

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Glossary of Terms

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON – SCHOOL OF PUBLIC
HEALTH

DEPARTMENT OF EPIDEMIOLOGY – EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND
INCLUSION (EDI) COMMITTEE

Introduction

The Glossary of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) terms was developed by the Epidemiology Department's EDI Committee.

The intention behind the development of this Glossary is to encourage a common understanding and use of EDI terminology in our classrooms and across our department. The definitions provided are based on a review of published definitions and may represent a composite of available definitions. The terms included in this glossary are intended for use in public health coursework and research, and as such, are typically not as expansive as those one may find in the social sciences.

The glossary is updated on an annual basis to ensure that the content, both terms included and their definitions, reflects the evolution of language. We actively encourage feedback to ensure its continual improvement. If you have suggestions, please email the EDI committee at epidei@uw.edu.

A brief note on capitalization: Guidance regarding the capitalization of race and ethnicity varies by discipline. In this glossary, we have chosen to capitalize race and ethnicity when it is used as an adjective to describe a population or individual. There are various opinions on this matter, please see these additional resources for more information (McCarthur, JAMA).

Current Revision

Cohort Positionality

Zeruiah Buchanan is a Black, Queer, Hard of Hearing Cis Woman from the South in her second year as an epidemiology doctoral student. Through her education in community health, psychology, and Africana studies, she often looks through the lens of the socio-ecological model to comprehend the powers of socially constructed oppression at multiple levels. Zeruiah's interest in updating the EDI glossary stems from her understanding that language matters. Through her work, she hopes to engage in multidirectional learning that prioritizes the intentional utilization of vernacular to eliminate bias, promote brave spaces, practice cultural humility, and further comprehend harmful structures.

Bridget Waters is a White, straight, cis woman from Cleveland, Ohio, and a second-year student in the MS in Epidemiology program at UW. Her experiences have been deeply shaped by her time in Cleveland where she grew up in a middle class family as one of eight children, attended college, worked as a research technician in immunology research, and volunteered in the local criminal legal system reform space led by Black community organizers. Bridget was interested in participating in this update of the DEI glossary because she believes that we need language to

name and deconstruct existing systems of power that harm marginalized groups. She hopes that this project will help the Epidemiology department at UW cultivate a culture where people from many backgrounds feel welcome and ready to collaborate.

Margaret Madeleine holds a PhD in epidemiology, is White, a feminist, and studies HPV cancer in persons living with HIV. She uses the pronouns she/her and takes profound delight in a good glossary. She has relied on this glossary as a solid resource for all members of the Epi community and appreciates the effort to keep it up to date on an annual basis. She finds that it is important that our use of language evolves along with our comprehension of the EDI values we seek to live by and implement in our studies and organizations.

Kelley Pascoe is a White, straight, cis woman from the West Coast in the first year of the UW epidemiology PhD program. Her interest in collaborating on the updated glossary is based in her appreciation of the construction of and dynamic nature of language. She believes that this project will help foster inclusive, intentional, and respectful community within the department by providing an understanding to the meaning, use, and impact of the words we choose in our communications.

Anjum Hajat is a South Asian, straight, cis, immigrant woman and faculty co-chair of the Epidemiology department's EDI committee. She is a social and environmental epidemiologist interested in conducting policy relevant research. Anjum believes that this glossary can be a useful tool for the community and an opportunity to learn about the nuances of language. Recognizing that language changes rapidly she is committed to continually improving this document.

Taylor Riley is a White, cisgender, queer woman and in her third year of the UW epidemiology doctoral program. She is a social and reproductive epidemiologist who is interested in interrogating systems of oppression (e.g. white supremacy, heterosexism, patriarchy) as determinants of health and as influences within public health and epidemiology. The language we use matters, and it changes over time, so this glossary is meant to foster learning, growth, reflection, humility and collaboration within the Epi department.

Citation

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Ableism

The system of oppression that disadvantages people with disabilities and advantages people who do not currently have disabilities. Like other forms of oppression, it functions on individual, institutional, structural and cultural levels. Ableism is not solely about the experiences of people with disabilities as targets of discrimination, but rather about the interaction of institutional structures, cultural norms, and individual beliefs and behaviors that together function to maintain the status quo and exclude people with disabilities from many areas of society

Abolition

A political vision, practical organizing tool, and public health strategy of disrupting systems that create or compound harm such as prisons, policing and surveillance while building life-affirming institutions and lasting alternatives to punishment. Abolition of the prison industrial complex (PIC) ultimately creates a world where people have what they need to live healthy and safe lives in their communities. See this [APHA policy statement](#) of how abolition is central to public health policy and practice (See also *Prison Industrial Complex*)

Aboriginal people

People who have lived in a region “from the earliest time.” It is used interchangeably with Indigenous people. In Canada, the term Aboriginal People refers to the first indigenous inhabitants of Canada (including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in aggregate). In Australia, it refers to one of the two distinct groups of Indigenous peoples (the other being the Torres Strait Islander peoples). See also *First Nations* and *Indigenous Peoples*.

Accessibility

The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable by individuals with physical, mental, or social disabilities, such as self-opening doors, elevators, curb cuts and ramps, or raised lettering, braille, and pictograms on signs.

Asexual

A person who does not experience sexual attraction and yet can experience emotional or romantic attraction. Such attraction usually does not need to be realized in any sexual manner. Asexuality is an identity, and is not the same as celibacy, which is a choice.

Acculturation

A process in which members of one cultural group adopt the beliefs, patterns, language, values and behaviors of another group, typically the dominant culture. This concept is not to be confused with assimilation, where an individual, family, or group may give up certain aspects of its culture in order to adapt to that of their new host country. See also *Assimilation*.

African American

United States residents who have ethnic origins in the African continent may prefer this term. While the terms “African American” and “Black” are often used interchangeably in the United States, it is best to ask individuals how they identify as not all individuals who identify as Black have ancestors known to be from Africa. For example, some individuals in immigrant communities may identify as Black, but do not identify as African American. This is an established race categorization used by federal agencies and academic institutions in the US. See also *Black* and *BIPOC*.

Alaska Native

Umbrella term for the Indigenous peoples of Alaska, a diverse group consisting of over 200 federally recognized tribes, and speaking 20 Indigenous languages. This is a general term; Alaska Native people may prefer to identify themselves by their specific tribal affiliation(s). The term “Eskimo” is considered derogatory by some Alaska Native people, and should be avoided. It is an established race categorization used by federal agencies and academic institutions in the US.

American Indian

Refers to Indigenous people and numerous tribes of North America, most commonly referencing those within the current United States. This term is also part of an established race categorization used by federal agencies and academic institutions in the US “American Indian or Alaska Native.” Many Indigenous people identify themselves by their specific tribal affiliation(s).

Anglo or Anglo-Saxon

Of or related to the descendants of Germanic peoples (Angles, Saxons, and Jutes) who reigned in Britain until the Norman conquest in 1066. Often refers to White English-speaking persons of European descent in England or North America, not of Hispanic or French origin.

Anti-Racist

A person or policy who identifies, challenges, and actively and consciously opposes the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism.

Anti-Semitism

Hatred, discrimination, hostility, or oppression of Jewish people as a group or as individuals.

Anti-Muslim

Hatred, discrimination, hostility, or oppression of Muslim people as a group or as individuals.

Arab

Of or relating to the cultures or people that have ethnic roots in the following countries where Arabic is spoken: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. "Arab" is not synonymous with "Muslim." Arab people practice many religions, including Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and others.

Asian-American

The U.S. Census Bureau defines "Asian" as "people having origins in any of the original peoples of Asia or the Indian subcontinent. It includes people who indicated their race or races as 'Asian,' 'Indian,' 'Chinese,' 'Filipino,' 'Korean,' 'Japanese,' 'Vietnamese,' or 'Other Asian.' Asian-Americans are approximately 6% of the total U.S. population, and 6.5% including persons of mixed race. Individuals with origins in the Indian subcontinent (i.e., India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc.) are often wrongly excluded from the Asian-American narrative. This is an established race categorization used by federal agencies and academic institutions in the US.

Assimilation

The process by which one group takes on the cultural and other traits of a larger group, often giving up aspects of their own culture or beliefs. Assimilation can be chosen or forced. In the context of historically and currently marginalized groups in the United States, a stark example of forced assimilation and racism in the 19th century included government oppression of language, religious, and cultural expression enforced by sending Native American children to boarding schools.

Bias

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

Bicultural

Of or related to an individual who possesses the languages, values, beliefs, and behaviors of two distinct racial or ethnic groups.

BIPOC

An acronym that stands for "Black, Indigenous, and People of Color". The burden of white supremacy disproportionately falls on Black and Indigenous people in the US. This term centers the experiences of Black and Indigenous people and their relationship to whiteness, which shapes the experiences of and relationship to white supremacy for all People of Color within a U.S. context.

Biracial	A person who identifies as being of two races or whose biological parents are of two different racial groups.
Birth Assigned Sex	The binary designation that refers to a person's biological, morphological, hormonal, and genetic composition. One's sex is typically assigned at birth and classified as either male or female, and often excludes those who are intersex. Recent movements have sought to remove sex assignment from birth certificates. Also referred to as birth sex, natal sex, or sex assigned at birth.
Bisexual	An identity term for people who are attracted to people of two or more genders, usually to both men and women. Bi* is used as an inclusive abbreviation for the bi, pan, and fluid community.
Black	Is an umbrella term for or related to persons having ethnic origins in the African continent, including those whose ancestors were kidnapped into chattel slavery or persons belonging to the African Diaspora. "African American" is often interchangeably and incorrectly used with "Black" in the United States (see definition for African American). This guide , created for journalists, may be helpful to some. This term is often used in research and may not be preferred in interpersonal situations. It is best to ask individuals how they identify as it may differ from individual to individual.
Brahmanism	The doctrines and practices of Brahmans and orthodox Hindus, characterized by the caste system in India. It is considered the "highest" caste and is often manipulated to oppress the lower classes.
Casteism	The caste system was originally developed as a way to define religious practices and professions of individuals within communities in early India. However, modern day casteism manifests as prejudice or antagonism directed against individuals of a different (lower) caste and can even dictate marriage and employment decisions.
Chicano	Describes a person of Mexican-American descent. In other words, those who are beyond first-generation.
Cisgender/Cis	A term for individuals whose sex assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity align. Often referred to as a cis man or cis woman, these terms describe the antonym to transgender.

Classism

Prejudicial thoughts and discriminatory actions based on difference in socioeconomic status (defined by income or education for example), usually referred to as class. Differential treatment based on social class or perceived social class, classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the dominant class groups. The systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class, “Classism” can also be expressed through the use of public policies and institutional practices that prevent people from breaking out of poverty rather than ensuring equitable economic, social, and educational opportunity.

Color Blind(ness)

The problematic racial ideology that posits the best way to end discrimination is by treating individuals as equally as possible, without regard to race, culture, or ethnicity, and in doing so legitimizes systemic racism. The term “colorblind” de-emphasizes, or ignores, race and ethnicity, a large part of one’s identity and disregards systemic racism and persistent discrimination.

Communities of Color

A term used primarily in the United States to describe communities of people who are not identified as White, emphasizing common experiences of racism.

Covert Racism

Expresses racist ideas, attitudes or beliefs in subtle, hidden or secret forms. Covert racism can be used to describe other forms of racism including interpersonal racism, internalized racism, institutional racism, and structural racism and is often excused or dismissed due to its subtlety.

Decolonization

The active resistance against colonial powers and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, cultural, psychic independence and power that originate from a colonized nation’s own indigenous culture. This process occurs politically and also applies to personal and societal psychic, cultural, political, agricultural, and educational deconstruction of colonial oppression. Decolonization demands an Indigenous framework and a centering of Indigenous land, Indigenous sovereignty, and Indigenous ways of thinking. Please refer to “[The Wretched of the Earth](#)” by Frantz Fanon for more reading.

Disability

Physical or cognitive impairments which have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out one or more day-to-day activities. An individual’s disability can be visible or non-visible. Please refer to “[Disability-Inclusive Language Guidelines](#)” by the United Nations Geneva for more information on recommended inclusive language and communication practices.

Note: Within the disability community some identify as differently abled instead of disabled. In some spaces differently abled is controversial. We encourage you to ask for a person's preference. Learn more from the following resources.

[Disability Allyship Workshop](#)
[UW Student Disability Commission](#)

Discrimination

The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, employment, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, physical/mental abilities, body size and other categories that may result in differences in provision of goods, services or opportunities. These actions can be overt (public and apparent) or covert (subtle or concealed).

Diversity

The myriad ways in which people differ, including the psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among all individuals, such as race, ethnicity, nationality, social class, religion, education, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, mental and physical ability, body size and learning styles. A state of diversity is a goal that includes having a variety of social identities represented in a space, community, or society. Diversity is all-inclusive and supportive of the proposition that everyone and every group should be valued. It is about understanding these differences and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of our differences.

Equality

The condition under which every individual is treated in the same way, and is granted the same rights, responsibilities, resources, and opportunities, regardless of their individual differences.

Equity

The condition under which all individuals are provided the resources they need to have proportionate access to the same rights and opportunities, as the general population. Equity represents impartiality and recognizes that each person has different circumstances, i.e. the distribution is made in such a way to even opportunities for all the people. Conversely, equality indicates uniformity, where everything is evenly distributed among people.

Ethnicity/Ethnic Group

A grouping of people who identify with each other on the basis of characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, cultural heritage, values, language, religion, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base.

First Nations

Indigenous peoples of Canada who are not Inuit or Métis. Many First Nations people define or identify themselves by their specific nation or tribal affiliation(s).

Gay

An identity term used to describe a male-identified person who is attracted to other male-identified people in a romantic, sexual, and/or emotional sense. Also an umbrella term used to refer to people who experience same-sex or same-gender attraction.

Gender

The socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that society considers "appropriate" for men and women. It is separate from 'sex', which is the classification of female, intersex, or male based on physiological and biological features. A person's gender may not necessarily correspond to their birth assigned sex or be limited to the gender binary (woman/man). Please see the [Trans Student Gender Unicorn](#), and [GLADD Glossary](#) for additional terms related to gender.

Gender Binary

Two discrete and opposite gender categories, namely women and men or feminine and masculine, informed by social system or cultural belief. (See also non-binary)

Gender Expression

The outward ways in which a person presents their gender identity to others. External expression of gender can include but is not limited to name, pronouns, clothing, speech and behaviors. It can also be referred to as gender presentation.

Gender Identity

Refers to all people's internal sense of being a man, woman, both, in between, or outside of the gender binary, which may or may not correspond with sex assigned at birth or with sexual orientation. Because gender identity is internal and personally defined, it is not visible to others, which differentiates it from gender expression.

Gender Fluid

Persons who do not identify as having a single fixed gender.

Gender Nonconforming

Persons whose gender expression does not conform to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.

Health Equity

Attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Efforts to ensure that all people have full and equitable access to opportunities that enable them to lead healthy lives.

Heterosexism

The individual, societal, cultural, and institutional beliefs and practices that favor heterosexuality and assume that heterosexuality is the only natural, normal, or acceptable sexual orientation. This creates an imbalance in power, which leads to systemic, institutional, pervasive, and routine mistreatment of people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, two-spirit, and those who do not identify as heterosexual. Heterosexism as a systemic bias leads to, intersects with, and fuels homophobia (the fear of, aversion to, or being against, non-heterosexuals).

Heterosexual

An identity term for individuals who are sexually, physically, and/or emotionally attracted to individuals who hold the opposite gender identity.

Hispanic

A term instituted by federal agencies and describes individuals who are descendants of people from Spain, or from predominantly Spanish-speaking regions formerly colonized by Spain. The term is not used to describe race. Some find the term offensive as it honors the colonizers and not the Indigenous groups the term represents. The U.S. Census Bureau defines Hispanic origin as those people who classified themselves in one of the specific Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino categories listed on the Census 2020 questionnaire (Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban or additional Hispanic origins including but not limited to Argentinian, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, and Salvadorian).

Homosexual

A person who is primarily sexually, physically, and/or emotionally attracted to individuals who have the same gender identity. Many people reject the term homosexual because of its history as a term denoting mental illness and abnormality - the terms Gay, Lesbian, or Queer are preferred.

Implicit Bias

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. Implicit biases can be framed as either negative or positive, but both are harmful. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to be more predominant than the individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that people may profess. Some efforts to recognize and combat implicit bias have been termed "debiasing" and "anti-bias work". Note: Although implicit bias is widely comprehended as unconscious bias, we acknowledge implicit bias is a controllable behavior with compassionate self-critique and humility.

Inclusion/Inclusiveness

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power and respects all cultural values.

Indigenous People

Culturally distinct ethnic groups native to a place which has been colonized and settled by another ethnic group. As a result of colonization, Indigenous people experience challenges such as marginalization, cultural and linguistic preservation, land rights, ownership and exploitation of natural resources, political determination and autonomy, environmental degradation and incursion, poverty, poor health, and discrimination. Indigenous people exist everywhere in the world.

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism refers specifically to racially adverse "discriminatory policies and practices carried out...[within and between individual] state or non-state institutions" on the basis of racialised group membership. Some of these institutional policies and practices explicitly name race (eg, de jure Jim Crow laws, which required schools and medical facilities to be racially segregated, and restricted certain neighborhoods to be white-only), but many do not (eg, employer practices of screening applications on seemingly neutral codes, such as telephone area codes or ZIP codes, because of presumptions about which racial groups live where). This definition comes from Bailey ZD, Krieger N, Agénor M, Graves J, Linos N, Bassett MT. Structural racism and health inequities in the USA: evidence and interventions. *The Lancet*. 2017 Apr 8;389(10077):1453-63.

Internalized Racism

Internalized racism is a phenomenon that occurs when those oppressed by racism *develop ideas, beliefs, actions and behaviors that support or collude with* supremacy and dominance of a racist system by maintaining or participating in the set of social structures and ideologies that reinforce that system. In the U.S. this generally involves reinforcement of white supremacy. Internalized racism

involves four essential and interconnected elements:

Decision-making — Due to racism, there are decisions out of the control of people of color that affect their daily life and resources. As a result, on an intrapersonal level, some people of color may (consciously or unconsciously) be taught to think White people know more about what needs to be done for their community than they do. On an interpersonal level, communities of color may not support each other's authority and power — especially if it is in opposition to the dominating racial group. Structurally, there is a system in place that rewards People of Color who support white supremacy and power and coerces or punishes those who do not.

Resources — Resources, broadly defined (e.g., money, time, etc.), are unequally in the hands and under the control of White people. Internalized racism is one of many systems in place that make it difficult for People of Color to get access to resources for their communities and to control the resources of their community.

Standards — People of Color may be taught to accept standards for what is appropriate or "normal" that are Eurocentric or American-centric (e.g., "Western," to borrow an imperialist phrase). They may have difficulty naming, communicating, and living up to "Western" standards and values, and holding themselves and each other accountable to them.

Naming the problem — There is a system in place that misnames the problem of racism and its effects as problems of or caused by People of Color. As a result of internalized racism, People of Color might, for example, believe they are more violent than White people instead of recognizing the role of state-sanctioned political violence and institutional racism.

From "Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building" by Donna Bevins (Racial justice educator at Mission Institute):

"As people of color are victimized by racism, we internalize it. That is, we develop ideas, beliefs, actions and behaviors that support or collude with racism. This internalized racism has its own systemic reality and its own negative consequences in the lives and communities of people of color. More than just a consequence of racism, then, internalized racism is a systemic oppression in reaction to racism that has a life of its own. In other words, just as there is a system in place that reinforces the power and

expands the privilege of white people, there is a system in place that actively discourages and undermines the power of people and communities of color and mires us in our own oppression...Because race is a social and political construct that comes out of particular histories of domination and exploitation between Peoples, people of colors' internalized racism often leads to great conflict among and between them as other concepts of power-such as ethnicity, culture, nationality and class-are collapsed in misunderstanding. ... Putting forward this definition of internalized racism that is systemic and structural is not intended to 'blame the victim.' It is meant to point out the unique work that people of color must do within ourselves and our communities to really address racism and white privilege. As experiences of race and structural racism become more confusing, complex and obscured, it is imperative that people of color explore and deepen our understanding of internalized racism. As more anti-racist white people become clearer about whiteness, white privilege... people of color are freed up to look beyond our physical and psychological trauma from racism."

Read more about internalized racism at racialequitytools.org [here](#) and read more from "Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building" [here](#).

Interpersonal Racism

Interpersonal racism is a form of bias that occurs when individuals interact with others and their personal racial beliefs affect their public interactions. Examples: public expressions of racial prejudice, hate, bias and bigotry between individuals.

Intersectionality

The theoretical framework introduced by Kimberle' Crenshaw states that various biological, social, and cultural categories-- including but not limited to gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation and social categories-- interact and contribute towards systematic social inequality. This concept recognizes that groups of people or individuals:

- 1) belong to more than one social category simultaneously and
- 2) may experience either privilege or marginalization depending on circumstances and relationships.

Exploring [one's] multiple identities can help clarify the ways in which a person can simultaneously

experience privilege and oppression. For example, intersectionality is how gendered-racial discrimination was understood in a lawsuit against General Motors. Black women banded together to point out the jobs for women were only for White women and the jobs for Black people were only for Black men leaving Black women without access to a job at General Motors. In this lawsuit Kimberle' Crenshaw displayed how intersecting identities can affect lived experience.

Intersex

The term intersex is a general term that refers to internal and/or external anatomical sexual characteristics observed at birth or developed naturally during puberty, where features usually labeled as male or female may be mixed to some degree. These variations are naturally occurring variations in humans and not a medical condition.

Islamophobia

Prejudice, fear, and hostility toward Islam and people who practice Islam (Muslims) and those with names that reflect ties to South and West Asia and North Africa (SWANA). Those perceived to be visibly Muslim may face increased discrimination, including Muslim women who wear a hijab (headscarf) and Sikh men (not Muslim) who wear a turban. These practices and beliefs often result in discrimination, surveillance, and hate crimes. This term is falling out of favor with a preference towards using the term xenophobia.

Latino/Latina/Latine/Latinx

The term "Latino/Latina" are gendered terms used to describe individuals who are descendants of people from Latin America. The term is not used to describe race. U.S. Census Bureau uses the term "Hispanic or Latino" (see definition of Hispanic). The term Latinx is a gender-neutral term for Latino/Latina. This term omits any masculine or feminine roots. Latine is also a gender-neutral term, but the "e" ending is viewed as a more common and grammatically correct Spanish ending. Note: While Latinx and Latine carry the same meaning, we emphasize the need to respect a Latine/Latinx person by asking them what language they prefer. In different settings one word may be preferred over the other.

In research settings this article may be helpful: María del Río-González A. To Latinx or not to Latinx: a question of gender inclusivity versus gender neutrality. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2021 Jun;111(6):1018-21. Also see this [Pew Research Center article](#) for general population acceptance of the term

Lesbian

The term is used to describe women attracted emotionally, physically, and/or sexually to other women. Although some nonbinary people identify as lesbian too.

LGBT/LGBTQIA/LGBTQA/LGBTIQ, etc.

LGBTQ: This acronym is an umbrella term used to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people. Another common acronym used is LGBTQIA, which encompasses intersex and asexual identities, although there doesn't seem to be consensus within the intersex or asexual communities about wanting to be included in or directly linked to the LGBTQ community. To be inclusive most people utilize the term LGBTQ+.

Marginalized/Marginalization

The process by which minority groups/cultures are excluded, ignored or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community. A tactic used to devalue and oppress those that vary from the crafted norm of the mainstream, sometimes to the point of denigrating them as deviant and regressive.

Microaggression

Everyday slights, insults, putdowns, invalidations, and demeaning behaviors and messages sent to historically and presently marginalized groups by members of a majority group sent through verbal, behavioral, or environmental cues that perpetuate stigma. Perpetrators of microaggressions may be unaware that they have engaged in demeaning ways towards a target group. Insensitivity toward others in ways that devalue, discriminate, and deny all or some parts of someone's personal identity (see definition of Personal Identity below). Micro refers to the interpersonal nature of the and not the "size" of impact. More information, including examples, can be found [here](#).

Minoritized

The uncontrollable and systemically oppressive force of being in a minority group, with respect to race, religion, or other aspects of identity. Oppression permeates the language we use to describe persons who bear the burden of white supremacy, heteronormativity and Western-centric ideals. This term is preferable to terms such as "vulnerable," "disadvantaged," "underserved," or "minority."

Multicultural

Of or pertaining to more than one culture.

Multiculturalism

[Multiculturalism](#) refers to (a) the state of a society or the world in which there exists numerous distinct ethnic and cultural groups seen to be politically relevant; and (b) a program or policy promoting such a society.

Multiethnic

Of or pertaining to more than one ethnicity.

Multiracial

Of or pertaining to more than one race. This can pertain to individuals who identify as such, as well as social movements, coalitions and organizing that comprise individuals of multiple and different racialized groups.

Non-binary

An individual whose gender identity is not defined within the margins of the gender binary (man or woman). Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories.

Native American

Can be used to refer broadly to the Indigenous peoples of North and South America, but is more commonly used as a general term for the Indigenous peoples of the contiguous United States. This term has been used interchangeably with the term “American Indian,” although some find this latter term offensive since “Indian” is a misnomer. These are general terms which refer to groups of people with different tribal affiliations; many Native American individuals identify themselves by their specific tribal affiliation(s). See also *Indigenous and American Indian*.

Normativity

A standard for evaluation of actions or outcomes as good or permissible and others as bad or impermissible, often resulting in privilege, censure, or other power-based outcomes. For example, “heteronormativity” and “cisnormativity” assume that heterosexuality or cisgender are the norms, and privilege these norms over other sexual orientations or gender identities. “White normativity” is the unconscious ideas and practices that make whiteness appear natural and right.

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 that saturate most aspects of life in our society. Oppression also signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privileged groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups.

Pacific Islander

Refers to the Indigenous inhabitants of the Pacific Islands, specifically persons whose origins are of the following sub-regions of Oceania: Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia. Also known as Pasifika.

Person/People-first language

Language that puts the person before the disability, disease or situation, and describes what features or experiences a person has, not who a person is. For example, “person with a disability” instead of “disabled” or “person who injects drugs” instead of “drug addict” or a person who is incarcerated instead of “felon” or “the incarcerated”.

Person/People of Color (POC)

Used primarily in the United States to describe any person who is not White or of European descent; the term is meant to be inclusive among non-White groups, emphasizing common experiences of racism. (This definition parallels the Communities of Color definition.) BIPOC, defined above, is a term that centers the experience of Black and Indigenous POC in conversations, as POC are not a monolith.

Personal Identity

Evolving and defining properties of an individual’s experience that have shaped the ways in which they engage with the world. Self-chosen, self-identifying terms may include ethnicity, race, religion, sexuality, gender, disability, politics, profession, and life experiences (such as immigrating).

Power

The ability to influence and make decisions that impact others that 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

An unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude toward a 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.

Prison Industrial Complex (PIC)

The overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems (Critical Resistance, 1997)

Privilege

Unearned social power (set of advantages, entitlements, and benefits) accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to the members of a dominant group (e.g., White people with respect to People of Color, cisgender men with respect to cisgender women, heterosexuals with respect to LGBTQ+ people, adults with respect to children, citizens of a certain country with respect to immigrants, and rich people with respect to low-income and working class people). Privilege tends to be invisible to those who possess it, because its absence (lack of privilege) is what calls attention to it. In other words, men are less likely to notice/acknowledge a difference in advantage because they do not live the life of a woman; White people are less likely to notice/acknowledge racism because they do not live the life of a person of color; straight people are less likely to notice/acknowledge heterosexism because they do not live the life of a gay/lesbian/bisexual person.

Queer

A multi-faceted word that is used in different ways and means different things to different people. It can refer to any combination of gender identity and sexual orientation. Reclaimed from its earlier negative use, the term is valued by some for its defiance, by some because it can be inclusive of the entire community, and by others who find it to be an appropriate term to describe their more fluid identities. However, it is still possible to use and interpret the word as a slur, depending on context. Here are some ways that queer is used today:

*** Due to its varying meanings, this word should only be used when self-identifying or quoting someone who self-identifies as queer (i.e. "My cousin identifies as queer.")*

1) Queer (adj.): non-heterosexual. Queer is sometimes used as an umbrella term to refer to all people with non-heterosexual sexual orientations or all people who are marginalized on the basis of sexual orientation.

2) Queer (adj.): attracted to people of many genders. Although dominant culture tends to dictate that there are only two genders, gender is actually far more complex. Queer can be a label claimed by a person who is attracted to men, women, genderqueer people, and/or other gender nonconforming people.

3) Queer (adj.): not fitting cultural norms around sexuality and/or gender identity/expression. Similarly to the above, queer can be a label claimed by a person who feels that they personally don't fit into dominant norms, due to their own gender identity/expression, their sexual practices, their relationship style, etc.

4) Queer (adj.): transgressive, revolutionary, anti-assimilation, challenging of the status quo. Many people claim the label queer as a badge of honor that has a radical, political edge.

5) Queer (n.): an epithet or slur for someone perceived to be gay or lesbian. Queer is still sometimes used as a derogatory term, and is disliked by some within the LGBT community.

Race	A social and political construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly skin color), cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time. There are no distinctive genetic characteristics that truly distinguish between groups of people. Created by Europeans (White populations), race presumes human worth and social status for the purpose of establishing and maintaining privilege and power. Race is independent of ethnicity.
Racism	The process by which systems and policies, actions and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race. It can also be defined as “prejudice plus power.” Racism is more than just prejudice in thought or action. It occurs when this prejudice – whether individual or institutional – is accompanied by the power to discriminate against, oppress or limit the rights of others. Racism leads to racialization and race. The different levels of racism (see interpersonal racism, internalized racism, structural racism, and institutional racism) are all grounded in a presumed superiority of the White race over groups historically or currently racialized into marginalized groups (African, Asian, Latino, Native American, etc.).
Racial Capitalism	The centrality of race in structuring social and labor hierarchies in capitalist economies. Coined by Cedric J. Robinson, it describes the process of extracting social and economic value from a person of a different racial identity, referring, predominantly, to the extraction of value from those who are racially minoritized
Racialization	Process through which social meaning is assigned to individuals or groups based on shared characteristics such as phenotype, culture, language, nationality, religion, and class. This process separates people into distinct groups for the purpose of domination and exploitation. Racialization works in tandem with racist policies and practices (e.g. school and residential segregation, job discrimination etc.) to produce advantages for some and disadvantages for others.
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 themselves based on such factors as ancestry, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.
Racial Justice	The proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all.

Religion	A system of beliefs, usually spiritual in nature, and often in terms of a formal, organized institution.
Reverse Racism	The falsely held belief of perceived discrimination against a dominant group or political majority. Commonly used by opponents of affirmative action who believe that these policies are causing members of traditionally dominant groups to be discriminated against.
Safe Space	A place where anyone can fully express, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, religious affiliation, age, or physical or mental ability.
Scientific Racism	The unacceptable use of scientific techniques, theories, and hypotheses to sanction and perpetuate the belief of racial superiority, inferiority, or racism. Examples include eugenics, Tuskegee Syphilis Study, Puerto Rico contraceptive trials, cells taken from Henrietta Lacks without consent, "Indigenous Races of the Earth", and many others. Also known as biological essentialism.
Settler Colonialism	Colonization in which colonizing powers create permanent or long-term settlement on land owned and/or occupied by other peoples, often by force. This contrasts with colonialism where colonizer's focus only on extracting resources back to their countries of origin, for example. Settler Colonialism typically includes oppressive governance, dismantling of indigenous cultural forms, and enforcement of codes of superiority (such as white supremacy). Examples include Israel's occupations of Palestinian land, the US's settlements of indigenous land, and the Apartheid government established by White Europeans in South Africa.
Sex	The biological classification of female, intersex or male based on physiological and biological features. A person's sex may differ from their gender identity.
Sexual Orientation	Refers to the sex(es) or gender(s) to whom a person is emotionally, physically, sexually, and/or romantically attracted. Examples of sexual orientation include gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, asexual, pansexual, queer, etc.

Sinophobia

Racist or xenophobic sentiments against China, Chinese people, or Chinese culture. When COVID-19 began to spread outside of China, political leaders and others in the United States and elsewhere took advantage of its apparent origin in China to stoke latent Sinophobia. See also xenophobia below.

Socioeconomic status

A multidimensional construct that refers to the social and economic factors that influence what positions individuals or groups hold within the structure of society. SES is often described as being on a gradient and measured by education, income or occupation. Other terms such as social class have different meanings, specifically they are not defined as a gradient and use a different theoretical framework.

Stereotype

Widely held beliefs, unconscious associations and expectations about members of certain groups that are presumed to be true of every member of that group, and that present an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude or uncritical judgment. Stereotypes go beyond necessary and useful categorizations and generalizations in that they are typically negative, are based on little information and are highly generalized and/or inflammatory.

Structural Racism

Refers to “the totality of ways in which societies foster [racial] discrimination, via mutually reinforcing [inequitable] systems... (e.g., in housing, education, employment, earnings, benefits, credit, media, health care, criminal justice, etc) that in turn reinforce discriminatory beliefs, values, and distribution of resources, reflected in history, culture, and interconnected institutions.” See Bailey ZD, Krieger N, Agénor M, Graves J, Linos N, Bassett MT. Structural racism and health inequities in the USA: evidence and interventions. *The Lancet*. 2017 Apr 8;389(10077):1453-63. *See also Institutional Racism.*

Transgender

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their assigned sex at birth (i.e. the sex listed on their birth certificates). Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies through the use of hormones and/or gender affirmation surgery. Transgender people may identify with any sexual orientation, and their sexual orientation may or may not change before, during, or after transition. Use "transgender," not "transgendered." Transgender people use pronouns that are person-specific, please ask their pronouns and do not assume. See also Gender and related terms, Sexual Orientation and Transition.

Transition

The process that people go through as they affirm their gender expression and/or physical appearance to align with their gender identity. A transition may occur over a period of time, and may involve coming out to family, friends, coworkers and others; changing one's name and/or sex designation on legal documents; and/or medical intervention. Some people find the term "transition" offensive, and prefer terms such as "gender affirmation". It is best to ask individuals which terms they prefer.

Two Spirit/Two-spirit

A term used by some Indigenous peoples of North America to describe a person who holds a gender identity that is not rooted in Western society and is often revered in Native communities. Two Spirit identities have an accepted place in Native societies and are grounded in spiritual teachings that all life is sacred. Some also identify Two-Spirit as a sexual orientation in addition to or instead of a gender identity.

White Fragility

An insulated social environment that protects and insulates White people from race-based stress which builds White expectations for racial comfort while at the same time lowering the ability to tolerate racial stress. It is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate White racial equilibrium. See DiAngelo R. White fragility: Why it's so hard to talk to White people about racism. The Good Men Project. 2015 Apr 9; 9 for more information.

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.

White Supremacy

A historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations, and peoples of color by White peoples and nations of the European continent. The ideological goals of white supremacy include maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege for White people, typically involving the creation of a White ethnostate from which People of Color are excluded, by force if necessary.

Xenophobia

Literally, fear of the outsider. A specific form of racism and prejudice against people from other countries, with emphasis on immigrants and refugees.

