

Inclusive Auburn

Diversity and Inclusion Glossary

****This glossary of terms was formatted and adapted by UWT's Diversity Resource Center using a number of resources, including universities, community centers, and the wisdom and experience of various people engaged in social justice. This glossary is a comprehensive, but not exhaustive, listing of terminology used in our conversations about diversity and equity. Because language is a reflection of the lived experience, many of these words and terms will continue to evolve as the lived experience evolves. Even so, it is still useful to have a reference that provides basic working definitions to facilitate shared discussions. It is a work in progress, so please share your ideas and suggestions with us for this glossary.**

Ableism: Prejudicial thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in physical, mental, and/or emotional ability; usually that of able-bodied/minded persons against people with illnesses, disabilities, or less developed skills/talents.

Accessibility: The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable by individuals with physical disabilities, such as self-opening doors, elevators for upper levels, or raised lettering on signs. Also, the term refers to being admitted to programs and activities and having the right to enter institutions, such as colleges and universities.

Advocate: Someone who speaks up for her/himself/themselves and members of his/her/their identity group; e.g., a woman who lobbies for equal pay for women. *

Ageism: Prejudicial thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in age; usually evidenced as a societal predilection for younger persons over older persons.

Agency: Agency refers to the thoughts and actions taken by people that express their individual power in social context. The core challenge at the center of the field of sociology is understanding the relationship between structure and agency. Structure refers to the complex and interconnected set of social forces, relationships, institutions, and elements of society that work together to shape **the thought, behavior**, experiences, choices, and overall life courses of people. In contrast, agency denotes the power people have to think for themselves and act in ways that shape their experiences and life trajectories. Agency can take individual and collective forms.

Ally: Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, ability age, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways.

Assimilation: The process by which one group takes on the cultural and other traits of a larger group; usually refers to the forced acculturation of a marginalized group by the dominant or White group.

Bias: Prejudice: an inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.

Bigotry: Intolerance and prejudice that glorifies one's own group and denigrates other groups and their members.

Categorization: The natural cognitive process of grouping and labeling people and other things based on their perceived similarities. Categorization becomes problematic when the groupings become oversimplified and rigid, thereby stereotyping people.

CIS: An abbreviation for individuals in whom there is a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity. Often referred to as cis-male or cisfemale, these terms describe the antonym to transgender.

Classism: Prejudicial thoughts and discriminatory actions based on difference in socioeconomic status and income, usually referred to as class. Most particularly refers to the hierarchical stratification of people by class.

Colonialism/colonizing: The invasion, dispossession and subjugation of a people that results in long-term institutionalized inequality in which the colonizer benefits at the expense of the colonized.

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.

Critical Race Theory: Refers to a critical analysis of race and racism that examines the intersection of race, law, and power. Critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism and principles of constitutional law.

Cultural Racism: Cultural racism refers to representations, messages and stories conveying the idea that behaviors and values associated with the dominant societal group, generally identified as White, are automatically “better” or more “normal” than those associated with subordinate groups, generally other racially defined groups. It is a powerful force in maintaining systems of internalized supremacy and internalized racism by influencing collective beliefs about what constitutes appropriate and valued behavior, status, expression, or lifestyle. All of these cultural norms and values in the U.S. have explicitly or implicitly racialized ideals and assumptions.

Cultural White Privilege: A set of dominant cultural assumptions about what is good, normal or appropriate that reflects Western European White world views and dismisses or demonizes other world views.

Culture: A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

Discrimination: Actions stemming from conscious or unconscious prejudice, which favor and empower one group over others based on differences of race, gender, economic class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, language, age, national identity, religion and other categories.

Diversity: Diversity refers to all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used, but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance.

Dominant culture: The cultural values, beliefs, practices, language and traditions that are assumed to be the most common, accepted, and influential within a given society.

Ethnicity: A socially constructed grouping of people who share a common cultural heritage derived from values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, geographical base, and ancestry. Examples include: Cape Verdean, Haitian, African American (Black); Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese (Asian); Cherokee, Mohawk, Navajo (Native American); Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican (Latino); Polish, Irish, and Swedish (White European)

First Nations People: Tribal people who identify as those who were the first people to live on the Western Hemisphere continent; also identified as Native Americans. . Fundamental Attribution Error: A common cognitive action in which one attributes his/her own success and positive actions to his/her own innate characteristics ("I'm a good person") and failure to external influences ("I lost it in the sun"), while attributing the success of other people to external influences ("he had help, was lucky") and failure to others' innate characteristics ("they're bad people"). This operates on the group levels as well, with the ingroup giving itself favorable attributions, while giving the outgroup unfavorable attributions, as way of maintaining a feeling of superiority. A "double standard."

Gender: The socially constructed concepts of masculinity and femininity; the 'appropriate' qualities accompanying biological sex.

Hate crime: Law or legislation that designates a crime as being motivated by hate for the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation of any person and assigns a greater penalty for conviction of such a crime.

Heterosexism: The presumption that everyone is, and should be, heterosexual.

Homophobia: The fear or hatred of homosexuality (and other non-heterosexual identities), and persons perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual and /or transgender.

Implicit Bias: Negative associations expressed automatically that people unknowingly hold; also known as unconscious or hidden bias. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that people may profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics.

In-group Bias (favoritism): The tendency for groups to "favor" themselves by rewarding group members economically, socially, psychologically, and emotionally in order to uplift one group over another.

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

Individual Racism: Refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals who support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing what he or she is doing: for example, telling a racist joke or believing in the inherent superiority of Whites over other groups.

Institutional Racism: Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups but always benefitting the dominant group. 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: for example, city sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

Internalized Oppression: a process by which people come to accept and internalize the inaccurate myths and stereotypes they have been exposed to.

Internalized Racism: The situation that occurs in a racist system when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures and ideologies that undergird the dominating group's power. Resources - broadly defined assets (e.g. money, time, etc.) that are unequally in the hands, and under the control, of White people. Internalized racism is the system in place that makes it difficult for people of color to get access to resources for their own communities and to control the resources of their community.

Interpersonal Racism: When private beliefs are put in interaction with others, racism resides in the interpersonal realm: for example, a public expression of racial prejudice, hate, bias and bigotry between individuals.

Interpersonal White Privilege: Behavior between people that consciously or unconsciously reflects White superiority or entitlement.

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; they interact and intersect in individuals' lives, in society, in social systems, and are mutually constitutive. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a White woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life.

LGBTIQQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and Questioning.

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

Multiethnic: An individual who comes from more than one ethnic group and/or whose parents are born from more than one ethnicity.

Naming: When a thought that traditionally has not been discussed due to its counter-culture nature is articulated.

Oppression: The use of power to disenfranchise and marginalize groups of people, usually people of color, for the benefit of another, usually Whites, in order to dominate the culture and society. It may also be defined as the use of institutional power and privilege for domination.

People of Color: A collective term for men and women of Asian, African, Latin and Native American backgrounds; as opposed to the collective "White" for those of European ancestry.

Personal Identity: Our identities as individuals-including our personal characteristics, history, personality, name, and other characteristics that make us unique and different from other individuals.

Power: Power is unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access to and control over resources. Wealth, Whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates.

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 unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Privilege: Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. White privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because they are taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

Race: An historical, political and social construction created to concentrate power with White people and legitimize dominance over non-White people.

Racial and Ethnic Identity: An individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe him or herself based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.

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. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

Racial Justice: The proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.

Racism: Individual, cultural, institutional and systemic ways by which differential consequences are created for groups historically or currently defined as being advantaged, and groups historically or currently defined as disadvantaged or non-White (African, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, etc.). Racism may also be said to be prejudice plus power. The relationship and behavior of these interdependent elements has allowed racism to recreate itself generation after generation, such that systems that perpetuate racial inequity no longer need racist actors or to explicitly promote racial differences in opportunities, outcomes and consequences to maintain those differences.

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

Sexual Orientation: An individual's natural preference in sexual partners; predilection for homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

Stereotype: Blanket beliefs and expectations about members of certain groups that present an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment. They go beyond necessary and useful categorizations and generalizations in that they are typically negative, are based on little information, and are highly inflammatory.

Structural Racism: The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing

new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism – all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism. For example, we can see structural racism in the many institutional, cultural and structural factors that contribute to lower life expectancy for African American and Native American men, compared with White men. These include higher exposure to environmental toxins, dangerous jobs and unhealthy housing stock, higher exposure to and more lethal consequences for reacting to violence, stress and racism, lower rates of health care coverage, access and quality of care and systematic refusal by the nation to fix these situations. 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.

Two Spirit: A Native American term for individuals who identify both as male and female. In western cultures these individuals are identified as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgendered.

White Privilege: Refers to 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.

Structural White Privilege: A system of White domination that creates and maintains belief systems that make current racial advantages and disadvantages seem normal. The system includes powerful incentives for maintaining White privilege and its consequences, and powerful negative consequences for trying to interrupt White privilege or reduce its consequences in meaningful ways. The system includes internal and external manifestations at the individual, interpersonal, cultural and institutional levels. The accumulated and interrelated advantages and disadvantages of White privilege are reflected in racial/ethnic inequities in life-expectancy and other health outcomes, income and wealth and other outcomes, and through differential access to opportunities and resources. These differences are maintained in part by denying that these advantages and disadvantages exist at the structural, institutional, cultural, interpersonal and individual levels and by refusing to redress them or eliminate the systems, policies, practices, cultural norms and other behaviors and assumptions that maintain them.