

Dictionary of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terms

Term	Definition
Allyship	An active practice of leveraging personal positions of power and privilege to fight oppression by respecting, working with and empowering marginalized voices and communities. Allyship involves advocating for and supporting communities one does not belong to, striving to understand other people's experiences and creating a more inclusive and caring environment.
Bias	An inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment. Biases can be negative or positive, conscious or unconscious, and can be innate or learned. They include cognitive shortcuts used by our brain to process information about others, often resulting in stereotyping and discrimination. People may develop biases for or against an individual, group or belief.
Cultural Competence	The ability of both individuals and systems to understand, respect, and respond appropriately to the values, attitudes, beliefs, and morals that differ across cultures. Cultural competence involves acquiring knowledge and skills to provide care and services that meet the social, cultural and linguistic needs of diverse patients and communities.
Cultural Humility	A lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique by which individuals willingly interact with diverse individuals, learn about other cultures, and examine their own beliefs and cultural identities. Cultural humility emphasizes humble and empathetic communication, avoiding assumptions, and creating an environment of empowerment and respect.
Discrimination	The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, national origin, age, and other categories. Discrimination can result in differences in the provision of goods, services or opportunities.
Diversity	The wide variety of shared and different personal and group characteristics among human beings. Diversity encompasses acceptance and respect, understanding that everyone is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. It includes characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs and more.
Equity	The proportional distribution of desirable outcomes across groups. Equity ensures that individuals are provided the resources they need to have access to the same opportunities. It involves addressing present and historical inequality to work towards equality in outcomes, often requiring measures to compensate for systemic bias and discrimination.
Identities	The various social categories to which individuals belong, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, age, marital status, disability status, sexual orientation, sex, gender, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, and political affiliation. These categories often intersect, shaping unique individual experiences and perspectives, and foster a sense of similarity, connection, or shared experience with their respective groups.

Inclusion	The various social categories to which individuals belong, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, age, marital status, disability status, sexual orientation, sex, gender, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, and political affiliation. These categories often intersect, shaping unique individual experiences and perspectives, and foster a sense of similarity, connection or shared experience with their respective groups.
Intersectionality	The interconnected nature of social identities such as race, class and gender that creates interdependent systems of privilege and disadvantage. Intersectionality recognizes that individuals belong to multiple social categories simultaneously and may experience privileges or disadvantages based on these intersections.
Health Literacy	The degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions.
Justice	The establishment or determination of rights according to rules of law and standards of equity. It involves the fair and equal treatment of individuals, ensuring the proper distribution of benefits, burdens and resources.
Microaggression	Brief and commonplace verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative slights and insults to the target person or group.
Privilege	Unearned social power and advantages accorded by society to members of a dominant group. Privilege tends to be invisible to those who possess it, as its absence is what calls attention to it.
Racism	The individual, cultural, institutional, and systemic ways by which differential consequences are created for different racial groups. Racism is often grounded in a presumed superiority of one race over others and involves prejudice plus power.
Social Justice	The practice of allyship and coalition work to promote equality, equity, respect and the assurance of rights within and between communities and social groups. Social justice includes a vision of society where resources are equitably distributed and all members are safe and secure.
Socioeconomic Status	The social standing or class of an individual or group, frequently measured in terms of education, income and occupation. Socioeconomic status is linked to inequities in access to resources and affects psychological and physical health, education and family well-being.
Structural Racism	The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics that advantage certain groups while producing adverse outcomes for others. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of domination, diffused in all aspects of society, and involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms.