

Equity Toolkit: Inclusive Teaching and Learning

ENGAGING IN ONGOING SELF-INQUIRY



COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

<http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/equitytoolkit>



EXAMINING IDENTITY

It is important to engage in understanding your own identities and how the socialization of those identities influence your interactions with your students. The way in which we have been socialized informs the biases (both implicit and explicit) we have that can contribute to oppressive outcomes our students experience in our institutions. Please get familiar with these terms as you engage in the activity below.

Socially Constructed Identities: Categories created to “label” or “categorize” people; based on beliefs about groups of people not biology such as: race/ethnicity, sex/gender, gender identity, nationality, age, sexual orientation, ability, and religion (Bell, 1997)

Dominant Identities: Membership in a social identity that automatically provides access to power, opportunity, and privilege (Tatum, 2000)

Marginalized Identities: Membership in a group that experiences oppression or marginalization in mainstream society (Tatum, 2000)

DIRECTIONS

Most of us experience both marginalization and privilege in our many identities. This is an activity to begin thinking about the status of your identities in terms of privilege and marginalization. Please circle which side of the identity chart you align with below. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of social identities and these are identities that tend to be focused on in the context of the United States of America. If you can identify with both sides feel free to circle both sides and respond to the reflection questions after you complete the chart.



PRIVILEGED/MARGINALIZED GROUPS		
PRIVILEGED GROUP		MARGINALIZED GROUP
Able bodied, non-disabled	ABILITY/DISABILITY	People with a physical, mental, emotional, and/or learning any other disability
30s to early 50s	AGE	Younger; Older
Upper class; Upper middle class; Middle class	CLASS	Working class; Living in poverty
Graduate or college degree; Private schooling	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	High school degree; GED; Public schooling
“American;” Western European Heritage	ETHNICITY/CULTURE	Puerto Rican; Navajo; Mexican; Nigerian; Chinese; Iranian; Russian; Jewish...and tons more
Cisgender, Behavior and/or supporting the gender binary, cisgender men	GENDER IDENTITY	Women, trans, gender non-conforming, gender variant; gender queer; agender
Binary gender expression, masculine & feminine characteristics in line with dominant norms	GENDER EXPRESSION	Fluid expression of gender with feminine, masculine, and beyond
US born; naturalized citizen, documented status	NATIONAL ORIGIN/ CITIZENSHIP	“Foreign born;” Born in a country other than the US; refugees; undocumented people; indigenous people
Parent children within a 2-parent heterosexual marriage	RELATIONSHIP & FAMILY STATUS	Single parent; do not have children; LGBTQ+ parents
White	RACE	Person of Color; bi/multi-racial
Christian	RELIGION/SPIRITUALITY/ FAITH	Muslim, Jewish; Agnostic; Buddhist; Atheist; Hindu; Spiritual; etc.
Male	SEX	Female; Intersex
Heterosexual	SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Gay; Lesbian; Bisexual; Pansexual; Asexual
Align with narrow image of fit, thin, attractive, beautiful, handsome, etc.	SIZE/APPEARANCE	Perceived by others as too fat, tall, short, unattractive, etc.
Proficient in the “King’s English;” use “proper” English	USE OF ENGLISH	Have an “accent;” Use regional dialect; learning English



SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER...

- Binaries rarely, if ever, tell the whole story. There is much more complexity to power, privilege, and oppression than can ever be represented in one table.
- We are all individuals with ways of naming ourselves in our own language. And we are also members of groups that exist in a particular context.
- We have multiple and intersecting identities and those intersections affect how we experience power, privilege, and oppression.
- There is no hierarchy of oppression and there are very real, material differences in how oppression is experienced.
- Becoming more aware of each of our identities and how they interact with one another is an important part of being able to understand others and work toward collective liberation.

EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER LEARNING:

What are the complexities of any one (or more) of your identities?

How has the understanding of your identities changed over time?

What are your reflections on your dominant and/or marginalized identities?

How do your social identities have an impact on your work? Daily life?