DEFINITIONS TO ADVANCE OUR WORK IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Introduction

Shared values engender trust and link an organization together. Establishing shared values requires conversation and reflection about organizational objectives, individual beliefs, and institutional operating systems. When organizations embrace the challenge of identifying shared values, navigating organizational culture change can be more productive.

In the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, we believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion are important shared values, values that are integral to and reflective of who we are. To initiate conversations around these shared values it is helpful to define the terms. This is not just a process of putting words down on a piece of paper. It requires a sustained and thoughtful discussion about how we understand the language we use in our college and how we work with one another. These definitions aim to begin the process of uncovering and defining the values from which we wish to operate so that we can integrate them into existing organizational norms and the behavioral expectations of our learning community.

Culture

Culture refers to the traditions, beliefs, and values of an individual or a group of people, both observable and invisible. Culture should be defined broadly and recognize that the intersectionality between cultural elements such as race, gender, sexual orientation, language, and ethnicity contribute to a person's sense of self in relation to others, shaping the individual's personal identity and sense of own culture (CAUS, DEI Committee, 2021).

Diversity

Diversity is the individual and group differences among people. These include "individual and organizational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences and behaviors (SHRM Business Plan for Diversity)." These differences are important qualities that we engage and value as we work and learn together in CAUS.

Equity

Equity is the social right to just and fair treatment for all people. Within CAUS, equity is an organizational expectation, ensuring that everyone has the resources and opportunities needed to succeed in every stage of education and career development. To achieve equity, we actively identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of marginalized individuals and groups.

Adapted from the original developed at UC Berkeley

Inclusion

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which all individuals or groups feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued as fully participating members. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. Inclusion integrates diversity and equity into the culture of CAUS, embedding these shared values into the core academic mission and institutional functioning.

Adapted from the original developed at UC Davis