

Mary McGriff 2/03/2023 ↻

## As a member of the College of Education community, how do you define equity, diversity and inclusion?

We are working toward a shared articulation of what diversity, equity and inclusion mean for the NJCU College of Education community. We will begin by gathering and then synthesizing COE community members' individual thoughts about what these concepts mean. We will use these to create a statement to present for review, and further discussion. Please respond to this question below by clicking on the "plus" sign and then typing in the box that appears. Please remember to include your name & title or position with your comments. We would appreciate your input before April 17, 2023. Thank you!

↻ ANONYMOUS 2/26/23 2:07AM

### DEI

I want to start off by agreeing with the three previous Padlet posts on this topic. I like to think of DEI as a mindset that is continuously evolving as more voices and perspectives emerge in our student body, and among the faculty and professionals at NJCU. I think it's important for all of us to create opportunities for equity, inclusion and diversity in our classrooms, in our dealings with faculty and staff, and in all potential prospects that come to the university.

Human beings bring a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and other not-so-obvious characteristics. You can still have people of similar backgrounds, and yet possess completely different thoughts and understanding when it comes to a variety of topics. This includes religious beliefs, work experience, cultural norms and identity, and even perspectives based on their current life experiences. As such, it is important for us to also allow for equity and inclusion of diverse opinions, even if we do not agree with them. That also includes discussing such topics in a rational and meaningful way so that true learning can take place. This in turn supports the ideals of inclusivity, equity, and diversity.

As an institution of higher learning, I believe that we have an opportunity to create an environment that allows for diverse opinions and ideas. The reality is it's important for us to create opportunities and an environment where this kind of dialogue is both supported and discussed in civil ways. So any definition that the university considers when it comes to DEI must also include diversity of thought, diversity of belief, diversity of experience, and how we include those as part of a greater more inclusive learning environment for all.

DEI should also include diversity in terms of knowledge, experience, work and family dynamics, and in relation to the type of student that walks through our halls (i.e., full-time students versus part-time). These are perspectives that we need to understand to best support and design meaningful learning experiences for them. As instructors, we need to be mindful of these elements and consider the many ways that we can support them as they continue their learning journeys.

What may not be obviously clear, although it is inherent in its objectives, is to use DEI as a tool for unity. Uniting

students, faculty, staff and all members of the NJCU community is paramount to the success of DEI initiatives. It is important to empower all students and all members of our community without excluding anyone (i.e., offering many programs and resources during the day that "excludes" students who can only attend online or in the evenings.). Exclusion can take on many forms regardless of whether it is systemic, politically motivated, or due to other constraints (i.e., university budget). We all must consider this so that we can empower and support all of the students.

Finally, DEI should instill this idea of "unity" in our students, and in all NJCU community members. When our students leave the university and enter the workforce, they will more than likely encounter people that are not necessarily like them, and that's ok. Even on campus, they will deal with others that do not share their background or perspectives, and that should be ok as well. We can learn from this exchange and create new understanding for all. Dealing with others should be seen as the norm and not the exception. We can lead by example and show our students the pathway to empowerment and unity through a DEI program... but it starts with us and in our instilling these ideals to the rest of our community.

Rem Jimenez  
Adjunct instructor  
Department of Educational Technology.

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⇒ ANONYMOUS 3/12/23 3:05PM

**DEI**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are important aspects of the daily lives of people in society. These three aspects are vital as they ensure that society is fair and equal and allows people to interact without limitations. Diversity refers to the practice of involving people from different social and ethnic backgrounds, such as gender, race, nationality, social-economic status, and disability, among others. Equity refers to the act of providing fair opportunities to all people in society, and lastly, inclusion refers to the process of involving all people in societal activities regardless of their differences.

As faculty and educators, we must engage in cultural competency because it is important as it increases the self-awareness of an individual, develops social skills and behaviors, and helps people gain advocacy skills. Therefore, it means that

people with cultural competency are ready to overlook cultural differences and recognize and respect diversity. One of the methods of creating diversity in the workplace and society is by implementing training programs in workplaces and social

places such as schools which will train people about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through this training, all people participating will be able to understand and have knowledge about the meaning of diversity, various diverse backgrounds, and how to interact with these different backgrounds. Also, the training will help them understand equity, which comprises equal opportunities for all people despite differences in diverse backgrounds, and inclusion, which means involving all people in workplaces and societal activities without discriminating based on cultural and social differences.

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⇒ ANONYMOUS 3/10/23 10:55PM

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

When I've had conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion, the conversations have tended to be in terms of the advantages or disadvantages that certain groups may or may not have, the privileges and the challenges, the stigmas and the stereotypes, the injustices inflicted on or by some group or other, etc. While I find these conversations to be interesting, important, and valuable, I worry that they sometimes devolve into mere admonishments to "be nice to the less privileged." I hope that the college's eventual statement on DEI would present it not just as a matter of social justice, but as a matter of social good, i.e., that there is intrinsic value in diversity, equity, and inclusion for all the members of the community and not just for those whose past and present inequities are being addressed. I found a lot of the previous posts to be very helpful in that regard.

CGochuico  
Adjunct Instructor  
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⇒ RONNIE O'NEILL 2/28/23 10:05PM

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

When I think about DEI, I think about this quote from Sr. Thea Bowman:

"How can we work together so that all of us have equal access to input, to opportunity, to participation?"

As faculty, we must remember that our diversity is our strength, and we must develop in our students the skills they need to function in a diverse world. We each bring a unique point of view to the University, and we must support our students as they learn to leverage that point of view to become successful in the future.

Ronnie O'Neill  
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⇒ ANONYMOUS 2/27/23 9:06PM

**DEI**

Everyone needs to belong!

In our dealings with students, faculty, administration, and support staff, it is a primary goal that we recognize that age is not a static thing. DEI issues are viewed in quite different ways by different age groups, from "youngsters" to "fogies."

By concentrating on the unique skills and life experiences of an age diverse population we can improve communication.

It is essential that we at NJCU provide our community with tools required to develop a vibrant climate of inclusiveness to advance our collective capabilities.

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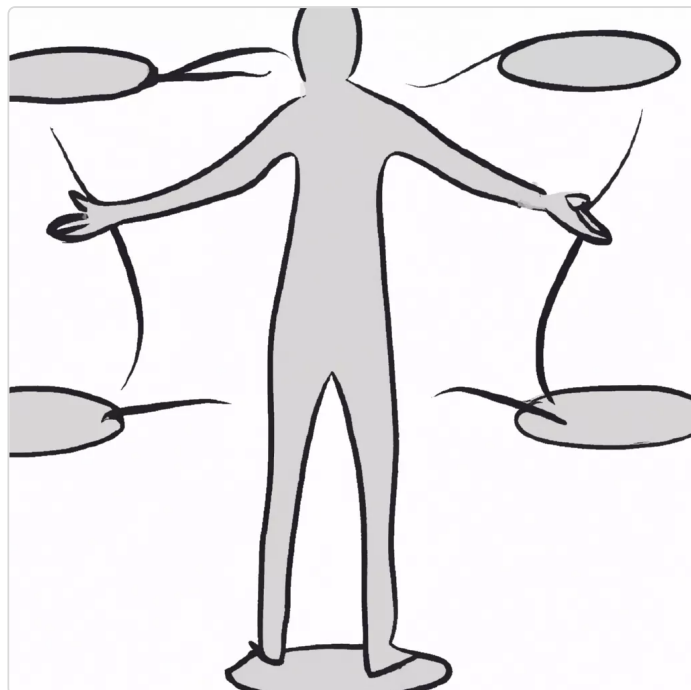
Department of Teaching, Literacy, and Literacy

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⇒ ANONYMOUS 2/24/23 10:37PM

### DEI

Diversity, equity, and inclusion is defined by our actions, not by a lengthy explanation. Action speaks louder than words, and that should be evidenced in our syllabi, activities, and pedagogical approaches and what services we provide our community and how we carry through a sustained and concerted commitment to helping our students thrive socially, emotionally, and academically. DEI is evolving, and changing systematic processes and structures as we include more pluralistic perspectives and voices; essentially understanding it means very different things to many different people, and embracing the ambiguity of its definition is part of the process of embracing DEI in the COE.



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⇒ ANONYMOUS 2/22/23 6:43PM

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Aside from being anodyne socially progressive buzzwords, the concepts of *equity*, *diversity* and *inclusion* are essentially reminders. They remind us to consider historic and current inequities in how individuals have been, and are, treated in our society and to reflect on these inequities as we make decisions for ourselves, our students, and our campus. The concepts are reminders that people with various ethnic, racial, gender, sexual preference, and/or other identities often have unique experiences and that those experiences are as valid and legitimate as any others. They remind us to reflect on our own experiences, biases, transgressions, and assumptions, and to use those reflections to treat people more fairly and with greater empathy. They also challenge us to see and respect various group identities, while simultaneously treating people like the unique individuals they are.

↩ ANONYMOUS 2/22/23 6:36PM

**As a lexicographer, I study word meaning. Here are two definitions of diversity, one from Merriam-Webster and the other from dictionary.com, what was formerly Random House unabridged dictionary:**

: the condition of having or being composed of differing elements : **VARIETY**

*especially* : the inclusion of people of different races (see RACE entry 1 sense 1a), cultures, etc. in a group or organization

or

the inclusion of individuals representing more than one national origin, color, religion, socioeconomic stratum, sexual orientation, etc.:

Neither of these definitions fully explains my view of diversity, because of the ambiguity of "inclusion."

Certainly, diverse students are "included" at NJCU. But their "inclusion" does not indicate that their needs are fully addressed, that they are considered "enough" as they are, that they are fully "seen" and heard, and that they are ASSESSED equitably in the courses that they take.

