

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) Glossary

Created by: American Board of Genetic Counseling's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Committee

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Foreword

The purpose of this glossary is to aid ABGC and ABGC committees, Diplomates, and candidates in effectively and appropriately understanding terminology that directly relates to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ). The goal is to provide a basic framework of terminology to promote discussions surrounding DEIJ topics.

Please note, this glossary should not be considered all-inclusive as DEIJ language and dialogue is complex and constantly evolving. As such, this glossary will be updated accordingly to reflect the expansion of our understanding of DEIJ. Terminology might hold different meanings for each person, and we encourage you to continue to explore these topics outside of this document.

ABGC will share this glossary as a resource on our website and with aligned industry partners. Additionally, this glossary will be utilized as part of item writing training, and a guide for all ABGC volunteers.

For suggestions or proposed terms to include for the next version, please contact info@abgc.net and put “Attention DEIJ Committee” in the subject line.



Part I: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Terms

Key: * depicts there is an example of the definition in “Part II: Term Examples” with a hyperlink.

Diversity Term List

Diversity is the wide range of variation in characteristics and backgrounds among people

Ability Diversity Terms

Ability diversity refers to varying levels of abilities/disabilities among people, including cognitive, social-emotional, and physical abilities, which can be present from birth, develop with age, or from an illness, disease, or accident.

Ableism: set of beliefs or practices that devalue and discriminate against people with disabilities with the assumption people with disabilities need to be “fixed”

Person-First Language*: linguistic description that puts the person first before the diagnosis, which describes the condition the person has rather than stating the person “is” the diagnosis. Important to note, not everyone will refer to themselves in person-first language or prefer this language.

Mental Health: the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of a person, affecting the way a person thinks, feels, and acts.

Mental Health Diagnoses: a diagnosis of conditions involving the change in emotion, thinking, and/or behavior, which can lead to distress or dysfunction in social, work, or family activities (previously known by “mental illness”)

Neurodiversity: variation in the human brain regarding sociability, learning, attention, mood, and other mental functions

Age Diversity Terms

Age diversity refers to the varying ages and generations of people

Ageism: set of beliefs or practices that devalue and discriminate against individuals of a certain age category

Adultism: a set of beliefs or practices that devalue and discriminate against children or youth.

Cultural Diversity Terms

Cultural diversity refers to the differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, physical ability, language, beliefs, values, behavior patterns, or customs among various groups within a community.

Ancestry*: refers to the origin of birth of ancestors

Cultural Appropriation*: the inappropriate use of specific customs, practices, etc. of one person or society by members of another

Cultural Awareness: the ability to be aware of the differences in the impact of cultures within one’s own and others’ identities

Cultural Competency*: refers to the knowledge and understanding of different cultures and perspectives, measuring the ability to work with people of different nationalities, ethnicities, languages, and religions

Cultural Humility*: the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity

Cultural Identity: self-identification to a particular group, which typically is constructed by the process of sharing collective knowledge within a group

Cultural Intelligence*: the ability to adapt, relate, and work effectively across cultures, gaining the skills to enter new environments with making informed judgments based on observations and evidence as opposed to stereotypes and biases.

Cultural Sensitivity*: awareness of cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value

Ethnicity: refers to the social or cultural characteristics, backgrounds, experiences, or descent of a group or subgroup of people

Language Diversity Terms

Language/Linguistic diversity describes the differences between languages and communication methods

American Sign Language (ASL): a language expressed by movements of the hands and face that is specifically spoken in the United States

Bilingual: describes a person who can speak two languages fluently

Multilingual: describes a person who can speak in three or more languages fluently

Native Language: a language first learned by a person

Primary Language: the language a person uses most frequently to communicate

Second Language: a language spoken in addition to one's first/native language
Speech Disorder: the impairment of articulation of speech sounds, fluency, and/or voice

National Diversity Terms

National diversity refers to differences between nationalities

Asylum Seeker: a person who left their home country as a refugee and is seeking protection and shelter in another country.

Immigrant: a person who comes to a country to establish permanent residence

Naturalized Citizen: a person who was born outside of the United States and obtained citizenship after meeting established requirements

Refugee: a person who flees a country or power to escape from danger and/or persecution

Racial Diversity Terms

Racial diversity is the acknowledgement of difference between racial groups

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC): specifically highlights the impact of injustices and oppression on Black and Indigenous people

Indigenous People*: a group of people who are the first inhabitants of an area and their descendants

People of Color: refers to those from non-white communities, each have their own distinct experience and meaning

Race: a social construct - the idea that the human species is divided into distinct groups based on the inherited physical differences, including skin color.

Race Minority: a group of a specific race that has a smaller number of members compared to the remaining population in a location

White: refers to a group of people having European ancestry, and often are classified according to certain physical traits, such as light pigmented skin.

Religious Diversity Terms

Religious diversity is the coexistence of two or more religious communities in a specific geopolitical setting

Omnism: the respect of or belief in all religions with their gods or lack thereof

Religious Pluralism: a value, cultural, or religious ideology which positively welcomes the encounter of different religions.

Below includes a list of religious beliefs. It is important to note this list is not inclusive of all beliefs and/or identities. Additionally, these beliefs may have unique meanings to each person who identifies with such beliefs/religions.

Agnosticism: a form of belief that the existence of any ultimate deity (such as god) is unknown and probably unknowable

Atheism: a form of belief that any gods or higher power do not exist

Bahá'í: a form of belief and religion that emphasizes the spiritual unity of humankind by viewing human beings as equally created under one god regardless of gender, race, nationality or creed and should be respected and treated without prejudice.

Buddhism: a form of belief that originally comes from South Asia that teaches that human life is one of suffering and believes through meditation and good living one can achieve enlightenment, or nirvana.

Christianity: a monotheistic religion centered on the Bible and the teachings of Jesus Christ, the religion's founder.

Evangelicalism: a set of beliefs held by some Protestant churches and Christian groups in the teachings of the Bible and the importance of persuading other people to join them.

Hinduism: a form of belief that includes the worship of many gods and goddesses and the belief that when a person or creature dies, their spirit returns to life in another body.

Islamism: an Abrahamic monotheistic religion centered on the Quran and the teachings of Muhammad, the religion's founder.

Jainism: a form of belief that originally comes from India, which teaches all living things should be treated with respect and non-violence.

Judaism: a form of belief of the Jewish people, which includes the belief in one god and the laws contained in the Torah and Talmud.

Latter-Day Saints/LDS Mainline: previously known as Mormons; followers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and related churches belonging to a millenarian Christian movement founded in the US in 1830 by Joseph Smith Jr.

Muslim: a follower of the religion of Islam

Shinto: a form of belief that is the traditional religion of Japan in which people worship past members of their family and various gods that represent nature.

Sikhism: a form of belief of which there is a single god, the equality of all people, and on the teachings of Guru Nanak.

Taoism: a form of belief originally developed in ancient China, that emphasizes a simple and natural life.

Socioeconomic Status Diversity Terms

Socioeconomic diversity refers to the diversity in people's financial status, educational background, and occupation

Social Determinants of Health: the non-medical factors, including conditions in the environment (where people are born, live, work, etc.), that influence health outcomes, such as functioning and quality of life. Social determinants of health can be broken up into 5 categories/domains, including: economic stability*, education access and quality*, health care access and quality*, neighborhood and built environment*, and social and community context*.

Poverty Threshold: a measure of income issued annually by the Department of Health and Human Services. This measurement is used to determine eligibility of specific programs and benefits.

Socioeconomic Status: refers to a person's position in society based on measurements of education, income, and occupation.

Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation Diversity Terms

Sex at Birth is the assignment of female vs male to a newborn based on anatomical and other biological characteristics

Assigned Male/Female at Birth: this phrase refers to the sex that is given at birth

Intersex/Differences in Sexual Development: a group of congenital conditions in which the reproductive organs, external genitalia, and/or other sexual anatomy do not develop based on expectations for "females" or "males"

Gender identity is one's self-identification

Agender: a person who identifies with having no gender, or does not experience gender as a major identify component

Identity: a gender identity that is a combination of two genders

Cisgender: a person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth correspond

Gender affirmation is the process of making social, legal, and/or medical changes to recognize, accept, and express one's gender identity.

Gender Affirming Hormone Therapy: feminizing and masculinizing hormone treatment to align secondary sex characteristics with one's gender identity

Gender Affirming Surgery: surgeries to modify a person's body to be more aligned with one's gender identity.

Gender Expression: the way a person communicates, verbally or non-verbally, their gender identity to others

Gender Fluid: a person whose gender identity is not fixed, and can be a mix of two traditional genders with different identities at different times

Gender Non-Conforming: a gender expression that does not match societal norms for masculine and feminine

Genderqueer: an umbrella term for gender identity for people who do not identify as cisgender

Hijra: in South Asia, a person who was assigned male at birth, but identifies as female or outside of the binary

Non-Binary: a gender identity that falls outside of the traditional gender binary structure

Pangender: a gender identity that includes many genders or falls outside the traditional cultural parameters

Transgender: a person whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth do not correspond based on traditional expectations

Two-Spirit: a term used by some Indigenous people to describe their identity, for someone who identifies as having both a masculine and feminine spirit

Sexual Orientation is how a person characterizes their emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction to others

Aromantic: describes a person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others, and/or lacks interest in forming romantic relationships

Asexual: describes a person who experiences little or no sexual attraction to others

Bisexual: describes a person who is attracted to females and males

Gay: describes a person who is attracted to people of their own gender identity

Heterosexual: describes a person who is primarily attracted to the opposite sex and/or gender identity

Homosexual: describes a person who is primarily attracted to the same sex and/or gender identity

Lesbian: describes a person who identifies as female, who is attracted to others who identify as female

Monogamous: describes a sexual and/or romantic relationship with only one person at a time

Omnisexual: describes a person who is attracted to people of all genders and sexual orientations, recognizing the gender of a person

Pansexual: describes a person who is attracted to people of all gender identities, or whose attractions are not related to a person's gender

Polyamorous: describes a sexual and/or romantic relationship comprising three or more people

Polysexual: a person who is sexually attracted to more than one gender identity

Queer: an umbrella term that describes a person whose sexual orientation and gender identity falls outside the societal norms.

Questioning: describes a person who is unsure about, or is exploring their sexual orientation and/or gender identity

Intersectionality of DEI Term List

Intersectionality is the cumulative way in which multiple forms of discrimination can combine and intersect, and leading to the impact on individuals or groups

Intersectionality of DEI Terms

Barriers: the differences and inequalities that exist based on the living, learning, growing, and working conditions of people, creating disparities among groups of people

Bias: an inflexible positive or negative, conscious or unconscious, belief about a particular category of people

- » **Explicit (Conscious) Bias*:** negative beliefs expressed through physical and verbal harassment, or more subtle means, towards a person or a group of people
- » **Implicit (Unconscious) Bias*:** the attitudes and stereotypes that influence judgment, decision-making, and behavior in ways that are outside of conscious awareness and/or control

Colorblind: the belief that all racial groups are treated equally, leading to the continuation of practices that perpetuate racial disparities

Discrimination: unfair treatment towards an individual or group based on identities rather than individual merit

Disparities: unfair difference in outcomes, conditions, and treatment based on barriers among groups of people or discriminatory practices

Homophobia: the irrational fear and/or discrimination against homosexuality or queer people

Macroaggression: systematic oppression of a specific group of people by society's institutions, such as government, education, and culture, which can all contribute or reinforce the oppression of marginalized social groups while elevating dominant social groups

Marginalization: the placement outside of mainstream society of groups of people who vary outside of the norm of the dominant culture

Microaggression: brief repetitive verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward groups of people or individuals

- » **Microassaults*:** explicit derogations characterized primarily by violent verbal, non-verbal, or environmental attacks meant to hurt the intended victim
- » **Microinsults*:** communications that convey rudeness, insensitivity, and demeaning language towards a specific marginalized group
- » **Microinvalidation*:** communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of an individual

Minority Stress: high levels of stress faced by members of stigmatized minority groups, which can be caused by poor social support, low socioeconomic status, discrimination, and other social determinants of health

Misandry: refers to the dislike of, prejudice against men

Misogyny: refers to the dislike of, prejudice against women

Prejudice*: a bias or a preconceived opinion, idea, or belief about a specific group of people

Privilege: an inherent unearned advantage, institutional preferential treatment, and/or exception from racial oppression

- » **White Privilege*:** inherent advantages that benefit a white person over a non-white person in societies based on race

Racism: prejudice and/or discrimination by an individual or group of people against a person or people based on their racial and ethnic group

- » **Interpersonal Racism*:** a person's conscious or unconscious bias against other people based on race, between one individual and another.
- » **Internalized Racism*:** the internalization of the racist beliefs and images that is pressured by the dominant society regarding another racial group
- » **Internalized Racial Inferiority:** acceptance of and adopting actions representing one's inferior definition of self, often in self-defeating behaviors.
- » **Internalized Racial Superiority:** acceptance of and adopting actions representing one's superior definition of self, often including invisible advantages and privilege based on race.

- » **Institutional Racism:** public policies, institutional practices, cultural messages, and/or social norms that reinforce and perpetuate inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race
- » **Structural Racism*:** the history and culture of racism across institutions and/or system, often includes perpetuation by the media

Sexism: discrimination based on sex at birth or gender expression

Stereotype: a set of cognitive generalizations (e.g., beliefs, expectations) about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a group or social category

Stereotype Threat: an individual's expectation that negative stereotypes about a self-identified group will adversely influence others' judgments towards themselves.

Stigma: the negative social attitude attached to a characteristic of an individual that may be regarded as a mental, physical, or social deficiency.

- » **Institutional Stigma:** systemic, involving policies of government and private organizations that intentionally or unintentionally limit opportunities for people
- » **Public Stigma:** negative attitudes towards others/a group of individuals
- » **Self-Stigma:** internalized, negative attitudes attached to one's own characteristics

Transphobia: the irrational fear and/or discrimination against transgender people

Equity and Inclusion Term List

Belonging: the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group or place

Equity*: the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups

Inclusion: the creation environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.

Justive Term List

Justice is the fair treatment of all people

Ally/Upstander: a person who verbally defends and/or takes actions to defend those who are targeted for harm or injustice

Anti-Racism: policy or practice of actively opposing and identifying racism and promoting racial equality by actively changing policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas or actions

Bystander Intervention: recognizing a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could positively influence the outcome

Equality*: evenly distributed access to resources and opportunity

Safeguards*: measures actively placed to preserve safety

Social Justice: a vision of a society that distributes equal resources to all individuals



Part II: Term Examples

Ability Diversity Term Examples

Person First Language Examples

- Person first language: “A person with a disability.”
- Identity first language: “A disabled person.”

Cultural Diversity Term Examples

Ancestry Examples

- Jamaican, English, Irish, Pennsylvanian Dutch, German, Mexican, and etc.

Cultural Appropriation Examples

- Dressing up for Halloween costume that depicts a culture to solely get attention.
- A sports team’s mascot or name that are of Native American tribes.
- Trends, such as cornrows, borrowed from cultures and inaccurately depicted.

Cultural Competency Examples

- Established protocol for individuals who are non-English speaking, providing accurate communication.
- Accessibility for an individual using a wheelchair to enter a bathroom.
- In clinic, providing examples in a culturally specific manner, such as values, beliefs, etc.

Cultural Humility Example

- A healthcare provider learning and reflecting on their own beliefs of vaccination and also trying to understand their patient’s point of view when there are different beliefs.

Cultural Intelligence Examples

- Learning a new language to better connect and provide care to specific population.
- Volunteering for organizations to be immersed in different cultures.

Cultural Sensitivity Example

- Established onsite or virtual options for translation that are readily available at any point in time.

Racial Diversity Term Examples

Indigenous People Examples

- Mayas in Guatemala, Lakota in the United States, Aymaras in Bolivia, and etc.

Socioeconomic Status Diversity Term Examples

Economic Stability Examples

- Employment, poverty, food security, income, debt, medical bills support, housing stability

Education Access & Quality Examples

- Literacy, education level, language, early childhood education, vocational training, enrollment in higher education

Health Care Access and Quality Examples

- Health coverage, access to health care, health literacy, provider availability, provider linguistic and cultural competency, quality of care

Neighborhood and Built Environment Examples

- Housing, transportation, safety, parks, transportation, access to health foods, air quality, access to green space, playgrounds, walkability, and zip code/geography.

Social and Community Context Examples

- Social integration, support systems, community engagement, discrimination, perceived fairness, perceived helpfulness, trust, and stress.

Intersectionality of DEI

Term Examples

Explicit (Conscious) Bias Examples

- overt racism and racist comments are examples of explicit biases.
- An example would be a sign in the window of an apartment building saying, “We don’t rent to (insert race here).”

Implicit (Unconscious) Bias Examples

- When most people hear the word “kindergarten teacher,” they are more likely to picture a female.
- When people assume that a doctor is male.

Microassault Examples

Can be verbal or nonverbal.

- A verbal example is name-calling, inappropriate jokes, singling out certain people, and stereotyping. Someone could say, “You don’t belong here. Go back home.”
- A non-verbal example is crossing the street or clutching a handbag in the presence of certain individuals or following certain individuals in a store.

Microinsults Examples

- If someone reassures you that you are not like the negative stereotype for your marginalized group
- Commenting on how articulate or well-spoken someone is given their race.
- Touching someone’s hair without permission.
- Implying someone got their job based on a diversity action or quota.
- Assuming that an individual is in a junior role, or not attempting to say someone’s name because it’s unfamiliar.

Microinvalidations Examples

- Invalidating someone’s feelings by saying that the one/s causing the offense didn’t mean it like that.
- Inappropriately telling someone that you have friends of their race.

- Mistaking people of the same race, staying silent when something should be addressed or corrected, and giving credit to someone else.

Prejudice Examples

- Racism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, sexism, and classism.

White Privilege Examples

- The first-aid kit having “flesh-colored” Band-Aids that only match the skin tone of white people.
- The products white people need for their hair being in the aisle labeled “hair care” rather than in a smaller, separate section of “ethnic hair products.”
- The grocery store stocking a variety of food options that reflect the cultural traditions of most white people.
- Having the privilege of finding children’s books/toys that overwhelmingly represent White people.
- White people are less likely to be followed, interrogated, or searched by law enforcement because they look “suspicious.”
- White people’s skin tone will not be a reason people hesitate to trust their credit or financial responsibility.
- The personal faults or missteps of white people will likely not be used to later deny opportunities or compassion to people who share their racial identity.

Interpersonal Racism Examples

- The use of racial slurs or similar hate speech against an individual or group of people.
- Complimenting BIPOC individuals on their English with the assumption that they wouldn’t speak well because of their race.
- Attacks against Asian Americans in response to COVID-19 being called “the China Virus.”
- Shopkeepers or security guards following BIPOC shoppers assuming they’re a shoplifter.
- Claims that immigrant workers steal American jobs.

Internalized Racism Examples

- Viewing white as “the norm” or the “ideal.”
- Valuing white or light skin over dark skin and trying to lighten skin color through surgery, harmful skin products, or other means.

- Trying to get rid of all “ethnic” features that don’t fit Eurocentric beauty standards.
- Increased levels of self-loathing, shame, and rejection of one’s own identity and/or culture.
- Hostility and prejudice against members of one’s own race or other marginalized people.

Structural Racism Examples

- Selectively locating coal-fired power plants and hazardous waste disposal in or near communities of color, with adverse effects on the population’s health
- Policies that allow K-12 students to be arrested on campus – a disproportionate amount of whom are Black or Hispanic – result in long-lasting trauma for these young kids and teens.
- Police brutality creates higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression amongst Black and Latine communities.
- Racial and ethnic disparities in health insurance coverage resulting in Black, Hispanic/Latine, and Native American people having the highest number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Equity and Equality Term Examples

Equity Examples

- A hiring manager wants to contribute to the diversity of her firm’s workforce.
- The hiring manager recognizes that there are organization-wide barriers preventing Black and Latine employees from thriving. She works with her supervisor and team members to collect data on the obstacles experienced by underrepresented employees. She also advocates for the company to establish diversity hiring initiatives or programs and track hiring and retention demographics.

Equality Examples

- The hiring manager observes that there has been low hiring and retention of Black and Latine employees over the last year. She implements a blind resume screening system that hides each candidate’s name, educational institution, and gender to address this.

- Of note: Equity differs from equality in that it considers specific disadvantages and obstacles that certain groups or individuals may experience on the path to obtaining the same outcome. That is, something that is equitable might not be equal - in some situations, the most equitable path is to give certain individuals additional support in order to provide fair access to a certain opportunity.

Justice Term Examples

Safeguards Examples

- Providing employee training on gender-diverse patient care.
- Supervisor training for graduate students to discuss how to tackle microaggressions within the clinical space with students.



Part III: Resources and Citations

Dictionaries Utilized

Organizational Resources Utilized

- **American Psychiatric Association**
- **American Psychological Association**
- **Cultural Intelligence Center**
- **HealthCare Glossary**
- **Learning for Justice**
- **National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Cultural Awareness Glossary**
- **National Institute of Health Glossary**
- **National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center – A Program of the Fenway Institute**
- **Seattle City Government Resources**
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**
- **United States Census Bureau**
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Priority Areas**
- **YMCA**

Literature Articles Utilized

- Braveman, P. A., Arkin, E., Proctor, D., Kauh, T., & Holm, N. (2022). Systemic And Structural Racism: Definitions, Examples, Health Damages, And Approaches to Dismantling. *Health affairs (Project Hope)*, 41(2), 171–178. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2021.01394>
- Hook, J. N., Davis, D. E., Owen, J., Worthington, E. L., & Utsey, S. O. (2013). Cultural humility: measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. *Journal of counseling psychology*, 60(3), 353–366. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032595>
- Singu, S., Acharya, A., Challagundla, K., & Byrareddy, S. N. (2020). Impact of Social Determinants of Health on the Emerging COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States. *Frontiers in public health*, 8, 406. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2020.00406>