Diversity Glossary

About this glossary and the "Diversity in Teaching" toolbox

The University of Freiburg's student body is diverse. Therefore, recognizing and valuing this diversity and simultaneously reducing inequalities and barriers are important topics for all those who are involved in teaching at our University. If you are a teacher and would like to come to grips with diversity, this diversity glossary will give you an introduction. It explains terms that are important in the context of diversity-sensitive university teaching in alphabetical order.

The glossary is part of the toolbox "Diversity in Teaching". This toolbox was developed as part of the project "Diversity Sensitization at the University of Freiburg". The autonomous departments of the student government applied for it and it was elaborated by the Gender and Diversity Office. You can also find a lot of further information in the toolbox, such as checklists for diversity-sensitive teaching, guidelines and learning modules for different teaching settings, as well as further literature references and information on relevant contact persons at the University of Freiburg.

The glossary is not intended to be exhaustive. We are instead interested in a continuous further development and thus welcome your comments and suggestions! Please feel free to contact us.

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Ableism and hostility towards the disabled

The term Ableism (derived from the English term *able*) originates from Anglophone disability studies and refers to a view and institutionalized practice through which certain cognitive and physical abilities are constructed as requirements of normality. The compliance or non-compliance with these socially constructed requirements then determines the evaluation and social positioning of both those who are marked as deviating from this normality and those who are constructed as "normal". Ableism divides people into homogeneous groups and evaluates them differently. The supposed difference of the groups is then often legitimized with naturalizing arguments.*)

*) Source: Köbsell, Swantje: „Doing Disability: Wie Menschen mit Beeinträchtigungen zu ‚Behinderten' werden", in: Karim Fereidooni/Antonietta P. Zeoli (Ed.): Managing Diversity. Die diversitätsbewusste Ausrichtung des Bildungs- und Kulturwesens, der Wirtschaft und Verwaltung. Wiesbaden 2016, p. 93.

Accessibility

In general, accessibility means that no one is excluded from using an object, service or content. In this respect, it is the University's responsibility to provide all members with barrier-free access to buildings, rooms, websites, information and orientation offers, publications, equipment and products. For diversity-sensitive teaching, this means ensuring equal participation in studies and teaching for physically, psychologically and mentally impaired students - but also for other potentially disadvantaged students (e.g. with family obligations).

Age and Ageism

Age is one of the core dimensions of diversity and is also defined as such in the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG). It describes the different classification of persons in life phases and is a carrier of biological, medical, developmental-psychological, anthropological, religious, cultural and social attributions.*)

Age can become the starting point of discrimination, for example when people are attributed different characteristics because of their actual or perceived age, or because they are perceived as "too young" or "too old". This is where the term ageism comes in. It describes ageism as a form of social and economic discrimination. The negative perception of age and the associated stigmatization of the aging process, of being old, and of the group of people affected by it, lead to social exclusion and discrimination practices.

*) Source: Klammer, Ute/Ganseuer, Christian: Diversity Management. Kernaufgaben der künftigen Hochschulentwicklung. Münster 2015, p. 151.

Ambiguity Tolerance

Ambiguity tolerance refers to the ability to tolerate differences and not to devalue them in complex, difficult situations, but to remain open, to sometimes leave uncleared issues at it, and to tolerate contradictions. Ambiguity tolerance involves accepting ambiguity and foregoing unambiguity (i.e. living a 'both and' rather than 'either or').*)

*) Source: Lüthi, Erika et al.: Teamentwicklung mit Diversity Management. Methoden-Übungen und Tools. Bern 2013, p. 54.

Antiromaism

Antiromaism refers to the discrimination, hostility and rejection of the mainstream society towards Roma and Romnja as well as Sinti and Sintize. As an ethnicized group, Roma and Romnija as well as Sinti and Sintize were affected by extermination under National Socialism. Numerous racist stereotypes and inner reservations are still prevalent today, which lead to rejection, exclusion, expulsion, and even killing.

Antisemitism

Antisemitism is a particular perception of Jews that may be manifested in hatred toward Jews. Antisemitism is directed in word or deed against Jewish or non-Jewish individuals [in the sense

of attribution] and/or their property and against Jewish community institutions or religious institutions. In addition, the state of Israel, understood as a Jewish collective, can also be the target of such attacks.*)

The term antisemitism originated in the second half of the 19th century as a self-designation in the politically active anti-Semites circle, who wanted to use the term to achieve a supposedly "rational" foundation of antisemitism. A more recent form of antisemitism is the "secondary antisemitism". It refers to a form of memory defence in which the Holocaust is relativized with the help of various constructs, for example by blaming Jews for their own persecution and extermination.

*) Source: https://www.demokratie-bw.de/antisemitismus#c58067

Black and Blackness

The terms *black* and *blackness* emerged as a strategy of self-empowerment and denote a political and social construction, not a biological characteristic. This term does not describe the skin color of people, but a construction that assigns black people a certain social position. In a society characterized by racism, this is a disadvantaged position characterized by discrimination. *Black* – in German also capitalized as an adjective - has a history of resistance in Germany that dates back to the 1980s and is closely linked to the Afro-German and black movement. Through the resistant appropriation of a foreign appellation and following the Black Power Movement in the English-speaking world, it was introduced as an emancipatory self-designation and as an alternative to clearly racist terms. The term 'black Germans' counters the alleged incompatibility of being black and being German. It refers to the history of black presence in Germany, which dates back to way before colonial times.*)

*) Source: https://weranderneinenbrunnengraebt.wordpress.com/2012/09/15/schwarzschwarzsein/

Care

The word 'care' means welfare, but also mindfulness, custody, nursing, and vigilance. It stands for a certain attitude towards the world and other people as well as for concrete 'care work' such as nursing, raising children, or washing, cleaning, and preparing meals.

Routine procedures at the University can create barriers for teachers and students with heavy care responsibilities, for example: towards children and family members in need of care. Therefore, it is important to look for flexible support options in the context of teaching as well.

A point of contact for students is the Autonomous Unit for Students with Family Responsibilities: https://www.stura.uni-freiburg.de/gremien/referate/sfv

Classism

Classism is a form of discrimination based on social origin or the social position in society. For example, people are discriminated against due to the fact that their parents are poor or that they themselves are dependent on state benefits such as unemployment benefits. Classism degrades people and makes it more difficult for them to access resources (e.g. education).

Source of further information: Andreas Kemper: Klassismus. Eine Bestandsaufnahme. Published by the Thuringia Office of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2016. Available online at: http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/erfurt/12716.pdf

Coloniality

Coloniality describes the persistence of practices, attributions, and patterns of interpretation that emerged under colonialism. The term was first developed by the Latin American research group "proyecto modernidad/colonialidad" and refers to the fact that colonialism and the ways of thinking and structure that emerged from it are not a deviation from European modernity,

but rather its basis as well as its concomitant. A still prevalent expression of coloniality is racism, which emerged in its modern form with the conquest and colonization of the Americas.*)
Coloniality structures not only formerly colonized countries, but also European societies.

German universities have played an important role in colonialism and in the production of colonial thought patterns, for example: through the production of racist and Eurocentric theories and the collection of ill-gotten cultural objects or human remains that are often still in their possession. Thus, coloniality is still reproduced today.

*) Source: Sebastian Garbe/Pablo Quintero (ed.): Kolonialität der Macht. De/koloniale Konflikte: zwischen Theorie und Praxis. Münster 2013.

For more information on Freiburg's role in colonialism and on the role of the University of Freiburg, see the pages of the project "Freiburg Postcolonial" (http://www.freiburg-postkolonial.de).

Disability

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, persons with disabilities include "those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (Article 1).*)

However, a disability is not only medically diagnosed, but also socially induced: In the environment of the impaired person, everyday objects and facilities (physical factors) as well as the attitude of other people (social factors) have a disabling effect (ableism/hostility towards the disabled). Consequently, barrier-free access to higher education is of central importance, especially for students with disabilities (accessibility).

*) Source: https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-1-purpose.html

Disadvantage Compensation

Disadvantage compensation is aimed to enable certain groups of students who are institutionally disadvantaged to complete pass/fail and graded assessments with equal opportunities and under appropriate conditions. For example, students with disabilities and chronic illnesses, as well as students with family obligations, are entitled to claim compensation for disadvantages. Disadvantages these students have compared to other students when completing pass/fail and graded assessments should be compensated for as much as possible. However, the requirements that are part of the performance profile of the examination may not be waived. The entitlement to disadvantage compensation arises from the principle of equal opportunity under examination law and is regulated and defined in the respective study or examination regulations for the individual degree programs.

Further information on disadvantage compensation at the University of Freiburg can be found here: https://www.studium.uni-freiburg.de/de/beratung/studieren-mit-behinderung-oder-chronischer-erkrankung/nachteilsausgleich

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as the characteristic-based disadvantage or degradation of individuals or groups. Discrimination can take different forms: it ranges from thoughtless and insulting remarks to deliberate ignoring and arbitrariness to violent attacks. It includes individual behavior as well as forms of discrimination against entire population groups by state organizations and institutions (institutional discrimination).

Discrimination in the legal sense is unequal treatment of a person on the basis of one (or more) legally protected discrimination categories for no objective reason that justifies the unequal treatment. The disadvantage can be expressed, for example, by the behavior of a person, by a regulation, or a measure. The decisive factor for recognizing discrimination is not the intention of the discriminating person or the measure in question - it may be "well-intentioned" by the originators of the discrimination - but the effect on the disadvantaged person.

Diversity

The term diversity is used to describe the variety of people or groups. Generally, diversity includes characteristics such as ethnicity, social origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, and religion - although the perspective can be expanded by a variety of further (individual) characteristics. Sociological approaches also argue that difference does not exist per se, but is brought about in interactions and through institutional practices.

Through diversity management and anti-discrimination work, the University works towards the recognition and appreciation of this diversity - similarities and differences, heterogeneity, individuality - of its current and future members (students, professors, research assistants and administrative, service, and technical staff). This mission also includes recognizing and reducing inequalities and barriers in the context of the University.

Diversity Competence

Diversity competence encompasses various social and communicative skills. It aims to recognize and deal with social exclusion mechanisms such as racism, homophobia, or sexism. The ability to perceive and respect oneself and others in their differences and similarities plays a central role here. Accordingly, diversity competence also implies dealing with one's own social positioning and privileges in a self-reflective manner.

Diversity Management

Diversity management is generally defined as the recognition and utilization of diversity in companies and organizations. It includes all measures and initiatives that preserve, increase, and value diversity and consciously use it as a resource for success. For the University of Freiburg, this implies an explicit commitment to the diversity of its staff members and students. The University considers it as its task to create and maintain an organizational culture in which equality within diversity is valued and regarded as an enrichment in research and teaching. It ensures equal participation opportunities for all university members and provides for the sustainable elimination of exclusion mechanisms of any kind.

Further information can be found at: https://www.diversity.uni-freiburg.de/gender-diversity-konkret

Diversity Monitoring

The main purpose of diversity monitoring is the systematic collection and comprehensive presentation of diversity-related statistical data. The data is to be processed and distributed in a way that it can be used directly by the decision-makers in the organizational units.

Diversity monitoring at the University of Freiburg creates a uniform database of diversity-relevant key figures that serves as a basis for strategic decisions. It is aimed at all decision-makers, especially the rectorate. The data collected can, for example, form the basis for gender-sensitive human resources development, provide information about the dropout rate of female students compared to that of male students, or allow well-founded statements about how long students with disabilities study.

Further information can be found at: www.diversity.uni-freiburg.de/Monitoring

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Equal Opportunity

Equal opportunity refers to access to equal life chances for all, regardless of attributions or social positioning. Equal opportunity is a central goal of liberal societies and it focuses on the equality of starting opportunities, in contrast to equal outcomes.

A point of contact for administrative and technical staff is the staff equal opportunity representative: https://www.chancengleichheit.uni-freiburg.de/

Equal Opportunities Officer
The Equal Opportunities Officer contributes to the implementation of the constitutionally required equal opportunities for women and men, and to the elimination of existing disadvantages for academically active women as well as female students.
Further information at: https://www.gleichstellungsbuero.uni-freiburg.de

Ethnic Origin and Ethnicization
Ethnicity/Ethnic origin is one of the core dimensions of diversity and refers to a group of people who are ascribed a collective cultural identity or origin, or who ascribe it to themselves. Ethnicity is not a fixed characteristic, but a dynamic process in which identities and affiliations are in a constant state of change.
The term ethnicity is sometimes used itself as a powerful attribution that makes use of racialized ideas. In this context, this is called ethnicization, where differences between people are reduced to alleged ethnic differences and individual people or groups are labelled as "foreign" or deviating from the "own" society. Ethnicization is a process that usually starts from an unmarked mainstream society that constructs minorities and marks them as fundamentally different, thus securing its own privileges.

Ethnocentrism
This term, that was influenced by the US-American sociologist W. G. Sumner, generally emphasizes an egocentrism related to one's own group. In a narrower sense, ethnocentrism refers to the judgment of the 'other' - (ethnic) groups and cultures - one's perspective based on one's own group and the value standards associated with it. This can lead to an idealization of one's own group through the selection and emphasis of certain information and the denial or ignorance of other information. In extreme cases, this is an interpretation of the world in which one's own group is the center of all good things and all others are evaluated as negative.*)
*) Source: https://www.idaev.de/recherchetools/glossar/

First-Generation Students
The term 'first-generation students' refers to students who were the first in their family to enter or complete higher education. In some cases, first-generation students are also referred to as "non-traditional students" - a term that also includes those students who gained access to higher education via second or third chance education or who have obtained a higher education entrance qualification as vocationally qualified persons. However, from a diversity-sensitive perspective, the term "non-traditional students" must be viewed critically, as it divides the student body into two groups and places them in a power relationship - the 'traditional' students as the normal case, the 'non-traditional' students as a deviation - that reproduces structural inequality.
Various programs and support measures are specifically directed to first-generation students and so-called "non-traditional students". Further information is provided, for example, by the initiative ArbeiterKind.de, which also has a local group in Freiburg.

Foreigners with a German university entrance qualification (Bildungsinländer*innen) or foreigners with a university entrance qualification from abroad (Bildungsausländer*innen)
The term "Foreigners with a German university entrance qualification (Bildungsinländer*innen)" refers to persons who have acquired their university entrance qualification in Germany, but do not hold a German passport. In addition, persons who have obtained their university entrance qualification at a German school abroad are also referred to as "Bildungsinländer*in-

nen". On the other hand, persons without a German passport who have acquired a non-German university entrance qualification are referred to as foreigners with a university entrance qualification from abroad (Bildungsausländer*innen).

Gender
The term *gender* refers to the sociocultural sex of a person (as an opposite term to the physical sex). With this differentiation, it becomes clear that gender and related ideas of women and men are culturally and historically constructed, with regard to supposedly gender-specific abilities, responsibilities, and identities - for example.
Further information can be found via the following link: https://queer-lexikon.net/2017/06/15/gender/ and in an introductory essay by Paula-Irene Villa: „Soziale Konstruktion: Wie Geschlecht gemacht wird", in: Sabine Hark (Hrsg.): Dis/Kontinuitäten: Feministische Theorie. Wiesbaden 2001.

Gender Identity
A person's gender and sexuality, along with his or her origin, age or worldview, make a significant contribution to the formation of an identity - also because gender is a frequent point of reference for social attributions. The term "gender identity" refers to the elementary self-understanding of a person's sexual character. Here it is fundamental how a person perceives him- or herself and how he or she wants to be perceived by others. The gender identity can, for example, correspond with the physical gender (cis identity), differ from it (trans identity) or follow other self-determined identity concepts.

Gender Mainstreaming
Gender mainstreaming is an equality policy strategy that is geared [...] to critically examine all decisions in an organization with regard to their impact on the reality of women's and men's lives, which are influenced differently by gender-related inequalities, and to reduce the related differences.*) The development of this strategy goes back to the international women's movement. It was incorporated in the final document of the platform for action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and adopted by the European Union at the end of the 1990s and is thus also valid for Germany.
*) Source: http://gender-glossar.de/glossar/item/34

Gender Studies
Gender studies refers to inter- and transdisciplinary research approaches that examine the meaning of gender and gender relations in all societal and cultural spheres.*) Among others, they address questions of inequity and inequality between genders, and deal with differences between genders and the possibilities for societal change.
*) Source: https://www.zag.uni-freiburg.de/gender-studies/masterstudiengang-gender-studis

General Act on Equal Treatment
The General Act on Equal Treatment (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, AGG) is a German federal law that has been in force since 2006. The purpose of this act is to "prevent or to stop discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation" (§1).

In accordance with the provisions of the directive, protection against discrimination in the field of employment and occupation is the main focus of the AGG. In addition to a labor law-related prohibition of discrimination and its exceptions, measures and obligations of the employer to protect against discrimination, as well as the rights of employees and their claims in the event of violations of the prohibition of discrimination, are regulated.*)

Heteronormativity

The term heteronormativity refers to a socially anchored power relationship in dealing with gender and sexuality, which is considered normal or natural. This power relationship is based on two assumptions that usually occur together and have exclusionary effects: One, it is assumed that society is a two-gender order, in which there are only men and women. Two, it is inferred from that assumption that only opposite-sex desire (heterosexuality) exists. To put it more pointedly: Heteronormativity describes the idea that there are only men and women and that these - and only these - can exclusively occur in couples. All people and life forms that deviate from this idea are disadvantaged. Thus, intersexual persons or homosexuality are repeatedly constructed as deviations from a supposed normality.

Heteronormativity is not natural: It is constructed into a supposed norm, e.g. by laws, scientific theories, and everyday practices. An example of the everyday creation of gender binarism at the University are forms that force students to classify themselves as male or female. Gender-segregated restrooms follow the same logic.

Hostility to Homo- and Bi+-Sexuality

Hostility to homosexuality refers to negative attitudes toward gay men and women. These attitudes can manifest themselves in prejudice and derogatory speech, advocacy of discrimination or physical violence. The term hostility to homosexuality is explicitly distinguished from the term homophobia in order to emphasize, that these attitudes are usually not pathological fear (phobia), but hostile devaluations.

While the term bi (short for bisexual) refers to a sexual orientation that is directed at both women and men, the term bi+ includes all people who are attracted to more than one gender. Thus, this designation goes beyond the scope of the binary gender order and aims to make clear that sexual orientation can be directed at more than just men and women. These sexual orientations are also often treated with hostility, which is to be expressed in the term Bi+hostility.

Hostility to Islam

Hostility to Islam refers to a specific form of racism that is directed towards Muslims and people to whom a religious affiliation with Islam is attributed. For this attitude, the personality of the person concerned or the meaning that religion has for him or her is not important. Instead, the person is only perceived as a representative of Islam and thereby constructed as an expression of a homogeneous group. Islam is thereby principally devalued as something "bad" and associated with, for example, backwardness, danger, and violence or the oppression of women. In turn, those people who make use of such attributions benefit from this devaluation and thus present virtue signalling, e.g. by implicitly presenting themselves as progressive, civilized and enlightened.

Further information can be found here: Blickpunkt – Antimuslimischer Rassismus. Published by DGB-Jugend, 2013. Available online at: http://jugend.dgb.de/++co++76d173e2-9c68-11e2-b5dd-525400808b5c

Inclusion

As a guiding principle in education policy and in a comprehensive understanding, inclusion refers to the reflection and reduction of barriers, discrimination, and exclusion of different groups and respectful support that is necessary for each individual in the educational process. Accordingly, inclusive teaching goes beyond the equal participation of students with disabilities and explicitly takes into account the individual needs of each student.

Institutional Discrimination

The term institutional discrimination refers to the embedding of discrimination in organizational structures. It makes clear that discrimination cannot only be the result of individual prejudices and actions, but also of structures and procedures in organizations. For example, certain regulations or established routines may exclude or disadvantage people.

Like any organization, universities are also places of institutional discrimination. For example, it has discriminating effects, if universities require German as a first language and do not provide opportunities for students with other first languages to develop their language skills or to perform in other ways. Universities try to reduce and deal reflexively with these and other institutional barriers through diversity management and other measures.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality refers to the intersection of features of discrimination in a person. The concept was first developed by black feminists in the USA and is based on the insight that social categories such as gender, ethnicity, or class cannot be viewed separately, but must be analyzed in their "interwovenness" or "intersections". For example, a female student may be impaired or disadvantaged in her studies both because of her gender and because of a mental or physical disability. She may have different experiences than a male student with a disability or a female student without a disability.

Inter*/Intersexuality/Intergender

Inter* is a term used as an emancipatory generic term to describe the identity of intergender people. The term is distinguished from the medical use of the term intersex, which is a medical diagnosis for people who are born with both the male and female reproductive organs. Intergender, on the other hand, refer to the gender identity, which fall under the non-binary and transgender umbrella. It includes people who identify as neither only male nor only female, or a mix of both. Both intersex and intergender people are often confronted with physical and social interventions aimed at creating a binary gender order: Through such interventions, they are forced to be either a woman or a man - often without medical indication. Also, in everyday university life, gender binarism is repeatedly established as a norm - be it in forms, in seminar readings in which only men and women appear, or through gender-segregated toilets.
Source: https://nonbinary.wiki/wiki/Intergender

LGBTIQ

LGBTIQ is an abbreviation from the English language and includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, intersexual, and queer people and identities. The abbreviation is an umbrella term for very different lifestyles, orientations, and identities. They are often mentioned together in political discourse because they defy the social norm of heteronormativity, according to which there are only two genders, each of which desires the other. The abbreviation appears in different manifestations. The abbreviation LSBTIQ is also used, which, in contrast to LGBTIQ, refers to the German-language terms.

Lookism

Lookism refers to the discrimination and evaluation of people on the basis of outer appearance, clothing or certain body characteristics. Lookism is based on certain normality expectations in terms of appearance and body, which can be related to other dimensions of discrimination. A deviation from these expectations is often evaluated negatively and can become the starting point for further negative projections onto the person concerned and might lead to exclusion.

Maternity Protection Act

The Maternity Protection Act is a federal law that aims to ensure the best possible health protection for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Women should not suffer disadvantages in their working lives as a result of pregnancy and nursing periods, nor should a woman's self-determined decision about her employment be violated (source: Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth). From January 1, 2018, female pupils and students have been included in the scope of the law for the first time. This legally strengthens the position of pregnant and breastfeeding female students. For the university context, the new provisions of the law have resulted in the following changes, among others: There is now an obligation to record and report pregnancy for which the students are responsible themselves. In addition, universities must ensure that degree programs and processes are evaluated without cause for possible risks.

For more information on the topics of pregnancy, maternity protection and parental allowances please see: http://www.zuv.uni-freiburg.de/service/mutterschutz.

Mentoring

Mentoring is an instrument for promoting young talent, where a learning relationship based on knowledge and experience transfer is established between a mentor and a mentee. Mentoring helps the personal and study-related development of the mentees. The mentors primarily serve as role models, whereby the focus is not on conveying subject-specific content, but rather on developing management and problem-solving skills that can be used in the university context. The University of Freiburg has various mentoring programs, explicitly for female students and for those interested in intercultural exchange - among others.

An overview of the various mentoring programs can be found on the pages of the Equal Opportunity Office (https://www.gleichstellungsbuero.uni-freiburg.de/de/gleichstellunganunifoerderprogramme/mentoring) and at the Competence Network Student Mentoring (https://www.mentoring.uni-freiburg.de/).

Migration Background

The term *migration background* is primarily a statistical term and includes both immigrants and people born in Germany who are assigned to this statistical group on the basis of an underlying understanding of a generational sequence (https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/Methoden/Erlauterungen/migrationshinter-grund.html?nn=208952). The majority of people with a migration background are German citizens.

Although the term *migration background* is only a statistical neologism, it is highly politically charged. In this usage, it suggests that people with a migration background are a homogeneous group that is also characterized by an "otherness" compared to people without a migration background. In this context, the migration background is often equated with being shaped by an ethnic origin or certain cultural values and norms. This is a form of ethnicization that is statistically and scientifically untenable. The group of people with a migration background is characterized by a similar diversity as those without a migration background.

Othering

The term "othering" means making someone the "other". In this process, the other person is constructed as a negative counter-image to an undefined "we", which is thereby valorized. So "othering" establishes hierarchical distinctions between supposed groups, which are drawn, for example, along ideologies of inequality such as sexism, racism or ableism.

Participation

The term participation is used to describe involvement and co-determination in important events or decision-making processes. From a diversity-sensitive perspective, it is desirable to achieve the most diverse inclusion possible and to break down the barriers that prevent participation. In the context of university teaching, participation is also an important means of addressing the diverse needs of all participants and creating a common ground for the learning process.

People of Color (PoC)

The term People of Color, PoC for short, originated in the US civil rights movement and is also used in Germany. It is a self-designation of people who experience racism and is understood as an emancipatory term.

Prejudice

A prejudice is a sweeping judgment about people or groups based on stereotypical attributions and historically developed patterns of interpretation. Prejudices are often so entrenched that people cling to them despite contradictory experiences.

Privilege

The term privilege refers to a form of structural preferential treatment based on certain characteristics that are perceived as "normal". Privilege can take effect on individual and structural level, and the people who benefit from it are often unaware of it. Privileges form a significant portion of inequality, because they do not only disadvantage people, but also privilege others. The concept of privilege was influenced by the U.S. researcher and activist Peggy McIntosh, who also cites various examples of privilege in her essay "White Privilege and Male Privilege."*)

Privileges also play a major role in the context of university teaching. For example, male students are often privileged in that they can dominate seminar discussions without being negatively judged or interrupted for doing so.

*) Source: https://nationalseedproject.org/images/documents/White_Privilege_and_Male_Privilege_Personal_Account-Peggy_McIntosh.pdf

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Queer

Queer is a collective term for all sexual orientations and gender identities that do not conform to the dominant social norm of gender and sexuality. In its original meaning, the English term has negative connotations and means "crazy", "strange", or "weird". Through political activism, it was turned positive and appropriated as a self-designation.*)

Queer is also a school of thought and a scientific analysis perspective (Queer Studies) that resists an exclusionary pigeonholing and critically questions the given order. A queer perspective is related to scientific and political activism and points to the changeability of our thinking and acting.

*) https://queer-lexikon.net/2017/06/08/queer/. For more information, see Degele, Nina: Gender/Queer Studies. Eine Einführung. Paderborn 2008, p. 11 (for further reading).

Racism

Racism is an ideology, a structure, and a process by which certain groups are viewed as different by their nature and as inferior 'races' or ethnic groups on the basis of actual or ascribed biological or cultural characteristics. Subsequently, these differences serve to explain why members of these groups are excluded from access to material and non-material resources. Racism always involves group conflict over cultural and material resources. It makes use of the rules, practices, and conscious perceptions of individuals. However, by definition it is not an inherent characteristic of individuals. Thus, fighting racism does not mean fighting against individuals, but confronting the practices and ideologies through which racism operates in cultural and social relations. *)

In a Senate resolution from 2016, the University of Freiburg has clearly spoken out against racism and xenophobia on the initiative of the student government. **)

*) Source: Philomena Essed, "Multikulturalismus und kultureller Rassismus in den Niederlanden", in: Institut für Migrations- und Rassismusforschung (ed.): Rassismus und Migration in Europa: Beiträge des Kongresses "Migration und Rassismus in Europa", Hamburg, Sept. 26 - 30, 1990. Hamburg 1992, p. 375.

**) Further information can be found at: http://www.pr.uni-freiburg.de/pm/2016/pm.2016-09-30.135

Religion

Religion is one of the core dimensions of diversity and refers to a variety of cultural phenomena that normatively influence people's thoughts, actions, and feelings and result in a cohesive, meaningful value system. In the university context, the conscious consideration and acceptance of the diversity of all religions and world views among students and staff members is relevant, especially the free practice of religion and its consideration in everyday work and study life. This includes differences in the perception of ritual and in the practice of faith, observance of holidays and religious festivals, clothing and religious symbolism or certain eating habits.

Sexism

Sexism refers to the discrimination, oppression, or disadvantage of people on the basis of their gender. The term sexism includes stereotypes, affects, and behaviors that result in or work towards unequal social, financial, legal status of women, men, and non-binary people. Sexist stereotypes can also affect and limit men. However, this does not relativize the fact, that men are fundamentally privileged in a sexist system that structurally disadvantages women.

Sexual Orientation

This term describes the identity that makes a person physically, emotionally, or sexually attracted to various genders. Usually, a distinction is made whether the sexual orientation is directed towards the other sex (heterosexual), the same sex (homosexual) or both sexes (bisexual). However, terms such as bi+ make it clear, that sexual orientation can be directed not only towards men and/or women, but also towards other genders. In addition, there are also sexual orientations that express no desire for sexuality with other people (asexual).

Social Origin

As a diversity characteristic, social origin refers to the sociocultural heritage, the milieu- or class-specific classification of a person by considering the life situation of the parents. In the context of higher education, social origin has a particular impact on the factors of access to higher education, financing, the course of studies and academic success.

Stereotype

A stereotype is a simplified and persistent image to typecast certain people and groups. Stereotypes are thus cognitive classifications that seek to reduce the complex reality and simplify interactions by creating an alleged predictability. Stereotypes become problematic when they deepen inequalities. This can be the case, for example, when a teacher infers certain positive or negative characteristics from a person's gender or skin color, since this assignment restricts the interaction possibilities of the person concerned or of the other interaction partners.

Trans*/Transgender/Transsexuality

The term trans* is a generic term for people who do not or only partially identify with their physical sexual characteristics. Trans* refers to the contradiction between the self-experienced gender and the gender attributed at birth. Trans* persons include both people who seek gender transition - for example "female-to-male" transsexuals or "male-to-female" transsexuals - and people who do not wish to be assigned to a gender category. The asterisk* is used as a placeholder to allow space for different identities and positionings. This is especially important when it comes to the term trans*, as it is a generic term for different people and self-definitions who do not always share the same interests and experiences.

Due to the dominant social gender model, which is based on the assumption of binarity (gender binary) and supposedly unchangeable gender identities, trans* persons are structurally disadvantaged. This is expressed by the term transphobia.

Transphobia

Transphobia describes the devaluation, stigmatization, and structural discrimination of trans* people. Transphobia can range from speech acts to physical violence.

Trans* people are also often made invisible in everyday university life and disadvantaged by the concept of rigid gender identities. At University, this concerns e.g. the process that many trans* people have to go through in order to adjust their name or gender affiliation on their UniCard. Changing names and gender affiliations is often complicated by universities and not approved before an official proof has been presented, putting trans* people at a severe disadvantage in their everyday university life and limiting their freedom of expression at the University. In addition, the insistence of the University on official proof paradoxically complicates the process for trans* persons to obtain official proof in the first place: They must be able to show that they live their everyday life "in the other gender" – and for trans* persons who are studying, the UniCard might be one of the most important proofs for this. This is one of the reasons, why it is important for trans* persons that their first name and gender on the UniCard can also be declared differently from official documents.

White and Whiteness

Like 'blackness', *white* and *whiteness* do not refer to a biological characteristic or skin color, but a political and social construction. *Whiteness* refers to the dominant and privileged position within the power relation of racism, which otherwise remains mostly unsaid and unnamed. *Whiteness* involves an unconscious self- and identity concept that influences white people's self-view and behavior and brings them into a privileged position in society in terms of, for example, access to resources. A critical reflection of *whiteness* consists in reversing the focus on those structures and subjects that cause and benefit from racism and was established in the 1980s as a paradigm shift in English-language racism research. It was initiated by the political struggles and criticism of People of Color.*)

Whiteness is consequently an analytical category that is critical of racism. In order to clarify the constructional character of the term, it is usually written in italics (*white*) or capitalized (White).

*) Source:

Xenophobia

Xenophobia or hostility to foreigners refers to a hostile attitude toward people who are perceived as foreign. The term is problematic, since it contains an aspect of exclusion itself, because it suggests that the person the hostility is directed to is constructed as not belonging to "our" society. In contrast, the term racism emphasizes that it is not the supposed "foreignness" of a person that is the cause of hostility, but the attitudes and social structures that turn people into strangers in the first place.