**Diversity Terms and Definitions for Orientation**

These definitions are meant to be baseline definitions used to acclimate students to an environment that cares deeply about diversity and inclusion. They were selected from a variety of resources for their ability to complex ideas in a way that is digestible but does not conflict with what they may learn in a university course.

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| **Definition** | **Video Links** | **Possible Activities** |
| **Institutional Power** is the capacity to exercise control over others and the ability or official authority to decide what is best for others and who will have access to resources. | **Power, Privilege, and Oppression** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTDikx-maoM>  **Why does privilege make people so angry**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qeYpvV3eRhY&list=PLLreUsexUtEO-afC42WdPtaBMQDYUEOOM&index=39>  **Discrimination explained**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uXgJA-VfjI> |  |
| **Privilege** is unearned advantages and immunities granted and available to a particular group of people  People in dominant groups often believe that they have earned the privileges that they enjoy or that everyone could have access to these privileges if only they worked to earn them. In fact, privileges are unearned and they are granted to people in dominant groups whether they want those privileges or not, and regardless of their stated intent.  Privilege is characteristically invisible to people who have it. Unlike targets of oppression, people in dominant groups are frequently unaware that they are members of the dominant group due to the privilege of being able to see themselves as the norm. | Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack (Peggy McIntosh) |
| **Oppression** is when a single group in society unjustly takes advantage of, and exercises power over, another group using dominance and subordination. It describes a relationship between groups or categories of between groups or categories of people in which a dominant group benefits from the systematic abuse, exploitation, and injustice directed toward a subordinate group. The relationship between whites and blacks in the United States and South Africa, between social classes in many industrial societies, between men and women in most societies, between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland - all have elements of social oppression in that the organization of social life enables those who dominate to oppress others. Relationships between groups and relationships between groups and social categories, it should not be confused with the oppressive behavior of individuals. A white man may not himself actively participate in oppressive behavior directed at blacks or women, for example, but he nonetheless benefits from the general oppression of blacks and women simply because he is a white man. In this sense, all members of dominant and subordinate categories participate in social oppression regardless of their individual attitudes or behavior. Social oppression becomes institutionalized when its enforcement is so of social life that it is not easily identified as oppression and does not require conscious prejudice or overt acts of discrimination." One of the purposes of the exercise we'll do is to help use better identify the feelings that oppression produces in us and in our clients. (Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology) |  |
| **Identity**  Age, gender, religious or spiritual affiliation, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status are all identities. Some identities are things people can see easily (like race or assumed gender), while other identities are not always easy to see (like some disabilities and class status).  Everyone has a personal and social identity. Personal identities include an individual’s name, unique characteristics, history, personality and other traits that make one different from others. Social identity includes affinities one has with other people, values and norms that one accepts, and the ways one has learned to interact in social settings.  Salient Identities: the prominence or importance attached to a particular experience, idea, feeling, or social identity |  | -Salient identity wheel  -Salient Identity Reflection Questions   1. What part of your identity do you think people first notice about you? 2. What part of your identity are you most comfortable sharing with other people? 3. What part of your identity are you least comfortable sharing with other people? 4. What part of your identity are you most proud of? |
| **Race** is a social and political construct that divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, history, ethnic classification, and the political needs of a society at a given period of time. | **Systemic Racism Explained**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrHIQIO_bdQ&t=16s>  **5 things you should know about racism (MTV Decoded)**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8eTWZ80z9EE&list=PLLreUsexUtEO-afC42WdPtaBMQDYUEOOM&index=66> |  |
| **Racism** is any prejudice against someone because of their race, when those views are reinforced by systems of power. |  |
| **Institutional racism** is the policies and practices entrenched in established institutions, which result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color. It differs from overt discrimination in that no individual intent is necessary. |  |
| **Anti-racism** is the work that actively opposes racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social spheres that reduce racial inequality. |  |
| **Social class**: An individual’s overall standing in society based on things like income, occupation, and education level. Classism is prejudice against or in favor of people belonging to a particular class. | **Born Poor, Stay Poor**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtca2-T4CBo>  **5 Myths About Poor People**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OroExM49oxo&list=PLLreUsexUtEO-afC42WdPtaBMQDYUEOOM&index=12> |  |
| **Classism** is differential treatment based on social class or  perceived social class. Classism is held in place by a system of  beliefs and cultural attitudes that ranks people according to economic status, family lineage, job status, level of education, and other divisions. |  |
| **Class privilege** includes the many tangible or intangible unearned advantages of “higher” class status, such as personal contacts with employers, “legacy admissions” to higher education, inherited money, good childhood health care, quality education, speaking with the same dialect and accent as people with institutional power, and having knowledge of how the systems of power operate. |  |
| **Internalized classism** is the acceptance and justification of classism by working class and poor people. Examples include: feelings of inferiority to higher-class people; disdain or shame about traditional patterns of class in one’s family and a denial of heritage; feelings of superiority to people lower on the class spectrum than oneself; hostility and blame towards other working-class or poor people; and beliefs that classist institutions are fair. |  |
| In general terms, **“sex”** refers to the biological differences between males and females, such as the genitalia and genetic differences. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive, as there are individuals who possess both. Sometimes, a person’s genetically assigned sex does not line up with their gender identity. These individuals might refer to themselves as trans\*, non-binary, or gender-nonconforming. | **Gender Stratification**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yb1_4FPtzrI>  **What is feminism?**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91ZWRf3GA6k> |  |
| **Gender** refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed**.** Rather than being purely assigned by genetics, as sex differences generally are, people often develop their gender roles in response to their their environment, including family interactions, the media, peers, and education. |  |
| **Sexism** is prejudice or discrimination based on a person's sex or gender. Sexism can affect anyone, but it disproportionately affects women and girls. It has been linked to stereotypes and gender roles, and may include the belief that one sex or gender is intrinsically superior to another. Sexism is any expressions (word, image, gesture, act) based on the idea that some persons, mostly women, are inferior because of their sex or gender. |  |
| **Sexualities or sexual orientation** refers to the emotional, romantic and/or sexual desires that one person may have for another person or other people, or who someone has an affinity for. It also may refer to whether experiences sexual or romantic desires. |  |  |
| When we discuss **gender identity**, we mean to how a person sees and/or feels about their gender. It may or may not be congruent with their sex assigned at birth. | **The Gender Unicorn**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPNCzXYy2CE> |  |
| Homophobia is oppression based on sexual orientation and is defined as the fear, hatred, discomfort with, or mistrust of people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual. |  |  |
| **Transphobia** is related, but different, in that is pinpoints fear, hatred, discomfort with, or mistrust of people who are transgender, genderqueer, or don’t follow traditional [gender norms](https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/gender-identity/sex-gender-identity/what-are-gender-roles-and-stereotypes) (Planned Parenthood). These can manifest themselves in negative attitudes, discrimination, violent language, harmful policies, etc. |  |  |
| One basic/simple way to demonstrate respect, specifically members of the LGBT community, is to use the correct **gender pronouns**, which can include she, he, they, and ze. You may have noticed that your Orientation Leaders, Resident Advisors, Sophomore Advisors, and fellow students include their gender pronouns during introductions. Identifying your pronouns AND not assuming other people’s is a part of creating a community of care. |  |  |
| **Spirituality**: Concerned with the human spirit, the essence of being human, your soul or inner life |  |  |
| **Religion**: the belief in a god or in a group of gods; an organized system of beliefs, ceremonies, and rules used to worship a god or a group of gods; an interest, a belief, or an activity that is very important to a person or group |  |  |
| **Religious persecution** is the systematic mistreatment of an individuals as a response to their religious beliefs or affiliations or lack thereof.  In U.S. society and in higher education, there are a number of forms of privilege and oppression that concern people’s religious and philosophical identities:  Historically, forms of white, mainline Protestant Christianity have held privilege in American public life and institutions; exceptions to these have been practitioners of minority or unorthodox Christian sects (such as Quakers)  Over time and today there has been prejudice and discrimination against Roman Catholics; toward Jews (anti-Semitism); toward Muslims (Islamophobia); toward Black Christians and their houses of worship; toward Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains and practitioners of other Asian religions—often mixed with racial prejudices  And there has been prejudice and discrimination against atheists, agnostics, humanists, and nonbelievers |  |  |
| **Islamophobia:** dislike of or prejudice against Islam or Muslims, especially as a political force | **Islamophobia:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xw_tUOBYYP4> |  |
| **Anti-Semitism**: discrimination against or prejudice or hostility toward Jews | **Antisemitism**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BIwf72ynS8>  <https://youtu.be/NVP3K5-0DI8> (MTV Decoded) |  |
| **Religious and philosophical pluralism**—the idea that our diversity of beliefs and respectful engagement with those different beliefs is welcome and encouraged |  |  |
| **Disability** is a physical or mental condition that limits a person’s movements, senses, or activities | **Unboxing Ableism**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLVMppeOaRo>  **5 Phrases Disabled People Are Tired Of**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DSL-2hsRk8&list=PLLreUsexUtEO-afC42WdPtaBMQDYUEOOM&index=2>  **Things People with disabilities wish you knew**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_b7k6pEnyQ4> |  |
| **Ableism** is the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. At its heart, ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people require ‘fixing’ and defines people by their disability. Like racism and sexism, ableism classifies entire groups of people as ‘less than’, and includes harmful stereotypes, misconceptions, and generalizations of people with disabilities. |  |
| **Xenophobia** is the fear or hatred of that which is perceived to be foreign or strange. It includes attitudes, prejudices and behavior that reject, exclude, and often vilify persons based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society, or national identity. Xenophobia may manifest in suspicion by the ingroup of the outgroup, a desire to eliminate their presence, and fear of losing national, ethnic or racial identity. | **What’s the difference between xenophobia and racism?**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Aicki4a4uI> |  |