

STUDENT WORKSHOP DEFINITIONS

1. DIVERSITY

Diversity means different or varied. The population of the United States is made up of people from diverse races, cultures, and places.

2. CULTURE

Culture is the pattern of daily life learned by a group of people. These patterns can be seen, among other places, in language, governing practices, arts, customs, holiday celebrations, food, religion, dating rituals, and clothing, to name a few examples.

3. MULTICULTURAL

Multicultural means many or multiple cultures. The United States is multicultural because it is made up of people from many different cultures.

4. STEREOTYPES

A stereotype is an oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for individual differences. Even positive stereotypes, such as Asians are good at math and computers, have a negative impact.

5. PREJUDICE

Prejudice is pre-judging, making a decision about a person or group of people without sufficient knowledge. Prejudicial thinking is based on stereotypes. Prejudice is an attitude.

6. DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is the behavior that can follow prejudicial thinking. Discrimination is the denial of justice or fair treatment in many areas, including employment, housing and political rights.

7. SCAPEGOATING

Scapegoating is the action of blaming an individual or group for something when, in reality, there is no one person or group responsible for the problem. It means blaming another person or group for problems in society because of that person's group identity. Prejudicial thinking and discriminatory acts can lead to scapegoating. Members of the disliked group are denied employment, housing, political rights, social privileges, or a combination of these. Scapegoating can lead to verbal and physical violence, including death.

8. BIGOTRY

Bigotry is prejudice and/or discrimination against one or all members of a particular group based on negative perceptions of their beliefs and practices or on negative group stereotypes.

9. RACISM

Racism is prejudice and/or discrimination based on the myth of race. Racists believe that some groups are born superior to others, and, in the name of protecting their race from “contamination,” they justify the domination and destruction of races they consider to be inferior to their own. Racism can be personal or institutional. An instance of personal racism occurs when a person of color is perceived to be dangerous because of the color of his or her skin. Institutional racism is racial prejudice or discrimination supported by power and authority used to the advantage of one race over others, as when all people are not treated the same by police or security guards.

10. SEXISM

Sexism is prejudice or discrimination based on gender. Like the other “isms,” sexism can be personal, as when someone tells a joke or makes a remark that demeans a woman or a man because of his gender, or institutional, as when women are paid less money than men for doing the same job.