

# **Useful Definitions for Exploring Gender Equity Excerpted from a Larger Document**

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The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

<b>Accumulation of Advantage</b>	Accumulation of Advantage (or disadvantage) means that very small differences in treatment can as they pile up result in large disparities or substantial long term effects. (Valian, 1999)
<b>Ally</b>	One (a non-target group member) who is united with another (a target group or member) to actively intervene, interrupt, challenge and counter personal and institutional attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate oppression.
<b>Androcentric</b>	An attitude, belief, action, or institutional policy that is male-centered. (Iowa Department of Education, 1989)
<b>Anti-Bias Education</b>	An active/activist approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping and bias, and the “isms.” In a society in which institutional structures create and maintain sexism, racism, ableism, etc., it is not sufficient to be non-biased (and also highly unlikely), nor is it sufficient to be an observer. It is necessary for each individual to actively intervene, to challenge and counter the personal and institutional behaviors that perpetuate oppression. (Derman-Sparks, 1989)
<b>Bias</b>	<p>Any attitude, belief, or feeling that results in, and helps to justify, unfair treatment of an individual because of his or her identity. (Derman-Sparks, 1989)</p> <p>An inclination for or against a person or group of persons based, in whole or in part, on sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability that inhibits impartial or objective judgement affecting pupils. (PI 9.02)</p>
<b>Bias, Seven Forms of</b>	<p>Curricular bias in materials and structure include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Invisibility:</b> Under-representation of certain groups, which can imply that these groups are of less value, importance, and significance.</li><li>2. <b>Stereotyping:</b> Assigning only traditional or rigid roles or attributes to a group, thus limiting the abilities and potential of that group; denying students a knowledge of the diversity and complexity of, and variations among, any group of individuals.</li><li>3. <b>Imbalance/Selectivity:</b> Presenting only one interpretation of an issue, situation, or group; distorting reality and ignoring complex and differing viewpoints through selective presentation of materials.</li><li>4. <b>Unreality:</b> Presenting an unrealistic portrayal of this country’s history and contemporary life experience.</li><li>5. <b>Fragmentation/Isolation:</b> Separating issues relating to people of color and women (or other protected groups) from the main body of text.</li><li>6. <b>Linguistic Bias:</b> Excluding the roles and importance of females by constant use of the generic “he” and sex biased words. Linguistic bias includes issues of ethnicity, culture and language proficiency as well. (Bethke, 1985)</li><li>7. <b>Cosmetic Bias:</b> Creating an illusion that particular texts or materials have been infused with equity and diversity when in fact minimal efforts to conduct new research and address diversity throughout the entire content have been made. Shortcuts to transformation of texts include adding a few pictures and adding “special focus sections” that discuss, yet segregate information about under-represented groups with exceptional or stereotypic stories. (Sadker/Lerner, 1997)</li></ol>

## **Culture**

The collective behavior patterns, communication styles, language, beliefs, concepts, values, institutions, standards, symbols, and other factors unique to a community that are socially transmitted to individuals and to which individuals are expected to conform. (PEO)

The ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and world view shared by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history/herstory, geographic location, language, social class, and or religion. (Nieto, 1992)

“Culture consists of all the people, objects, and events that impart meaning in our lives. It is not only our past history and traditions observed in our families, but also the detail of our present everyday lives. Cultures change from generation to generation, from locale to locale. Still, there is a thread of connection that allows us to derive at least part of our identity from that belonging.” (Leslie R. Williams as quoted in Minnesota)

The ways of believing, feeling, and behaving of a group of people; the way of life of a people, their values, skills, customs, and resulting material culture. All people have culture. (Iowa Department of Education, 1989)

Culture is the name of what people are interested in, their thoughts, their models, the books they read and the speeches they hear, their table-talk, gossip, controversies, historical sense and scientific training, the values they appreciate, the quality of life they admire. All communities have a culture. It is the climate of their civilization. (Walter Lippmann, (1889-1974), U.S. Journalist)

## **Cultural Competence**

Being able to function effectively in the context of cultural differences. To be a culturally competent provider of services, one needs to: be aware of and accept cultural differences; be aware of one’s own cultural values; understand that people of different cultures learn different ways of communicating, behaving, and problem solving; have basic knowledge or the skills to find out about a client’s culture; and be willing to adapt or adjust the way one works with people to take into consideration cultural differences. (Focal Point, 1988)

A life long process which includes the examination of personal attitudes, the acquisition of relevant knowledge, and the development of skills which facilitates working effectively with individuals and groups who are culturally different from you.

### **Six Steps to Cultural Competence**

1. The personal recognition and acceptance that all types of cultures have a profound influence on our lives.
2. The personal awareness that oppression is pervasive in our society, it is part of our history and, as much as we may want to escape that fact, it colors our relationships.
3. The acceptance that there are cultural differences and we need to learn to respect what we may not understand.

4. Having the humility to accept that we do not know everything about other cultures, and never will; therefore, we need to ascertain what it is we need to know about the specific groups with whom we are working.
5. A willingness to pursue that information in all the ways available to us.
6. When we are unable to do the above, having the courage to identify and confront our personal resistance, anger, and especially our fears. (Mohamed, 1992)

**Culturally Competent System, Institution or Agency**

Five essential elements contribute to an agency's ability to become more culturally competent. Such an agency values diversity, has the capacity for cultural self-assessment, is conscious of the dynamics of cross-cultural difference, has institutionalized cultural knowledge, and has developed adaptations to diversity. Further, each of the five elements must function at each level of the agency. (Focal Point, 1988)

**Culturally Relevant or Culturally Responsive Instruction**

The skill of recognizing (or seeking information on) the cultural resources each student brings to the classroom and creating a classroom culture which builds and expands on those resources. A culturally responsive pedagogy rejects the notion of a universal model of human development and assumes (and embraces) variation in approaches to learning across culturally varied communities. Teachers have the skills to maximize learning opportunities for each child by knowing the communities represented in their classrooms and translating that knowledge into instructional practice. Teachers have a wide repertoire of instructional strategies, and are skilled at selecting those strategies most appropriate for the students in their care. In short, it is using cultural knowledge to create rewarding classrooms for culturally diverse students. (Villegas, 1991)

**Desegregation**

An intermediate point on a continuum that extends from segregation to integration. The bringing together of students of different races (or other factors, e.g. sex and national origin) in common schools. (Vergon, 1981)

**Discrimination**

Any action, policy, or practice, including bias, stereotyping, and pupil harassment, which is detrimental to a person or group of persons and differentiates or distinguishes among persons, or which limits or denies a person or group of persons opportunities, privileges, roles, or rewards based, in whole or in part on sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, or which perpetuates the effects of past discrimination. (PI 9.02)

**Diversity**

Differences among people or peoples reflected in a variety of forms, including but not limited to race, culture, perspective, talent, interest, ability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, language and socio-economic status. (PEO)

**Equal Access**

Traditionally means impartiality in opportunity. It usually applies only to physical or legal barriers.

<b>Equal Educational Opportunities</b>	Providing the <i>same</i> resources, opportunity, treatment for each student
<b>Equality</b>	Sameness of status or competency (everybody gets the same)
<b>Equity</b>	Fairness and justice or impartiality (getting what you need). Beyond equal educational opportunity (which means providing the <i>same</i> resources, opportunity, and treatment for each student), <i>educational equity</i> is based on the principles of fairness and justice in allocating resources, opportunity, treatment and success for every student. Educational equity programs promote the real possibility of equality of educational results for each student and between diverse groups of students. Equity strategies are planned, systemic and focus on the core of the teaching and learning process (curriculum, instruction and school environment/culture).
<b>Equity, Educational</b>	The educational policies, practices, and programs necessary to: <b>(a)</b> eliminate educational barriers based on gender, race/ethnicity, national origin, color, disability, age, or other protected group status; and <b>(b)</b> provide equal educational opportunities and ensure that historically underserved or underrepresented populations meet the same rigorous standards for academic performance expected of all children and youth. Educational equity knowledge and practices in public schools have evolved over time and require a comprehensive approach. Equity strategies are planned, systemic and focus on the core of the teaching and learning process (curriculum, instruction and school environment/culture). Educational equity activities promote the real possibility of equality of educational <b>results</b> for each student and between diverse groups of students. (Wisconsin Consolidated State Plan for the Improving America's Schools Act)
<b>Gender</b>	Refers to a means of classification based on female or male designations including the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that are identified as either female or male; the culturally determined behavior of males and females. (New Jersey, 1993)  The sum of our feelings about sex status; the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that are identified as either female or male; the culturally determined behavior of males and females. Gender identity reflects the person's conviction that behaviorally and biologically he or she is either male or female. (Iowa Department of Education, 1989)
<b>Gender Equity</b>	Gender Equity is a set of actions, attitudes, and assumptions that provide opportunities and create expectations about individuals, regardless of gender. It is integral to and supports race, ethnic, economic, disabilities, and other equity concerns. In education, gender equity is specific action undertaken to create conditions that provide high-quality educational experiences for female and male students and enables outcomes of educational achievement with no differences based on gender. Gender equity is: an equal chance for learning for females and males; equitable options to learn subjects and prepare for future education, jobs, and careers; no limits on expectations due to gender; equal encouragement for both females and males to develop, achieve, and learn; and equitable treatment for female and male students. (Katherine Hanson, Education Development Center, 1996)

<b>Gender Schemas</b>	Gender Schemas are a set of non-conscious hypotheses about sex or gender differences that affect our expectations of females and males, evaluation of their work, and their performance or achievement. Gender Schemas refers to our intuitive hypotheses about the behaviors, traits and preferences of females and males. Both men and women hold the same gender schemas and begin acquiring them in early childhood. Gender schemas are generally unarticulated. One can profess egalitarian beliefs, but such beliefs do not control the unconscious and do not guarantee accurate, objective and impartial evaluation and treatment by others. (Valian, 1999)
<b>Harassment</b>	Behavior toward pupils based, in whole or in part, on sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability which substantially interferes with a pupil's school performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment. (PI 9.02)
<b>Heterosexism</b>	<p>The belief in the inherent superiority of one pattern of loving and thereby its right to dominance. Social standards and norms which dictate that being heterosexual is better or more moral than being lesbian, gay or bisexual, and that everyone is heterosexual or should be. (Thompson, 1990)</p> <p>Discriminatory beliefs or behaviors directed against gay men, lesbians and bisexuals. (Nieto, 1992)</p>
<b>Homophobia</b>	The fear of feelings of love for members of one's own sex and therefore the hatred of those feelings in others. (Thompson, 1990)
<b>Inclusive Education</b>	<p>An inclusive educational program should provide both <i>access and success</i> for all students. It employs curriculum that is developed and delivered so that students and staff gain an understanding and appreciation of all the groups present in the local, national, and global communities. It offers students and staff learning and teaching opportunities that reflect the wide range of contributions by and roles open to people similar and different from themselves. Information that is accurate and free of stereotypes and bias is infused in all aspects of the curriculum, which is taught from the perspectives of all groups. This fosters respect and appreciation for the diversity present in our pluralistic society. (Minnesota, 1990)</p> <p>Inclusive curriculum functions as both "window and mirror" for everyone regardless of race, culture, gender or disability. Inclusive language (words, phrases and structures that do not discriminate, that include rather than exclude) facilitates communication across cultures, genders and abilities. Such an approach ensures that students will know the positive contributions of men and women of all races, cultures, and abilities in all areas of life. (Minnesota, 1992)</p>
<b>Institutional Bias</b>	Attitudes, actions, and structures of institutions which subordinate any individual or group on the basis of sex, race, age, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status, disability, socioeconomic status, size or looks; inequalities

created by institutions, i.e., schools, courts, banks, hospitals, etc. which result in discrimination against a microcultural group. It may be intentional but usually is the result of established practices or “business as usual,” thus it is covert and subtle. Institutional bias functions through a combination of power, embedded in the established and respected forces in society, and prejudice toward a microcultural group. (Iowa Department of Education, 1989)

### **Internalized Oppression**

Condition in which individual members of oppressed groups internalize the negative beliefs and attitudes about self and other group members. Results in perpetuating limited or biased expectations for self and for other group members.

Turning prejudice on one’s self or others of one’s targeted group.

### **Multicultural Education**

An idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school. (James Banks)

Banks has identified four dimensions of multicultural education.

1. **Content integration** deals with the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline.
2. **Knowledge construction process** relates to the extent to which ability teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it.
3. **An equity pedagogy** exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, gender and social class groups. This includes using a variety of teaching styles that are consistent with the wide range of learning styles within various cultural and ethnic groups.
4. **Prejudice reduction** a conscious dimension that focuses on the characteristics of students racial, gender, class, and other stereotypes and attitudes and how they can be modified by teaching methods and materials.
5. **An empowering school culture** examining and changing the rules, roles and relationships, as well as differential participation and achievement/outcomes, across diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, and other social group distinctions, between student, staff, and community members. Grouping and labeling practices, sports participation, disproportionality in achievement, and the interaction of the staff and the students across racial, gender, class and other lines are among the components of the school culture that must be examined to create a school culture that empowers students from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural groups. (Banks, 1996)

A process of comprehensive and basic education for all students. Multicultural education challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, gender, sexual

orientation, etc.) that students, their communities and teachers represent. 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. Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action as the basis for social change, multicultural education furthers the democratic principles of social justice. (Nieto,1992)

“An education that is multicultural is a lifelong process of learning and development that promotes mutual respect, excellence, and achievement for all by confronting historical and current inequities, fostering responsibility, productivity, and active participation in a diverse and evolving society” (Developed by the Northeast Consortium for Multicultural Education at the Multicultural Education Working Conference, February 1993)

### **Multicultural Education Goals**

Vary for each organization. A contemporary set might include the following:

1. To enable students and school staff to recognize and make appropriate responses about discrimination based on race, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status, or disability and strive for equity and unity in a diverse society;
2. To provide students with multicultural experiences designed to enable them to interact and contribute more effectively in a pluralistic society and an interdependent world;
3. To transform curricular content areas to include ideas, perspectives, and experiences of women and men of diverse ability, social, cultural, and racial/ethnic groups;
4. To create a school and classroom climate that enhances learning by recognizing the history and culture of all people;
5. To empower students and their families to become active participants in the process of learning.
6. To increase students' knowledge of diverse cultural attitudes, traditions, and values;
7. To assist students in developing a positive self-image;
8. To improve intergroup/interpersonal relations, communication and understanding;
9. To provide a school atmosphere that fosters respect for all languages and dialects;
10. To develop student's ability to recognize, critically analyze, and make intelligent decisions about complex social problems and issues such as discrimination and oppression in contemporary society so that students will act as agents of social change.

(adapted from Guidelines for Education that is Multicultural, G.E.M., New Jersey Department of Education,1993)

### **Oppression**

The systematic subjugation of one social group by another. Oppression is having the power to carry out systematic discriminatory practices through and with the support of major societal institutions. Examples are racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ageism, ableism, anti-semitism.

### **Levels / Types of Oppression**



**Level 1 - Individual** - attitudes, beliefs, socialization, interpersonal interactions, individual behaviors.

**Level 2 - Institutional** - housing, employment, education, media, religion, health services (psychological & physical), government, legal system.

**Level 3 - Cultural/ systematic** - values, norm, needs, language, standards of beauty, holidays, sex roles, societal expectations, logic system. (Katz, 1978)

## **Prejudice**

A preconceived, usually unfavorable opinion marked by suspicion, fear, intolerance, or hatred, that is directed against a certain racial, religious, cultural, ethnic or gender group or individuals perceived to be members of such a group. (PEO)

An attitude, opinion, or feeling formed without adequate prior knowledge, thought, or reason. Prejudice can be prejudgment for or against any person, group, or sex. (Derman-Sparks, 1989)

## **Prejudice Reduction**

Planned efforts to acknowledge and reduce prejudice. Prejudice reduction strategies aimed at students most often include:

1. Increasing social contact between various groups
  2. Improving self-esteem and mental health
  3. Increasing cognitive sophistication
  4. Increasing empathy and understanding of other groups
- (Byrnes, Deborah A., 1988)

## **Privilege**

A right or resource that only one group (Dominants) have access to that other groups are denied.

Examples include: legalized, recognized marriages for heterosexuals; knowing that the hair care needs of whites can be met in every geographic area; men being able to walk downtown or on campus at night without fear of sexual assault; having the good deeds of Gentiles reinforced as the Christian thing to do; as able-bodied people we are assumed to be intelligent until proven otherwise.

The more memberships one has from Dominant social groups the more privileges and access to power one has. Whites, men, able-bodied/able-minded, Gentiles, heterosexuals, middle-aged, English-speaking, middle to upper class people and WASP's make more decisions for their counterparts than the reverse, and have more access to and availability to resources. (University of Massachusetts-Amherst)

A special advantage, benefit or bonus that some people or groups have. Privilege is not always earned; people are born with it by virtue of membership in a socially dominant group. Privilege is usually unasked for and assumed as the norm; therefore it is often invisible to the person or group possessing it.

## **Protected Group Status**

Refers to identifiable group membership specifically protected by federal or state civil rights or nondiscrimination laws. Under Wisconsin's Pupil Nondiscrimination statute and rule, pupils are protected on the basis of their: sex; race; color, religion; national origin; ancestry; creed; sexual orientation; pregnancy, marital or parental status; and/or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

<b>Segregate</b>	To separate or isolate from others or from a main body or group. To impose separation on the basis of race, gender, class, ability, religion, age, etc. within society. To practice a policy of racial or other separation. Segregation is the policy and practice of imposing social separation based on race et. al., or the condition of being segregated.
<b>Sex</b>	Identity as female or male, based on biological distinctions in the reproductive organs.
<b>Sex Bias</b>	Behaviors resulting from the assumption that one sex is superior to the other. (PL 94-482, VEA of 1976)  The under-lying network of assumptions or beliefs that says that men and women are different and should be different, not only physically but in tastes, talents, interests and personalities. (Smith, 1978)
<b>Sexism</b>	Discriminatory beliefs and behaviors directed at one sex or the other.  An assumption that each sex has a distinctive make-up that determines the development and role of their respective lives; that one sex is superior and has the right to rule the other. It is the degree to which an individual's beliefs or behaviors are prejudiced on the basis of sex. Sexism describes prejudice and discrimination at both the individual and institutional levels. It is the collection of institutional policies, practices, and structures which subordinate or limit a person on the basis of sex. Power plus sex bias equals sexism. (Iowa Department of Education, 1989)
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Having an orientation of heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality; having a history of such an orientation or being identified with such an orientation.
<b>Stereotype</b>	An oversimplified generalization about a particular group, race or sex, which usually carries derogatory implication. (Derman-Sparks, 1989)  Attributing behaviors, abilities, interests, values, and roles to a person or group of persons on the basis, in whole or in part, of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability. (PI 9.02)

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Northeast	Northeast Consortium for Multicultural Education is an ad hoc group of educators concerned with multicultural education from the eastern seaboard and northeast. Their definition is quoted in New Jersey.
PEO	Programs for Educational Opportunity, 1005 School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259, 734-763-9910, FAX 734-763-2137. Dr. Percy Bates, Director. PEO, part of a federally-sponsored Equity Assistance Centers, formerly Desegregation Assistance Centers, EACs are supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. ) and have many publications related to equity.
PI 9	Refers to Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 9 on Pupil Nondiscrimination.
PL 94-482, VEA 1976	Refers to the federal Vocational Education Act which was reauthorized in 1976 and included for the first time as a requirement for sex equity in career and vocational education programs.
Smith	Smith, Amanda, <i>New Pioneers: The North Carolina Program to Expand Sex Roles Through Elementary and Secondary Education</i> , North Carolina DPI, 1978.
Thompson	Thompson, Cooper. <i>A Guide to Leading Introductory Workshops on Homophobia</i> . Campaign to End Homophobia, P.O. Box 819, Cambridge, MA 02139, 1990.
Title VII, ESEA	Refers to the federal Bilingual Education Act which is Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
University of Massachusetts-Amherst	"Residence Life" - discussion of diversity.
Valian, Virginia	<i>Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women</i> , MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1999
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