

## DEI Definitions

### DEI

An expression of principles derived from the tenets of critical theory centered around challenging America's traditional culture, values, and institutions.

### Critical theory

A political ideology derived from the Marxist intellectual tradition that views every facet of society through the framework of oppression and seeks to "emancipate" oppressed groups by challenging all existing cultural, political, social, and economic "power structures."

Problem:

- It is predicated on challenging and dismantling every traditional feature of Western civilization and the American way of life.
- It causes strife and promotes conflict by encouraging students to view themselves, their classmates, and faculty as either victims/allies or oppressors.
- It harms free inquiry by transforming academics into an ideological conflict in which anyone who disagrees is labeled a bigot.

### Unconscious/implicit bias

DEI definition:

"A prejudice or an assumption that we unconsciously make about another person based on common cultural stereotypes, rather than on a thoughtful judgment."

Problem:

Maintains that white men in particular are inherently racist and sexist and is premised upon the belief that everyone must be deprogrammed from their unconscious bigotry.

### Microaggressions

DEI definition:

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

Problem:

It attempts to vilify basic social interactions as hate speech.

## **Internalized Racism**

DEI definition:

“The conscious or unconscious development of ideas, beliefs, social structures, actions and behaviors that confirm one's acceptance of the dominant society's racist tropes and stereotypes about their own race.”

Problem:

Encourages resentment amongst ethnic and racial minorities against their fellow Americans.

## **Cultural Appropriation**

DEI definition:

“...entails adopting aspects of a minority culture by someone outside the culture, without sufficient understanding of its context or respect for the meaning and value of the original.”

Problem:

It turns the natural process of cultural exchange in a diverse society into a form of racism.

## **Structural Equity**

DEI definition:

“The Identification and removal of institutional barriers to fair and equal opportunities with recognition to historical, cultural and institutional dynamics and structures that routinely advantage privileged groups in society and result in chronic, cumulative disadvantage for subordinated groups.”

Problem:

Advocates for radical, revolutionary measures to assure “fairness” in society.

## **Settler Colonialism**

DEI definition:

The concept that nations such as the United States are ongoing systems of oppression built upon the genocide of American Indians.

Problem:

Advances the belief that American society is inherently unjust and thus illegitimate.

## **Group Marginalization**

DEI definition:

When a group of people experience social, economic, and/or political discrimination.

Problem:

Reinforces the notion that the problems individuals face are always because of their race, gender, etc.

## **Antiracism**

DEI definition:

“Refers to the work of actively opposing discrimination based on race by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.”

Problem:

Dictates that anyone who is not a radical political activist is automatically a racist.

“I keep saying there’s no such thing as being ‘not racist.’ We are either being racist or antiracist.”—

[Ibram X. Kendi](#)

## **Systemic Oppression**

DEI definition:

“Systemic oppression is the intentional mistreatment of individuals or groups of individuals based on their identity...upheld and implemented by society and its institutions.”

Problem:

A central tenet of critical theory, it is the concept that oppression and discrimination is the product of systematic power structures established by a dominant group, rather than the product of individual prejudice.

Related terms:

institutional or systemic racism, structural equity, group marginalization.

## **Social Justice**

DEI definition:

“Social justice constitutes a form of activism, based on principles of equity and inclusion that encompasses a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.”

Problem:

This concept attempts to turn everyone into a radical political activist.

## **Institutional or Systemic Racism**

DEI definition:

“The ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes and opportunities for different groups based on racial discrimination.”

Problem:

Promotes the belief that America is inherently and irredeemably racist.

## **White Fragility**

DEI definition:

“The state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves in white people. 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.”

Problem:

Portrays white people’s rational desire not to be disparaged as racist as a form of racism itself.

## **Racial Privilege**

DEI definition:

Inherent set of advantages derived from one’s race, usually applied to white people.

Problem:

Assumes that one’s race, rather than their merit determines, their chances of success.

## **Disparate Impact**

DEI definition:

The theory that policies that appear to be neutral have disproportionate results on a protected group.

Problem:

Views any difference in outcome between races/sexes as necessarily the product of racism/sexism.

## **Intersectionality**

DEI definition:

“The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, and their multiple effects on the same individuals or groups. Also refers to the view that overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and inequality can more effectively be addressed together.”

Problem:

It forces individuals to judge themselves and others based solely on their status as an “oppressed class.”

## **Sexual Privilege**

DEI definition:

Inherent set of advantages derived from one’s sex, usually applied to men.

Problem:

Assumes that one’s sex, rather than their merit determines their chances of success.

## **Patriarchy**

DEI definition:

“Actions and beliefs that prioritizes masculinity.”

Problem:

It vilifies traditional masculinity and Western culture.

## **Gender Theory**

DEI definition:

An academic framework that studies how gender is a social construct.

Problem:

It challenges the natural distinction and differences between men and women.

Related terms:

Queer theory, neopronouns, transgender ideology, misgendering, othering, deadnaming, heteronormativity,

## **Neopronouns**

DEI definition:

Non-traditional pronouns such as using “they/them” to refer to an individual.

Problem:

They are a form of compelled speech.

## **Misgendering**

DEI definition:

“Referring or relating to a person using language whether a word or a pronoun that is not in line with another’s gender identity, whether intentionally or unintentionally.”

Problem:

Related to neo-pronouns, a form of compelled speech.

## **Othering**

DEI definition:

“The perception or intentional/unintentional placement of a group in contrast to the societal norm.”

Problem:

This concept promotes the erosion of traditional cultural norms and values.

## **Deadnaming**

DEI definition:

“Using a person’s birth name or name they used previously rather than their current chosen name.”

Problem:

Turns into a form of compelled speech.

## **Heteronormativity**

DEI definition:

“The assumption that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities.”

Problem:

This concept challenges the notion that male-female heterosexuality is normal.

## **Allyship**

DEI definition:

“An active and consistent practice of unlearning and reevaluating, in which a person in a position of privilege and power seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group.”

Problem:

It attempts to turn everyone into a radical political activist. It also necessitates authoritarian style reeducation to achieve.