

“Language both contributes to oppression and privilege and can also potentially be a tool of liberation. The power inherent in the ability to name oneself and others is tremendous. For these reasons, we encourage you to consider the following definitions as a rough starting point. Many of these terms and definitions will and should change over time.” (White Privilege Conference, 2018)

The definitions in this document are derived from multiple resources:

- Eliminating Barriers through Culturally Responsive Teaching (see page 78-81) <https://www.napequity.org/product/crt-toolkit/>
- White Privilege Conference (see page 10-11): <http://bit.ly/WPC2017defs>
- ASU-Intergroup Relations Center Glossary: <https://www.asu.edu/provost/Backup/intergroup/resources/glossary.pdf>

| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| Ableism | The system of oppression based on ability; assumes disabled people as flawed, insufficient, and inferior. Includes assumptions about what is “normal” and results in the marginalization of the disabled. In brief, it is the unearned privilege afforded to non-disabled people. |
| Asexual | An adjective used to describe people who do not experience sexual attraction (e.g., asexual person). |
| Asset Perspective | Asset perspective is when students’ cultural differences are seen as beneficial to the learning environment, as opposed to a deficit perspective, where cultural differences are perceived as detrimental to the learning environment. |
| Bisexual | A person who has significant romantic, emotional, physical, and/or sexual attractions to both men and women, but not necessarily simultaneously or equally. Included in the LGBTQ acronym. |
| Cisgender | Denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex |
| Code-Switching | Code-switching is the practice of shifting the languages you use or the way you express yourself in your conversations and environments. Decoding is the awareness and deciphering of difference cultural codes. Read the NPR article “Five Reasons Why People Code-Switch” to learn more about this practice at n.pr/Xyakij |
| Culture | The word culture implies the integrated patterns of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. |

| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| Cultural Capital | The accumulation of knowledge, behaviors, and skills (education, intellect style of speech, style of dress, etc.) that promote social mobility in a stratified society. Cultural capital provides social advantage and power to individuals whose cultures reflect dominant social norms. |
| Cultural Competence | Cultural competence is the ability to understand one's own and others' cultural backgrounds and values, to be aware of how different cultural backgrounds create different perspectives (Gay, 2002; Harrison et al., 2010), and to use knowledge and strategies to allow culturally diverse people to successfully learn and work together (Cross et al., 1989). |
| Cultural Mismatch | Cultural mismatch occurs when gaps exist between students and educators in regard to their racial, cultural, ethnic, social and linguistic identities. Often times these gaps lead to misunderstandings that harm students. |
| Culturally Responsive Teaching | Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is a teaching style where educators learn the cultural backgrounds, lived experiences, and learning styles of their students in order to better reach and teach them. In CRT, educators bring student identities to the center. (Geneva Gay) |
| Cultural Stereotype | Stereotypes are beliefs held within one's culture that lead to assumptions about characteristics, behaviors, and social norms. <i>"The problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."</i> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, The Danger of the Single Story, TED Talk |
| Disability | Depending on the model informing the definition, (i.e., medical, social, economic, feminist, legal, social justice, etc.) social, historical, political, and mythological coordinates impact the actual meaning of disability and disabled people as objects of institutional discourse. |
| Educational Equity | In education, the term equity refers to the principle of fairness. While it is often used interchangeably with the related principle of equality, equity encompasses a wide variety of educational models, programs, and strategies that may be considered fair, but not necessarily equal. Equity is given every student what they need to succeed, as opposed to giving every student the same. |
| Food Insecurity | Food insecurity is the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. In 2017, an estimated 1 in 8 Americans were food insecure, equating to 40 million Americans including more than 12 million children. |

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| Funds of Knowledge | Funds of knowledge refers to the knowledge that develops from one's home culture. The term originates from Luis Moll, who defines it as "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (Moll et al., 1992, p. 133). |
| Gay | A term used to describe an individual who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex. This term is often used in relation to men but also used in relation to anyone who does not identify as heterosexual or straight. Included in the LGBTQ acronym. |
| Gender | A socially constructed system of classification that ascribes qualities of masculinity and femininity to people. |
| Gender identity | A person's internal sense of themselves as a specific gender. |
| Gender Expression/ Image/ Display | The external presentation of self as gendered through cultural identifiers/markers such as clothing, behaviors, etc. |
| Gender-queer | A self-identifying term for someone who rejects the male/female gender binary in favor of a more fluid, nontraditional identity which merges or blurs characteristics of gender and gender norms. |
| Hetero-sexism | The system of oppression which assumes heterosexuality as the norm, favors heterosexuals, and denigrates and stigmatizes anyone whose gender or sexual behavior is considered non-heterosexual. |
| Humanizing Pedagogy | According to Salazar (2013), a "humanizing pedagogy" is additive, as opposed to focusing on deficits; it utilizes students' prior knowledge and connects it to new learning thereby legitimizing students' home languages and cultures. In such a pedagogy, students are viewed as experts. |
| Implicit Bias | Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect one's understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These are often unrecognized and may not align to one's declared beliefs and values. Visit implicit.harvard.edu to take the Implicit Association Test (IAT) and discover your implicit biases. Awareness is the first step! |

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| 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. The interconnected nature of social categorizations can create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or advantage. |
| Intersex | An umbrella term describing people born with reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or a chromosome pattern that can't be classified as typically male or female. Avoid the outdated and derogatory term "hermaphrodite." |
| Latinx | Pronounced "La-TEEN-ex", is a non-gender specific way of referring to people of Latin American descent. Other commonly known ways of referring to people of Latin American descent are Latinos, Latina, Latin@, Latino. The "x" at the end replaces "o" and "a" which are gendered suffixes, it moves beyond terms like Latino/a & Latin@, which still reinforce a gender binary. |
| Lesbian | A term used to describe a woman whose primary romantic, emotional, physical, and sexual attractions are to other women. Included in the LGBTQ acronym. |
| LGBT, LGBTQ+ and LGBTQIA | These are umbrella terms used to refer to the community as a whole. The letters stand for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and Allied (see separate definitions for these words). For a comprehensive list of terminologies see: docs.asee.org/public/LGBTQ/LGBTQ_Terminology_Handout.pdf |
| Marginalization | Marginalization is the treatment of a person, group, or concept as insignificant or peripheral. Marginalized groups refer to individuals who are consistently confined to the lower or peripheral edges of society or groups, because they are commonly seen as different from perceived norms and dominant cultures. They often experience disadvantage and discrimination that stem from systemic social inequalities and injustices. However, unintentional microinequities in interpersonal relationships can also cause marginalization. For example, women and people of color are marginalized groups in STEM careers, and, as a result, underrepresented. |
| Micro-aggressions | A type of micro-message; See micro-messages. |

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| Micro-messages | Micromessages are small, subtle, unconscious messages that are sent and received when communicating with others. Micro-messages can be either positive “micro-affirmations” or negative “micro-inequities” that communicate value to an individual. Micro-messages are relayed through not only words but also nonverbal communication, contextual cues in the classroom and school, and written feedback. Online course available at napequity.org |
| Multicultural Education | Multicultural education looks at acknowledging, recognizing, and incorporating diverse cultures into institutions on a large scale. Nieto (1996) defines it as “a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students...Multicultural education permeates the curriculum and instructional strategies used in schools, as well as the interactions among teachers, students, and parents, and the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning ” (p. 307). Although multicultural education is similar to CRT, CRT focuses more narrowly on how educators can acknowledge and utilize the diverse cultures of their students in their practice. |
| Pansexual | The sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction towards people regardless of their sex or gender identity. Pansexuality rejects the gender binary. |
| People first language (PFL) | Puts the person before the disability. “People with disabilities” acknowledges that individuals with disabilities are people first and not their diagnosis or disability. |
| Person of Color | Person of color refers to an individual who is not white or of European parentage. It is best to use the phrasing people of color, students of color, communities of color, etc. instead of terms like racial “minorities” or “nonwhite” when describing people. The latter terms are white-centric, and are terms that marginalize people of color. When possible, it is better to specifically identify people based on their race or ethnicity, such as American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Black, African American, Hispanic, Latino/a, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or White, recognizing that many people hold multiple racial identities. It is also important to note that not all Black people in the U.S. are, or identify as, African Americans. The racial identity of black immigrant groups such as Africans or Afro-Caribbeans can vary, so when in doubt, ask. Learn more: The Journey From ‘Colored’ To ‘Minorities’ To ‘People Of Color’ (NPR) The Changing Definition of African-American (Smithsonian) po.st/CgVAoW |
| Queer | A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations. Often used interchangeably with “LGBTQ.” Included in the LGBTQ acronym. The Q in LGBTQ can also stand for Questioning. |
| Race | A social construct that divides people into groups based on factors such as physical appearance, ancestry, culture, history, etc; a social, historical and political classification system. |

| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| Racism | A system of oppression involving systematic subordination of members of targeted racial groups by those who have relatively more social power. This subordination occurs at the individual, cultural and institutional levels. |
| Restorative Justice | Restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders. This can lead to transformation of people, relationships and communities. Visit restorativejustice.org to learn more. |
| Safe Zone | A safe zone is a place that is marked with a logo to indicate that it is a safe place for marginalized students (particularly the LGBTQ+ community) where they will be supported, understood, and listened to. Visit thesafezoneproject.com to find free resources and curriculum. |
| Self-Efficacy | Self-efficacy is one's belief that they can be successful in a specific task or challenge, and answers the question: "Can I do this?" An individual with high self-efficacy is more likely to adopt and commit to more challenging goals, and an individual with low self-efficacy is more likely to avoid challenges. Toolkit and online course available at napequity.org |
| Social Capital | Social capital is the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively. Social capital includes the resources inherent in social relations such as trust, norms, reciprocity, and knowledge from exposure to certain experiences. |
| Social Class | Social class (as in upper class, middle class, lower class, working class) refers to people's socioeconomic status, based on factors such as wealth, occupation, education, income, etc. |
| Stereotype Threat | A socially premised psychological threat that arises when one is in a situation or doing something for which a negative stereotype about one's group applies (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Awareness of negative stereotypes negatively impacts performance of members of marginalized groups in certain situations. |
| Trans-gender | An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc. Included in the LGBTQ acronym. |
| Universal Design | The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design (Ron Mace). |

| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| White Privilege | Institutional set of benefits, including greater access to resources and power, bestowed upon people classified as white. |
| White Supremacy | White supremacy is the assumption or theory that whites are superior to all other races and should be in power and control. It is a structural system built into the founding of our nation, our culture and our institutions and is still in place today. |

CITATIONS

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