

DEI Definitions:

What is Diversity?

Diversity is the variety of identities found within an organization, group or society and includes (but is not limited to) race, ethnicity, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political or religious beliefs, age, socio-economic status, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. It is about being unique and acknowledging and celebrating the individual qualities and range of differences that make up a community. In honouring Diversity, we affirm each individual's unique and varied histories, experiences, and ways of being, knowing and doing.

What is Equity?

Equity is about fairness, justice and fostering an environment where each person is provided access to opportunities, processes and resources to achieve equal outcomes. In contrast to the term equality, equity recognizes the unique needs of individuals by acknowledging the effects of colonization, economic and social disparity, injustices against marginalized groups, and systemic barriers that impact an individual's experiences and their access and participation.

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion is an active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege, and to build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces and opportunities to flourish for all. It means being able to be your authentic self in the work or learning environment and feel a sense of value, belonging and connection. An inclusive environment is supportive, welcoming, and accessible. (UBC Glossary of EDI Terms, May 2023(External link)) <https://equity.ubc.ca/resources/equity-inclusion-glossary-of-terms/#l>

Glossary of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Terms

What is Ableism?

Ableism is a systemic and structural form of oppression that stems from the attitude and belief that disabled people are inferior. It underpins individual discrimination and systemic barriers and inequities against people with disabilities. Ableist beliefs include the fear of becoming disabled, as well as the fear of disabled people. It engenders the erasure and invisibility of disabled people, which leads to inaccessible places, processes, and groups

What is Accessibility?

Accessibility means that all people can take part in their communities through work, play and other daily activities. Accessibility is about removing barriers and increasing inclusion and independence for everyone.

What is Allyship?

Allyship means supporting others that may not have had the same lived experiences. Amplifying our voices through listening and learning leads to action. Allyship is relational grounded in trust and respect without judgement. It means recognizing our own power and privilege and actively supporting others who may not experience the same power and privilege.

What is Belonging?

Belonging is a person's perception of acceptance within a given group. It means being able to be your authentic self in the work or learning environment.

Who are historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized groups?

Historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized groups are, in Canada, commonly understood to include: Indigenous Peoples, women, racialized people, people with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities (Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual, plus countless ways people choose to identify) and TGNB people (transgender and non-binary) who experience barriers on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

What is Intersectionality?

Intersectionality is about the intertwining of social identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity, which can result in unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers. A theory coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980s to draw attention to how different systems of oppressive structures and types of discrimination interact and manifest in the lives of marginalized people; for example, a queer black woman may experience oppression on the basis of her sexuality, gender, and race – a unique experience of oppression based on how those identities intersect in her life. (UBC)

What is Justice?

Justice, in the context of DEI, means identifying and removing barriers that prevent equity and impede the rights of others. Justice is about making fair and ethical decisions about the distribution of opportunities and resources.

What is Marginalization?

Marginalization/Marginalized is a social process by which individuals or groups are (intentionally or unintentionally) distanced from access to power and resources and constructed as insignificant, peripheral, or less valuable/privileged to a community or “mainstream” society.

What is Psychological Safety?

Psychological Safety is about feeling confident to share thoughts, ideas and perspectives without fear of judgement or reprisal. It is important to note that historically underrepresented or vulnerable groups or individuals may have a very different perspective and experience of psychological safety.

What is Substantive Equality?

Substantive equality is a legal principle that refers to the achievement of true equality in outcomes. It is achieved through equal access, equal opportunity and, most importantly, the provision of services and benefits in a manner and according to standards that meet any unique needs and circumstances, such as cultural, social, economic and historical disadvantage. (<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1583698429175/1583698455266>(External link))

What is the Universal Design for Learning (UDL)?

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning through the design of instructional goals, assessments, methods and materials that can be customized and adjusted to meet individual needs. (cast.org(External link))

What are Unconscious Biases?

Unconscious Biases are implicit associations, whether about people, places, or situations, which are often based on mistaken, inaccurate, or incomplete information and include the personal histories we bring to the situation. Unconscious (or implicit, hidden) biases are mental processes that operate outside of our consciousness, intentional awareness, or control.