



FASEB DEAI DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION GLOSSARY

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FASEB DEAI Glossary | Introduction

This glossary, developed by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) Committee, is meant to be a resource and guide for FASEB society members to establish a common language and aid our work of creating inclusive environments.

The glossary is divided into three main sections: (i) *Accessibility*; (ii) *Belonging*, and (iii) *Culture*. The Accessibility section specifically highlights disability in ways that are not included in common DEI glossaries. Belonging and Culture sections highlight the nuances between interpersonal and systemic experiences related to diversity and equity.

This glossary is a living document and will be routinely revised to accommodate community led shifts in language and terminology.

Accessibility

This section of the glossary focuses specifically on the disabled community and their access to resources.

According to the [U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights](#) accessible refers to a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability. Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology.

Able-bodied - Someone who does not identify as having a disability.

Some members of the disability community oppose its use because it implies that all people with disabilities lack “able bodies” or the ability to use their bodies well. They may prefer “non-disabled” or “enabled” as being more accurate.¹

Ability Privilege - Unearned and invisible social advantages held by people who are able-bodied over people who are disabled.²

Ableism - Refers to discrimination and social prejudice against people with disabilities. Ableism comes in all forms, from overt prejudice to more subtle microaggressions.³

Accommodation - An adjustment to make a program, facility, or resource accessible to a person with a disability.⁴

Adaptive Technology - Hardware or software products that provide access to a computer that is otherwise inaccessible to an individual with a disability.⁵

ALT Attribute - HTML code that works in combination with graphical tags to provide alternative text for graphical elements.⁶

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - A comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, public services, public accommodations and services operated by private entities, and telecommunications.⁷

¹ [National Center on Disability and Journalism “Disability Style Guide”.](#)

² [Larson, A., & Choate, R.O. \(2011\). The Able Privilege Scale: A New Educational Tool.](#)

³ [National Center on Disability and Journalism “Disability Style Guide”.](#)

⁴⁻⁸ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”.](#)

Assistive Technology - Technology used to assist a person with a disability, e.g., wheelchair, hand splints, computer-based equipment.⁸

Autism/autism spectrum - A group of complex conditions related to brain development.⁹

Common symptoms of autism include difficulties in communication, impaired social interaction and restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities, according to the Institute. However, symptoms vary across the spectrum. Many experts classify autism as a developmental disability.

Captioning - Text that is included with video presentations or broadcasts that enables people with hearing impairments to have access to the audio portion of the material.¹⁰

Communication device - Hardware that allows a person who has difficulty using their voice clearly to use words or symbols for communication. May range in complexity from a simple picture board to complex electronic devices that allow personalized, unique construction of ideas.¹¹

Comorbidity - Two or more exceptionalities occurring in the same person such as a learning disability and attention deficit disorder. Effects of comorbid disabilities interact and often complicate instruction.¹²

Compensatory tools - Assistive computing systems that allow people with disabilities to use computers to complete tasks that they would have difficulty doing without a computer, e.g., reading, writing, communicating, accessing information.¹³

Disability - Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990). Discrimination: Act of making a difference in treatment or favor on a basis other than individual merit.

Fingerspelling - Letters of the alphabet represented on one hand that have a 1:1 correspondence with the English alphabet. Used in conjunction with sign language for formal names and words that do not have a sign.¹⁴

Hearing impairments - Complete or partial loss of ability to hear caused by a variety of injuries or diseases including congenital defects.¹⁵

Impairment - The loss or reduced function of a particular body part or organ including brain, eyes, ears, limbs. An impairment is always present.¹⁶

⁹ [National Center on Disability and Journalism “Disability Style Guide”](#).

¹⁰ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”](#).

¹¹ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”](#).

¹² [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”](#).

¹³ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”](#).

¹⁴ [National Science Teaching Association. “Glossary of Disability Terminology”](#)

Individual Education Plan (IEP) - A specific plan for students with exceptionalities that describes special and unique instruction to support them in learning academic material. Should be given to all teachers who work with the student.¹⁵

Interpreter - Assists deaf individuals to access spoken instruction and provides platform for hearing individuals to communicate with deaf person.¹⁶

Mobility impairment - Disability that affects movement ranging from gross motor skills such as walking to fine motor movement involving manipulation of objects by hand.¹⁷

Neurodiversity - When neurological differences are recognized and respected as are any other kind of human differences or variations. These differences can include Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyscalculia, Autistic Spectrum, and Tourette Syndrome.¹⁸

Optical character recognition (OCR) - Technology system that scans and converts printed materials into electronic text.¹⁹

People-first terminology - “Person with quadriplegia” as opposed to “quadriplegic person” places emphasis on the person instead of on the disability.²⁰

Reader - Volunteer or employee of an individual with a disability (e.g., visual impairment, learning disability) who reads printed material in person or records to audiotape.²¹

Reading System - Hardware and software designed to provide access to printed text for people with visual impairments, mobility impairments, or learning disabilities. Character recognition software controls a scanner that takes an image of a printed page, converts it to computer text using recognition software and then reads the text using a synthesized voice.²²

Sensory impairment - A disability that affects touch, sight, taste, and/or hearing.²³

Sign language - Manual communication commonly used by deaf or hard of hearing individuals. Each sign has three distinct parts; the handshape, the position of the hands, and the movement of the hands.²⁴

Speech impairment - Problems in communication and related areas such as oral motor function, ranging from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech.²⁵

¹⁵ [National Science Teaching Association. “Glossary of Disability Terminology”](#)

¹⁶ [National Science Teaching Association. “Glossary of Disability Terminology”](#)

¹⁷ [National Science Teaching Association. “Glossary of Disability Terminology”](#)

¹⁸ [National Science Teaching Association. “Glossary of Disability Terminology”](#)

¹⁹ [National Science Teaching Association. “Glossary of Disability Terminology”](#)

²⁰ [National Science Teaching Association. “Glossary of Disability Terminology”](#)

²¹ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”.](#)

²² [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”.](#)

²³ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”.](#)

²⁴ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”.](#)

²⁵ [University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”.](#)

Speech input or speech recognition - A method of controlling a computer and creating text by dictation. Speech input software is combined with a microphone.²⁶

Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) or Teletypewriter (TTY) - A device which enables someone who has a speech or hearing impairment to use a telephone when communicating with someone else who has a TDD/TTY. TDD/TTYs can be used with any telephone, and one needs only a basic typing ability to use them.²⁷

Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability which applies to any program that receives federal financial support. Section 504 of the Act is aimed at making educational programs and facilities accessible to all students. Section 508 of the Act requires that electronic office equipment purchased through federal procurement meets disability access guidelines.²⁸

Vision impairments - Complete or partial loss of ability to see, caused by a variety of injuries or diseases including congenital defects. Legal blindness is defined as visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses, or widest diameter of visual field subtending an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.²⁹

²⁶ [University of Washington. "Glossary of Disability-Related Terms".](#)

²⁷ [University of Washington. "Glossary of Disability-Related Terms".](#)

²⁸ [University of Washington. "Glossary of Disability-Related Terms".](#)

²⁹ [University of Washington. "Glossary of Disability-Related Terms".](#)

Belonging

This section of the glossary focuses on terms related to intrapersonal lived experiences shaped by identity

Belonging is the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group. It is when an individual can bring their authentic self to work. When employees feel like they don't belong at work, their performance and their personal lives suffer. Creating genuine feelings of belonging for all is a critical factor in improving engagement and performance. (Cornell University)

AANHPI - an umbrella term for people with these backgrounds who are living in the United States and its territories. The Biden-Harris administration first added "Native Hawaiian" to what was previously known as AAPI in its AANHPI Heritage Month proclamation in 2021.³⁰

Accomplice - A person who knowingly, voluntarily, intentionally or directly challenges institutionalized racism, colonization and white supremacy by blocking or impeding racist people, policies and structures. The actions of an accomplice are coordinated, and they work to disrupt the status quo and challenge systems of oppression.³¹

Ally - Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and works in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. An ally recognizes that though they are not a member of a marginalized group(s) they support, they make a concentrated effort to better understand the struggle of another's circumstances. An ally may have more privilege and recognize that privilege in society.³²

Bias - Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in an unfair or negative way. Unconscious bias, also known as implicit bias, is defined as "attitudes and stereotypes that influence judgment, decision-making, and behavior in ways that are outside of conscious awareness and/or control".³³

Implicit Bias - A prejudice or an assumption that we unconsciously make about another person based on common cultural stereotypes, rather than on a thoughtful judgment. (cornell)

Biological Sex - Refers to anatomical, physiological, genetic, or physical attributes that determine if a person is male, female, or intersex. These include both primary and secondary sex characteristics,

³⁰ [Reader's Digest. "What Does AANHPI Mean? A Proud Asian American Explains".](#)

³¹ [National Association of Counties. "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions".](#)

³² [PFLAG National. "PFLAG National Glossary".](#)

³³ [Harvard Human Resources. "Glossary of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging \(DIB\) Terms"](#)

including genitalia, gonads, hormone levels, hormone receptors, chromosomes, and genes. Often also referred to as “sex,” “physical sex,” “anatomical sex,” or specifically as “sex assigned at birth.” Biological sex is often conflated or interchanged with gender, which is more societal than biological, and involves personal identity factors.³⁴

BIPOC – An acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color intended to center the experiences of Black and Indigenous groups and demonstrate solidarity between communities of color.³⁵

This term aims to bring to center stage the specific violence, cultural erasure, and discrimination experienced by Black and Indigenous people. It reinforces the fact that not all people of color have the same experience, particularly when it comes to legislation and systemic oppression.

Dehumanization - The process of depriving a person or group of positive human qualities, personality, or dignity.³⁶

Discrimination - The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of marginalized identities. Unfair treatment or consideration of a person based on their group, class, or identity rather than on individual merit.³⁷

Diversity - The condition of being different or having differences. Differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, health, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, religion, physical size, education level, job and function, personality traits, and other human differences. Some describe organizational diversity as social heterogeneity.³⁸

Equity - Fair treatment for all while striving to identify and eliminate inequities and barriers.³⁹

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.⁴⁰

Gender Identity - A person’s deeply held core sense of self in relation to gender. Gender identity does not always correspond to biological sex. People become aware of their gender identity at many different stages of life, from as early as 18 months and into adulthood. Gender identity is a separate concept from sexuality and gender expression.⁴¹

³⁴ [PFLAG National. “PFLAG National Glossary”.](#)

³⁵ [YMCA. “What it Means When We Say BIPOC”.](#)

³⁶ [Cornell University. “DEI Glossary”.](#)

³⁷ [Cornell University. “DEI Glossary”.](#)

³⁸ [Harvard Human Resources. “Glossary of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging \(DIB\) Terms”](#)

³⁹ [University of San Diego. “Quick Guide: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Definitions”.](#)

⁴⁰ [Cornell University. “DEI Glossary”.](#)

⁴¹ [PFLAG National. “PFLAG National Glossary”.](#)

Affirmed Gender - An individual's true gender, as opposed to their gender assigned at birth. This term should replace terms like new gender or chosen gender, which imply that an individual chooses their gender.

Agender – Refers to a person who does not identify with or experience any gender. Agender is not interchangeable with nonbinary because many nonbinary people do experience gender.

Assumed Gender - The gender assumed about an individual, based on their assigned sex as well as apparent societal gender markers and expectations, such as physical attributes and expressed characteristics. Examples of assuming a person's gender include using pronouns for a person before learning what pronouns they use or calling a person a man or a woman without knowing their gender.

Gender Binary - The disproven concept that there are only two genders, male and female, and that everyone must be one or the other. Also often misused to assert that gender is biologically determined. This concept also reinforces the idea that men and women are opposites and have different roles in society.

Gender-Expansive - An umbrella term for those who do not follow gender stereotypes, or who expand ideas of gender expression or gender identity. People of any gender identity can be gender expansive. While some parents and allies use the term gender expansive, the preferred term by the LGBTQ+ community is gender non-conforming. Gender expansive is not equivalent to non-binary. It is important to respect and use the terms people use for themselves, regardless of any prior associations or ideas about those terms.

Gender Expression - The manner in which a person communicates about gender to others through external means such as clothing, appearance, or mannerisms. This communication may be conscious or subconscious and may or may not reflect their gender identity or sexual orientation. While most people's understandings of gender expressions relate to masculinity and femininity, there are countless combinations that may incorporate both masculine and feminine expressions, or neither, through androgynous expressions. All people have gender expressions, and an individual's gender expression does not automatically imply one's gender identity. (PFLAG)

Gender Neutral - Not gendered. Can refer to language (including pronouns and salutations/titles--see Gender-neutral salutations or titles), spaces (like bathrooms), or other aspects of society (like colors or occupations). Gender neutral is not a term to describe people. A person who experiences no gender may be agender or neutrois. (PFLAG)

Heteronormativity - The assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities. This includes the often implicitly held idea that heterosexuality is the norm and that other sexualities are "different" or "abnormal."⁴²

⁴² [PFLAG National. "PFLAG National Glossary".](#)

Homophobia - The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, people who are attracted to members of the same sex.⁴³

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.⁴⁴

Intersectionality - A term first coined in 1989 by American civil rights advocate and leading scholar of critical race theory, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw. It is the study of overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination.⁴⁵

The theory suggests that—and seeks to examine how—various biological, social and cultural categories such as gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, religion, caste, age, nationality and other sectarian axes of identity interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels.

Intersex - The current term used to refer to people who are biologically between the medically expected definitions of male and female. This can be through variations in hormones, chromosomes, internal or external genitalia, or any combination of any or all primary and/or secondary sex characteristics.⁴⁶

While many intersex people are noticed as intersex at birth, many are not. As intersex is about biological sex, it is distinct from gender identity and sexual orientation. An intersex person can be of any gender identity and can also be of any sexual orientation and any romantic orientation. The Intersex Society of North America opposes the practice of genital mutilation on infants and children who are intersex, as does PFLAG National. Formerly, the medical terms hermaphrodite and pseudohermaphrodite were used; these terms are now considered neither acceptable nor scientifically accurate.

LGBTQIA+ - An acronym that brings together many different gender and sexual identities that often face marginalization across society. The acronym stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and the + holds space for the expanding and new understanding of different parts of the very diverse gender and sexual identities.⁴⁷

The acronym **LGBTQ2**, with the “2” standing for [Two-spirit](#) (two-spirit is a term used by some indigenous communities to represent gender and sexual diversity, often regarded throughout the tribal history as different figures within the community).

⁴³ [Georgetown University. “Glossary of LGBTQIA+ Terms”](#)

⁴⁴ [Racial Equity Tools. “Glossary”.](#)

⁴⁵ [Syracuse University Libraries. “Intersectional Self”.](#)

⁴⁶ [PFLAG National. “PFLAG National Glossary”.](#)

⁴⁷ [Princeton: Gender and Sexuality Resource Center. “LGBTAIQ+ 101”.](#)

Nonbinary - Refers to people who do not subscribe to the gender binary. They might exist between or beyond the man-woman binary. Some use the term exclusively, while others may use it interchangeably with terms like genderqueer, genderfluid, gender non-conforming, gender diverse, or gender expansive.⁴⁸

It can also be combined with other descriptors e.g. nonbinary woman or transmasculine nonbinary. Language is imperfect, so it's important to trust and respect the words that nonbinary people use to describe their genders and experiences. Nonbinary people may understand their identity as falling under the transgender umbrella, and may thus identify as transgender. Sometimes abbreviated as NB or Enby, the term NB has been used historically to mean non-Black, so those referring to nonbinary people should avoid using NB.

People of Color or Communities of Color – A term primarily used to describe people who do not racially identify as white. Persons of color include but are not limited to: African/African Americans, Latinx/Latinx Americans, Asian/Asian Americans, Native Americans, Pacific Islander Americans, Middle Eastern/Middle Eastern Americans, and multiracial Americans.⁴⁹

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 unique characteristics.⁵⁰

Privilege - Unearned benefits, which are often unconscious or taken for granted, afforded to a particular population in society based on norms. There are multiple types of privilege, i.e., race privilege, gender privilege, sexual orientation privilege, etc. For example, heterosexuals have privilege in a heterosexist society because of their sexual orientation.⁵¹

Pronouns - Words to refer to a person after initially using their name. Gendered pronouns include she and he, her and him, hers and his, and herself and himself. "Preferred gender pronouns" (or PGPs) are the pronouns that people ask others to use in reference to themselves. They may be plural gender-neutral pronouns such as they, them, their(s). Or, they may be ze (rather than she or he) or hir (rather than her(s) and him/his). Some people state their pronoun preferences as a form of allyship.⁵²

Psychological safety - Creating and allowing for a space where team members feel comfortable showing one's full, authentic self, and surface problematic behaviors, without fear of negative consequences from employers or coworkers.⁵³

Sexual Orientation - A person's physical, romantic, emotional, aesthetic, and/or other form of attraction to others. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. For instance, transgender people can be straight, bisexual, lesbian, gay, asexual, pansexual, queer, etc., like anyone else.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ [PFLAG National. "PFLAG National Glossary".](#)

⁴⁹ [Cornell University. "DEI Glossary".](#)

⁵⁰ [National Association of Counties. "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions".](#)

⁵¹ [PFLAG National. "PFLAG National Glossary".](#)

⁵² [PFLAG National. "PFLAG National Glossary".](#)

⁵³ [Cornell University. "DEI Glossary".](#)

⁵⁴ [PFLAG National. "PFLAG National Glossary".](#)

Aromantic - A person who experiences little to no emotional or romantic attraction to other people. Sometimes aromantic people abbreviate the term to Ace.

Asexual - A person who experiences little to no physical attraction to other people. Sometimes asexual people abbreviate the term to Ace.

Bisexual - A person who has an emotional and physical attraction to persons of the same and different genders.

Gay - A person who is emotionally and physically attracted to someone of the same gender. It is more commonly associated with males or men.

Heterosexual - A person who is emotionally and physically attracted to people of the opposite sex.

Lesbian - A female or woman who has an emotional and physical attraction for other females or women.

Pansexual - A person who is emotionally and physically attracted to individuals of all gender identities and expressions.

Queer - A term used by some LGBTQ+ people to describe themselves and/or their community. Reclaimed from its earlier negative use--and valued by some for its defiance--the term is also considered by some to be inclusive of the entire community and by others who find it to be an appropriate term to describe their more fluid identities. Traditionally a negative or pejorative term for people who are LGBTQ+, some people within the community dislike the term. Due to its varying meanings, use this word only when self-identifying or quoting an individual who self-identifies as queer.⁵⁵

Same Gender Loving (SGL) - A term coined by Cleo Manago, and sometimes used by some members of the Black community or people of African descent, to express sexual orientation without relying on terms and symbols of European descent.⁵⁶

Tokenism - Giving those in power the appearance of being non-racist and even champions of diversity because they recruit and use POC as racialized props. Examples include:

- Recruit POC to formal leadership positions, but keep all the power.
- Only hire POC for POC “stuff.”
- Convene Special “Diversity Councils” but don’t build POC leadership on your main Board.
- Use POC as your mouthpiece and shield against other POC.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ [PFLAG National. “PFLAG National Glossary”.](#)

⁵⁶ [PFLAG National. “PFLAG National Glossary”.](#)

⁵⁷ [Racial Equity Tools. “Glossary”.](#)

Transgender - An umbrella term used to describe a person whose gender identity is something other than their Sex Assigned at Birth (SAAB). The SAAB is a person’s first association with gender, typically based on physical sex characteristics.⁵⁸

Transfeminine – An AMAB person who is closer to femininity than masculinity but is not a binary woman. Often abbreviated to transfem or transfemme.

Transmasculine - An AFAB person who is closer to masculinity than femininity but is not a binary man. Often abbreviated to trans masc.

Two-Spirit - The term Two-Spirit is a direct translation of the Ojibwe term, Niizh manidoowag. “Two-Spirited” or “Two-Spirit” is usually used to indicate a person whose body simultaneously houses a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit. The term can also be used more abstractly, to indicate the presence of two contrasting human spirits (such as Warrior and Clan Mother).⁵⁹

⁵⁸ [Harvard Human Resources. “Glossary of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging \(DIB\) Terms”](#)

⁵⁹ [Tribal-Institute. “Walking in Two Worlds: Understanding the Two-Spirit & LGBTQ Community”](#).

Culture

This section of the glossary focuses on terms related to societal, systemic, and institutional concepts shaping identity and social interactions.

Shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. (CARLA, University of Minnesota)

Anti-Blackness - Any attitude, behavior, practice, or policy that explicitly or implicitly reflects the belief that Black people are inferior to another racial group. Anti-Black racism is reflected in interpersonal, institutional, and systemic levels of racism and is a function of White supremacy.⁶⁰

Anti-Racism - the policy or practice of actively and consciously opposing racism and promoting racial equity.⁶¹

Anti-Semitism - Hatred, discrimination, hostility, or oppression of or against Jewish people as a group or individuals.⁶²

Acculturation - The process of learning and incorporating the language, values, beliefs, and behaviors that makes up a distinct culture. This concept is not to be confused with assimilation, where an individual or group may give up certain aspects of its culture to adapt to that of the prevailing culture. Under the process of acculturation, an individual will adopt new practices while still retaining their distinct culture.⁶³

Assimilate - The process by which an individual of a minority group gradually adopts characteristics of the majority culture, thereby, becoming a member of that culture. This can include the adoption of language, culinary tastes, interpersonal communication, gender roles, and style of dress. Assimilation can be voluntary or forced.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ [Center for the Study of Social Policy. "Key Equity Terms & Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding".](#)

⁶¹ [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "Key DEI Terms"](#)

⁶² [University of Washington- School of Public Health. "Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Glossary of Terms"](#)

⁶³ [National Association of Counties. "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions".](#)

⁶⁴ [National Association of Counties. "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions".](#)

Classism - The institutional, cultural, and individual set of practices and beliefs that assign differential value to people according to their socioeconomic status. Classism also refers to the systematic oppression of poor and working-class people by those who control resources.⁶⁵

Colorblind Ideology - The belief that people should be regarded and treated as equally as possible, without regard to race or ethnicity. While a color-blind racial ideology may seem to be a pathway to achieve equity, in reality it invalidates the importance of peoples' culture; ignores the manifestations of racist policies which preserves the ongoing processes that maintain racial and ethnic stratification in social institutions.⁶⁶

Colorism – A term used to describe the unequal treatment of and discrimination against individuals based on their skin tone, is rooted in and perpetuates white supremacy and racism by privileging and upholding Eurocentric beauty standards.⁶⁷

Eurocentric physical features (e.g., lighter skin, narrower nose, straighter hair) are afforded greater value and considered more desirable than Afrocentric physical features (e.g., darker skin, broader nose, more coarse hair). Thus, the closer to whiteness (and further away from Blackness) individuals are, the more privilege and power they are assigned in society, and in essence, the more power they have.

Cultural Appropriation - Originally coined to describe the effects of colonialism, cultural appropriation generally entails adopting aspects of a minority culture by someone outside the culture, without sufficient understanding of its context or respect for the meaning and value of the original. Cultural appropriation done in a way that promotes disrespectful cultural or racial stereotypes is considered particularly harmful.⁶⁸

Cultural Competence - The capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge and (5) adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities one serves.⁶⁹

Cultural Humility - When one maintains an interpersonal stance that is open to individuals and communities of varying cultures, in relation to aspects of the cultural identity most important to the person. Cultural humility can include a life-long commitment to self-critique about differences in culture and a commitment to be aware of and actively mitigate power imbalances between cultures.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ [Center for the Study of Social Policy. "Key Equity Terms & Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding".](#)

⁶⁶ [Center for the Study of Social Policy. "Key Equity Terms & Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding".](#)

⁶⁷ [Boston University AntiRacism Center. "Moving Towards AntiBigotry"](#)

⁶⁸ [Harvard Human Resources. "Glossary of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging \(DIB\) Terms"](#)

⁶⁹ [Brandeis University. "Glossary of DEI Terms"](#)

⁷⁰ [Center for the Study of Social Policy. "Key Equity Terms & Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding".](#)

Dominant Group - The group within a society with the power, privilege, and social status to control and define societal resources and social, political, and economic systems and norms.⁷¹

Ethnicity – A socially or politically constructed group based on cultural criteria, such as language, customs and shared history.⁷²

Ethnocentrism - The tendency to view one’s own culture as most important and correct and as a stick by which to measure all other cultures. People who are ethnocentric view their own cultures as central and normal and reject all other cultures as inferior and morally suspect.⁷³

Gender Socialization - A process that influences and teaches an individual how to behave as a man or a woman, based on culturally defined gender roles. Parents, teachers, peers, media, and faith traditions are some of the many agents of gender socialization. Gender socialization looks very different across cultures, both inside and outside of the U.S. It is heavily impacted by other intersecting identities.⁷⁴

Inclusion - The authentic commitment to bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.⁷⁵

Internalized Dominance - Describes the experience and attitudes of those who are members of the dominant, privileged, or powerful identity groups. Members of the [dominant] group accept their group's socially superior status as normal and deserved.⁷⁶

Marginalization - The process that occurs when members of a dominant group relegate a particular group (minority groups and cultures) to the edge of society by not allowing them an active voice, identity or place for the purpose of maintaining power. Marginalized groups have restricted access to resources like education and healthcare for achieving their aims.⁷⁷

Microaggression - Commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory slights toward culturally marginalized groups.⁷⁸

Misogyny - Hatred, aversion or prejudice against women. Misogyny can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, denigration of women, violence against women, and sexual objectification of women.⁷⁹

⁷¹ [Center for the Study of Social Policy. “Key Equity Terms & Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding”.](#)

⁷² [Brandeis University. "Glossary of DEI Terms"](#)

⁷³ [Social Sciences Library: LibreTexts. Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism.](#)

⁷⁴ [PFLAG National. “PFLAG National Glossary”.](#)

⁷⁵ [Duke University School of Nursing. “DEI Glossary”.](#)

⁷⁶ [National Museum of African American History and Culture. “ Talking about Race”](#)

⁷⁷ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

⁷⁸ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

⁷⁹ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

Misogynoir - An extreme form of sexism rooted in racism. The term describes contempt for or ingrained prejudice toward Black women. The unique oppression experienced by Black women due to the intersectionality of gender, race, class and sexual orientation combined with discrimination. Misogynoir utilizes and reinforces stereotypes of Black women.⁸⁰

Oppression - A system of supremacy and discrimination for the benefit of a limited dominant group perpetuated through differential or unjust treatment, ideology and institutional control.⁸¹

Othering - The perception or intentional/unintentional placement of a group in contrast to the societal norm. The identifying of a group as a threat to the favored dominant group.⁸²

Patriarchy – Actions and beliefs that prioritize men in systems and positions of power and social society and privilege. Patriarchy may be practiced systemically in the ways and methods through which power is distributed in society or it may simply influence how individuals interact with one another interpersonally.⁸³

Power - The ability to exercise one’s will over others. Power occurs when some individuals or groups wield a greater advantage over 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.⁸⁴

Race - A social construct that divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly skin color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification and, often, are associated with the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given time.⁸⁵

Racism - The systematic subjugation of members of targeted racial groups, generally non-white groups, who hold less socio-political power. It involves actions correlated with or resulting from bigotry or the thinking that one’s racial differences produce an inherent inferiority of a particular race, mainly the dominant race. Racism differs from prejudice, hatred or discrimination because it requires one racial group to have systematic power and superiority over other groups in society.⁸⁶

Racialization - The process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics, etc.⁸⁷

Social Construct - Concepts created from prevailing social perceptions without scientific evidence.⁸⁸

⁸⁰ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

⁸¹ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

⁸² [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

⁸³ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

⁸⁴ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

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⁸⁶ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

⁸⁷ [Canadian Race Relations Foundation. \(2019\). “CRRF Glossary of Terms”.](#)

⁸⁸ [National Association of Counties. “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions”.](#)

Social Justice - Social justice [is a] form of justice that engages in social criticism and social change. Its focus in the analysis, critique and change of social structures, policies, laws, customs, power, and privilege that disadvantage or harm vulnerable social groups through marginalization, exclusion, exploitation, and voicelessness.⁸⁹

SOGIE - An acronym that honors the fluidity of numerous and ever-expanding identities related to sexual orientation (SO), gender identity (GI) and (gender) expression (E).⁹⁰

Transphobia - The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, transgender people. Transphobia occurs in a broader cisgenderist social context that systematically disadvantages trans people and promotes and rewards anti-trans sentiment.⁹¹

White Dominant Culture - White dominant culture describes how white people and their practices, beliefs, and culture have been normalized over time and are now considered standard in the United States. As a result, all Americans have all adopted various aspects of white culture, including people of color.⁹²

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.⁹³

White Supremacy Culture – The ideology that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions.⁹⁴

In the workplace, white supremacy culture explicitly and implicitly privileges whiteness and discriminates against non-Western and non-white professionalism standards related to dress code, speech, work style, and timeliness. Some identifiable characteristics of this culture includes perfectionism, belief that there's "only one right way, power hoarding, individualism, sense of urgency and defensiveness.

Worldview - a set of assumptions about physical and social reality that may have powerful effects on cognition and behavior.⁹⁵

Xenophobia - Fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign.⁹⁶

⁸⁹ [National Association of Counties. "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions".](#)

⁹⁰ [National Association of Counties. "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions".](#)

⁹¹ [Center for the Study of Social Policy. "Key Equity Terms & Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding".](#)

⁹² [National Museum of African American History and Culture. "Talking about Race"](#)

⁹³ [Duke University School of Nursing. "DEI Glossary".](#)

⁹⁴ [Duke University School of Nursing. "DEI Glossary".](#)

⁹⁵ [Koltko-Rivera, M. E. \(2004\). The Psychology of Worldviews. Review of General Psychology, 8\(1\), 3-58.](#)

⁹⁶ [Canadian Race Relations Foundation. \(2019\). "CRRF Glossary of Terms".](#)

Inclusive Alternatives for Commonly Used Phrases

The following chart provides alternatives for commonly used phrases with racist and microaggressive origins and connotations.

Phrase	Context	Alternative
Powwow	A powwow is a sacred gathering of Native people. Using it to refer to an informal meeting is offensive appropriation of a term of cultural importance to Indigenous American	meeting, discussion, gathering, brainstorming session
Gypped / Gyp / Jipped / Jip	The term, gypped, comes from the word Gypsy which is a derogatory name and slur for the Romani people (also known as Roma) who originated in northern India and migrated around the world for more than a millennium. This culture has been stereotyped as thieves and child abductors which led to the use of the word “gypped.”	Ripped off or cheated
Low Hanging Fruit	From a business perspective calling something “low hanging fruit” often means it can be easily accomplished, yields low risks and high returns, or is a no-brainer. While this phrase is not inherently racist, for some, it may bring about memories of lynchings in the American Antebellum South.	Easy, low risk, manageable
Guru	In the Buddhist and Hindu traditions, the word is a sign of respect. Using it casually negates its original value.	Expert, teacher
Picnic	The origin of the term “picnic” derives from the acts of lynching African-Americans. Individuals would	Gathering, barbeque, cook out

	“pic” a Black person to lynch and make this into a family gathering. There would be music and a “picnic.”	
Blacklist	Any language that reinforces the symbolism of white as pure and good, and black as dirty and bad, needs to be re-examined.	Banned, avoid, exclude
Grandfathered in	The American South created voting requirements referred to as the ‘Grandfather Clause’ that targeted Black people and restricted their access to vote. The restricted also required literacy tests but did not apply to people who had voted before 1867. This deliberately excluded enslaved Africans.	Legacied, exempted, preapproved
Master	In some contexts, it connotes a hierarchical relationship of control and ownership. In any form, it’s connected to the idea of dominance and is a harmful term that comes with a history of oppression.	Main or primary
Spirit Animal	A spirit guide or Spirit Helper is sacred and represents a larger spiritual culture within Indigenous and other cultures.	Kindred spirit

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