

# **NatSci Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Definitions and Goals**

## **Diversity**

The presence of individuals with differences within a given community, that may include race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, ability status and national origin.

A person does not represent diversity. However, their uniqueness can bring diversity to a group that extends beyond the status quo (or the boundaries of traditional grass-roots diversity).

Diversity is about a collective or a group.

Goal: We commit to increasing and sustaining a diverse community, where people's backgrounds and social identities are represented and valued within our faculty, staff, specialists, students and others within the College of Natural Science. Social Identities can include, but are not limited to race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, ability status and national origin.

## **Equity**

Equitable practices consist of structures used to reconcile prior challenges in accessing opportunities and available resources needed to meet their goals.

Equity is a process that recognizes that not everyone starts from the same place because advantages and barriers exist that are driven by, for example, varying socioeconomic factors, ideologies and perceptions. Equity works to correct these imbalances to ensure everyone has access to opportunities and resources. According to the Race Matters Institute, equity is a process and equality is an outcome of that process: "The route to achieving equity will not be accomplished through treating everyone equally. It will be achieved by treating everyone equitably, or justly according to their circumstances."

Goal: We recognize there are current and historical practices and policies within (and agencies outside of) the College of Natural Science and MSU that have led to unequal access and outcomes for people belonging to minoritized groups. We commit to understanding and utilizing practices that ensure members of our college have access to opportunities and resources needed to meet their academic and professional goals. By adopting equity-based practices, we will identify and strive to eliminate policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce achievement barriers.

## **Inclusion**

People of all identities in a community are visibly and deliberately welcomed, engaged, and celebrated, with full and authentic participation within a given setting.

Inclusion is not a natural consequence of diversity. You can have a diverse team of talent, but that doesn't mean they feel welcomed or valued or are given opportunities to grow. An analogy from Vernā Myers is: "Diversity is being asked to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance."

Goal: We commit to fostering an environment where our faculty, staff, specialists, students and others within the College of Natural Science community are engaged, valued, respected and have a sense of belonging. Our community will thrive when members are able to participate in relevant decision-making, raise concerns without retaliation and have their concerns addressed.

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