapted from the following sources:

- University of Southern California Race and Equity Center, <https://race.usc.edu>
- Washington University in St. Louis Center for Diversity and Inclusion, <https://students.wustl.edu/center-diversity-inclusion/>
- Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*. New York: Routledge.
- M Potachuk, S Leiderman, et al. (2009). *Glossary*. Center for Assessment and Policy Development.
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation. *Racial Equity Resource Guide*, <http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/about/glossary>
- Racial Equity Tools, <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>
- Pacific University Oregon Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, <https://www.pacificu.edu/life-pacific/support-safety/office-equity-diversity-inclusion/glossary-terms>
- The BIPOC Project, <https://www.thebipocproject.org/>

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