

Equity & Inclusion Shared Terminology

The terminology around diversity, equity and inclusion is broad and still growing. Therefore, a common vocabulary to avoid misunderstandings, misinterpretations, or ableist language is needed at MacPhail. Words often have different meanings; depending on lived experiences words might hold different meanings for different people. The purpose of the DEI Shared Terminology is to create a living document around equity and inclusion providing a basic framework that is constantly evolving to support DEI terminology as a resource to all employees and students at MacPhail.

TERMS

Ally Someone who supports a group other than one's own (in terms of multiple identities such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.). An ally acknowledges oppression and actively commits to reducing their own complicity, investing in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

Bias A form of prejudice that results from our tendency and needs to classify individuals into categories.

Bigot A person who is obstinately devoted to his or her own opinions and prejudices and intolerant towards other diverse social groups.

BIPOC An acronym used to refer to Black, Indigenous, and (other) People of Color. It is based on the recognition of collective experiences of systemic racism. As with any other identity term, it is up to individuals to use this term as an identifier.

BBIA Stands for Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Asian people, and is an identifier used to describe the different racially minoritized communities. Each community that comprises BBIA experiences degrees of marginalization differently, but are united by experiences of trauma, violence, and discrimination because of their shared lived experience of being a part of the non-dominant, centered culture in the United States.

Centering Putting yourself- your experiences, identity, viewpoint, opinions- in the middle of the dialogue or issue. It marginalizes, dismisses, invalidates, and erases BIPOC/BBIA voices.

Cisgender A term for people whose gender identity, expression, or behavior aligns with those typically associated with their assigned sex 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.

Cultural Appropriation The non-consensual/misappropriation use of cultural elements for commodification or profit purposes – including symbols, art, language, customs, etc. — often without understanding, acknowledgment, or respect for its value in the original culture.

Decolonize The active and intentional process of unlearning values, beliefs, and conceptions that have caused physical, emotional, or mental harm to people through colonization. It requires a recognition of systems of oppression.

Disability Physical or mental impairment that affects a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Diversity Socially, it refers to the wide range of identities. A broad term that includes race, ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, veteran status, physical appearance, etc. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

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.

Equity The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist in the provision of adequate opportunities to all groups.

Equity-Mindedness The perspective or mode of thinking exhibited by individuals and/or institutions who consistently call attention to patterns of inequity in student outcomes.

Gender Identity Distinct from the term “sexual orientation,” refers to a person’s internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one’s gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

Gender Non-conforming An individual whose gender expression is different from societal expectations related to gender.

Harassment The use of comments or actions that can be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning, and unwelcome.

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 act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued as a fully participating member. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

Institutional Racism 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.

Intersectionality A social construct that recognizes the fluid diversity of identities that a person can hold such as gender, race, class, religion, professional status, marital status, socioeconomic status, etc.

“Isms” A way of describing any attitude, action or institutional structure that subordinates (oppresses) a person or group because of their target group. For example, color (racism), gender (sexism), economic status (classism), older age (ageism), religion (e.g., anti-Semitism), sexual orientation (heterosexism), language/immigrant status (xenophobia), etc.

Lived Experience Knowledge gained from first-hand life experience rather than second-hand or from formal education. Lived experience holds certain weight and context that cannot be taught.

LGBTQIA An inclusive term for those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual.

Microaggression 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.

Multicultural Competency A process of embracing diversity and learning about people from other cultural backgrounds. 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.

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.

Patriarchy Actions and beliefs that prioritizes masculinity. Patriarchy is practiced systemically in the ways and methods through which power is distributed in society (jobs and positions of power given to men in government, policy, criminal justice, etc.) while also influencing how we interact with one another interpersonally (gender expectations, sexual dynamics, space-taking, etc.).

Person-first language Puts the person before the disability, and describes what a person has, not who a person is. PFL uses phrases such as “person with a disability,” “individuals with disabilities,” and “children with disabilities,” as opposed to phrases that identify people based solely on their disability, such as “the disabled.”

Person of Color (POC) A collective term for men and women of Asian, African, Latinx, and Native American backgrounds; as opposed to the collective “White”.

Positionality The various identities (race, gender, citizenship, sexual orientation, etc.) a single person holds that, when combined, affect the way they view the world and their perception of their placement in it. Positionality dictates how a person negotiates social movement within the society in which they live.

Prejudice An inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment and can be rooted in stereotypes that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Privilege Exclusive access or availability to material and immaterial resources based on the membership to a dominant social group.

Queer An umbrella term that can refer to anyone who transgresses society’s view of gender or sexuality. The definitional indeterminacy of the word Queer, its elasticity, is one of its constituent characteristics: “A zone of possibilities.”

Race A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic, and political needs of a society at a given period of time

Safe Space Refers to an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule, or denial of experience.

Sexual orientation An individual’s enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

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 who 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 form of generalization rooted in blanket beliefs and false assumptions, a product of processes of categorization that can result in a prejudiced attitude, uncritical judgment, and intentional or unintentional discrimination. Stereotypes are typically negative, based on little information that does not recognize individualism and personal agency.

Structural Inequality Systemic disadvantage(s) of one social group compared to other groups, rooted and perpetuated through discriminatory practices (conscious or unconscious) that are reinforced through institutions, ideologies, representations, policies/laws, and practices. When this kind of inequality is related to racial/ethnic discrimination, it is referred to as systemic or structural racism.

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. Sometimes is used to refer to systemic racism.

Tokenism Presence without meaningful participation. For example, a superficial invitation for the participation of members of a certain socially oppressed group, who are expected to speak for the whole group without giving this person a real opportunity to speak for her/himself.

Whiteness (not the same as “white people”) Race is a construct that is not the same in all societies. Race is not biologically real but has real world implications. In the US, whiteness has been historically constructed as having certain rights, benefits, access, property (people as property), and the right to exclude others from spaces. The most mainstream experiences associated with whiteness have been treated as default in our society (ethnocentrism). Whiteness shows up in all aspects of our society.

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.

The terms contained in this glossary have been reproduced from the following resources:

1. Decolonizing the Music Room. *Definitions*. <https://decolonizingthemusicroom.com>
2. Anti-Violence Project. *Glossary*. University of Victoria
3. Colors of Resistance. *Definitions for the Revolution*
4. Cram, R. H. (2002). *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook*
5. Equity and Inclusion. *Glossary*. UC Davis
6. Potapchuk, M., Leiderman, S., et al. (2009). *Glossary*. Center for Assessment and Policy Development
7. Center for Diversity & Inclusion. *Glossary of Bias Terms*. Washington University in St. Louis
8. Ontario Human Rights Commission. *Glossary of human rights terms*
9. W.K. Kellogg Foundation. *Racial Resource Guide*
10. Augsburg University. *Avoiding Ableist Language*
11. Autistic Hoya. *Ableism/Language*
12. Disability and Reprerentation. *Doing Social Justice: Thoughts on Ableist Language and Why It Matters*
13. DC.gov. *Person First Language*.