SUSANA RINDERLE CONSULTING, LLC
Diversity · Inclusiveness · Leadership

Basic D&I definitions

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ally	A member of a dominant group who actively partners with members of a non-dominant group to improve the material circumstances of that non-dominant group in a meaningful way. Mostly used in reference to LGBT allies (i.e. "straight ally"). See "dominant", "non-dominant", and "LGBT"
African American	Preferred term for a person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins anywhere in the African continent and is (usually, but not always) dark-skinned. See "race".
American Indian	See "Native American".
Anglo	Term often used for White people in the southwestern U.S. See "White".
Asian	Preferred term for a person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins anywhere in the Asian continent (excluding Russia and the Middle East, but including India). Preferable to the term "Oriental" which is considered outdated and more appropriate for referring to objects than people. "Asian" also collapses billions of people in multiple countries and cultures speaking hundreds of languages into a simplified term that can hide or gloss over their tremendous diversity. Native Hawaiians and Pacific islanders (people having biological origins in the island nations of the Pacific) are sometimes included in this category, sometimes not. See "race".
Baby Boomer	A member of the generation born between 1945 and 1964, with distinct cultural characteristics born out of the social and historical experience of that age cohort.
bigotry	Individual acts of (intentional or unintentional) meanness directed by one individual (or small group) to another, based on the recipient's actual *or perceived* group identity (typically race). While bigotry is *not* the same as racism, bigotry both reinforces and stems from racism. Bigotry can be expressed by and towards *anyone*, both dominant and non-dominant group members alike. See article "Focusing on Racists Perpetuates Racism". See "racism",

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	"prejudice", "stereotype", "sexism", "dominant" and "non-dominant."
binary thinking	Also called "binaries", this is "either-or" thinking where there are only two options and everything and everyone fits into one or the other. Binaries (e.g. Black or White, male or female, right or wrong) are rampant in our thinking and also limiting, incomplete, overly simplistic, and unrealistic. They blind us to the full range of truth, possibilities, and options. See article "The Greatest Threat to D&I: Binary Thinking." See "gender".
Black	Sometimes preferred term for a person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins anywhere in the African continent and is (usually) dark-skinned. Capitalizing "Black" as a racial identifier creates equity and consistency with other racial and ethnic identifiers (like Asian and Latino) and highlights the difference between black as a skin color and Black as a racial identity term (a person may identify racially and culturally as all or partly Black, but not be black-skinned). See "race".
Caucasian	Outdated, overly clinical term for "White". See article "6 Reasons to Not Say 'Caucasian'". Also see "White".
communication	An expression of thoughts and/or emotions. Communication may be verbal (using words), non-verbal (not using words; the "how" of the expression) or both. Communication may be effective or ineffective. Human beings communicate constantly – silence or "lack of communication" *are* communication.
cross-cultural	Refers to the comparing and contrasting of one group's cultural patterns (beliefs, values, practices, behaviors, etc.) to another's. Cross-cultural knowledge is limited in practical application because what occurs when people from two or more different cultures *interact* – in a particular *context* – is a different phenomenon and a system distinct from the sum of its individual parts. See article "Interculturalism vs. Diversity: Why Both Are Critical to D&I Success." See "culture", "intercultural" and "intercultural effectiveness".
cultural competence	Common term for the goal of many D&I programs and training programs (especially in healthcare), but problematic because it's vague, implies a fixed end point of completion and grants power to whomever defines "competence". See article "Cultural Competence: What's

	In a Name?" See "intercultural effectiveness" and "D&I"
cultural humility	The "ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the 'other'". Cultural humility implies a "lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique…a desire to fix power imbalances…and aspiring to develop partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others." (See APA article "Reflections on Cultural Humility" for all citations.) While well-intended, this term is limited and impractical because it points to an adaptive internal emotional state, but no clear actions, behaviors or impact. See article "Cultural Competence: What's In a Name?" See "intercultural effectiveness."
culture	"A complex frame of reference that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, symbols *and meanings* that are shared to *varying* degrees by *interacting* members of a community." (Stella Ting-Toomey, emphasis mine). Additional definition: "People are different around the world. Their needs, however, are the same. How they satisfy their needs is different, and this is what we mean by culture." (John Condon). Culture is *not* the same as nationality, race or ethnicity. See "nationality", "race", "ethnicity" and "intercultural".
D&I	Diversity and inclusion. See "diversity" and "inclusiveness/inclusion".
diversity	Human differences, particularly *group-identity based* or demographic differences. This term should *not* be used as a euphemism for "people of color" or race/ethnicity. It should also not be limited to individual personality or psychological differences. "Diversity" includes race and ethnicity as well as all the other ways (visible and invisible) humans differ from each other, especially along *group-based* differences. For more on the diversity field, see article "Interculturalism vs. Diversity: Why Both Are Critical to D&I Success." See "people of color", "race" and ethnicity."
dominant	A group which possesses greater relative social, political and/or economic power, whose traits and preferences are seen as "normal" or ideal. Dominants may or may not be a numerical majority. Dominants aren't necessarily domineering as people, nor aware of their dominant group identity. Dominants enjoy "privilege" even if they don't desire it. All people possess *both* dominant *and* non-

	dominant identities. Also referred to as "**insiders**". See "non-dominant", "power", "privilege", "racism" and "sexism".
East Indian	Optional term for a person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins in the country of India. "East Indian" makes it easier to differentiate between people with origins in India, and Native Americans who sometimes refer to themselves as "Indian" due to Columbus's error. See "Native American".
effective	Meets one's goals, or has the intended impact.
equality	Equality implies *sameness* and is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "as great as," "the same as," or "like or alike in quantity, degree, value, etc." Attempts to increase equality often come from dominants and focus on one's good *intent*, one's *self* and keeping one's *behavior towards* diverse others consistent. However, this approach often maintains inequities and may even reinforce the superiority and privilege of dominants by trying to make non-dominants more like dominants. Equity is a more effective goal than equality. See this [excellent cartoon illustration](#) of the difference. Also see articles ["Is Our Goal Equality or Equity?"](#) and ["One Size Does Not Fit All: A Parable About Equity."](#) See "equity", "non-dominant", "dominant" and "privilege".
equity	Equity implies *differences plus fairness* and is defined by Webster's as "the quality of being fair or impartial" and "that which is just". Attempts to increase equity often come from non-dominants and focus on *others* and keeping one's *impact on* diverse others consistent and fair. Equity is a more effective goal than equality. See this [excellent cartoon illustration](#) of the difference. See articles ["Is Our Goal Equality or Equity?"](#) and ["One Size Does Not Fit All: A Parable About Equity."](#) See "equality", "non-dominant" and "dominant".
ethnicity	A set of *cultural and linguistic* traits that define an individual or group of individuals as belonging to a particular social category. Ethnicity can include multiple cultures (the Karen ethnic group in Myanmar for example) and can transcend national borders (the Romani). Ethnicity is *not* the same as race, nationality, or culture. For example, in the United States a Latino can be Black, White, Native American, or multiracial; come from any of 20 different countries (nationalities); and belong to one or more different cultures or sub-ethnic groups (such as the

	Huicholes of Mexico) within their country of origin. See "race", "culture", "nationality", "Hispanic" and "Latino".
gay	See "sexual orientation" and "LGBT".
gender	Gender is identity and culture, not biology. Gender refers to the way behaviors, activities, traits, objects and even people are identified as "masculine", "feminine", both, neither, or something else. Like race, gender is a "social construct", meaning that how gender is defined and assigned varies dramatically across countries, cultures, and historical time. LGBT people often challenge the notion of gender as limited and incomplete binary thinking. Gender is not the same as "sex" although it's often used as a euphemism for "sex" in professional settings, likely due to politeness or not knowing the difference between the terms. See "binary thinking", "gender identity", "gender expression", "LGBT", "race", "sex" and "sexual orientation".
gender expression	How a person chooses to outwardly act, dress, speak, move, etc. (*or not*) based on their gender identity. (From Cooper Lee Bombardier at NMGSAN.) See The Genderbread Person. See "sex", "gender" and "gender identity."
gender identity	A person's innate sense of their gender. (Adapted from Cooper Lee Bombardier at NMGSAN.) See The Genderbread Person. See "sex", "gender" and "gender expression."
Generation X	A member of the generation born between 1965 and 1979, with distinct cultural characteristics born out of the social and historical experience of that age cohort.
Generation Y	Another term for Millenial. See "Millenial".
heteronormativity	Privilege enjoyed by straight people because they are straight, and the reinforcement (conscious or unconscious) of the dominant group identity of straight and straight-looking people. See "privilege", "dominant" and "LGBT".
Hispanic	Preferred term for a person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins anywhere in the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America. "Hispanic" is an ethnicity, not a race, as Hispanics can be of any race, and most are multiracial. "Hispanic" is typically preferred by older Hispanics, more politically conservative Hispanics,

	and Hispanics living in the south and southwestern U.S. See Articles webpage for articles on Hispanic/Latino identity. See "Latino", "race", "ethnicity" and "multiracial".
homophobia	The systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in our society to the benefit of straight and straight-looking people and the exclusion of LGBT people. (Adapted from Solid Ground's definition of institutional racism.) Can be expressed as bigotry and negative prejudice directed at LGBT people. See "bigotry", "prejudice" and "LGBT".
inclusiveness/inclusion	Making sure as many different people, voices, perspectives, beliefs and values are: taken seriously, heard fully, actively involved in decision making, and exercising equal power. Some prefer the term "inclusiveness" because it communicates a more ongoing, changing, co-created state than "inclusion" which can sound fixed, done, or static. See "D&I".
Indian	See "Native American" and "East Indian".
insider	Another term for "dominant". See "dominant".
intercultural	Refers to what occurs when individuals from different cultures *interact* with each other. This is a systems thinking approach that includes the critical element of *context*, and is more practical and applicable than cross-cultural knowledge. For more on the intercultural field, see article "Interculturalism vs. Diversity: Why Both Are Critical to D&I Success." See "cross-cultural" and "intercultural effectiveness".
intercultural effectiveness	Communicating and behaving in a context involving human differences in a way that has the intended impact; meets mutual needs and goals; and respects the humanity of all involved. Preferable to "cultural competence" or "cultural humility". See article "Cultural Competence: What's In a Name?" See "cultural competence", "cultural humility", "intercultural" and "effective".
internalized oppression	The phenomenon where a member of a non-dominant group holds negative beliefs, unconscious biases and/or prejudices towards themselves as a member of that group and/or towards their non-dominant group in general. They may even behave in a bigoted way towards their own non-dominant group, or deny their membership in that group. May be referred to as "internalized racism" or "internalized sexism." Internalized oppression is not

	evidence that non-dominants aren't really non-dominant (e.g. that racism or sexism don't exist) but evidence of the strength and pervasiveness of the dominants' position and their privilege (however unconscious or unintended). See "dominant", "non-dominant", "sexism", "racism", "bigotry", "prejudice" and "unconscious bias."
interpretation	The conversion of meaning in one language to meaning in another language in *spoken* form. Conversations are interpreted; documents are translated. Both are equally accurate when done by a professional. See "translation".
intersectionality	The concept that social group identities intersect to create a unique whole and thus need to be studied at their intersections. Examples: women of color, white men, working class people of color, etc. Concept coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw
intersex	" 'Intersex' is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. For example, a person might be born appearing to be female on the outside, but having mostly male-typical anatomy on the inside. Or a person may be born with genitals that seem to be in-between the usual male and female types—for example, a girl may be born with a noticeably large clitoris, or lacking a vaginal opening, or a boy may be born with a notably small penis, or with a scrotum that is divided so that it has formed more like labia. Or a person may be born with mosaic genetics, so that some of her cells have XX chromosomes and some of them have XY." (From The Intersex Society of North America.) See The Genderbread Person. See "LGBT".
Latino	Preferred term for a person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins anywhere in the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America. "Latino" is an ethnicity, not a race, as Latinos can be of any race, and most are multiracial. "Latino" is typically preferred by younger Latinos, more politically progressive Latinos, and Latinos living along the west coast and major east coast cities of the U.S. See Articles webpage for articles on Hispanic/Latino identity. See "Hispanic", "race", "ethnicity" and "multiracial".
leadership	The ability to take ownership of destiny, identify a goal, articulate values, define a direction and move consistently and effectively in that direction aligned with those values

	towards the realization of that goal.
LEP	Limited English Proficient. Preferable to "non-English speaker" as LEP is a more respectful term that doesn't privilege English proficiency and captures the broad diversity of language ability in the LEP community. See "privilege".
lesbian	See "sexual orientation" and "LGBT".
LGBT	An inclusive and respectful term for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender people. Some organizations and programs add additional letters, such (some or all of) LGBTQQIA*: Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Ally. "Lesbian" is placed first on purpose to disrupt the sexist tendency to put men first. See "sexual orientation", "sexism" and "ally".
microaffirmations	"Tiny acts of opening doors to opportunity, gestures of inclusion and caring, and graceful acts of listening. Micro-affirmations lie in the practice of generosity, in consistently giving credit to others—in providing comfort and support when others are in distress." (Mary Rowe, PhD)
microaggressions	"Everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership." (Derald Wing Sue, PhD)
Millenial	A person born between 1980 until (we're not sure yet) with distinct cultural characteristics born out of the social and historical experience of that age cohort. Also called Generation Y, Millenials are the largest generation in the history of humanity – worldwide – and are culturally distinct from other generations in a way that is already transforming many aspects of society.
minority	Outdated term for a person of color. See "person of color".
misandry	See "sexism".
misogyny	See "sexism".
multiracial	A person having biological origins in two or more racial groups. See "race".
Native American	A person having biological origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central

	America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. (U.S. Census Bureau). Many Native Americans also refer to themselves and their communities as "Native", "Indian", and/or "American Indian" as well as by their specific tribe(s) and/or nation(s). See "race".
nationality	Referring to a person's *country of birth*. A person's nationality is *not* the same as their culture, race, or ethnicity. See "race", "culture" and "ethnicity".
non-dominant	A group which possesses less relative social, political or economic power, whose traits and preferences are often seen as less than ideal, even "abnormal". Non-dominants may or may not be a numerical minority. Non-dominants aren't necessarily submissive as people, but are usually aware of their non-dominant group identity, and harmed more by pervasive and negative prejudices and unconscious biases towards them. Also referred to as "**outsiders**". All people possess *both* non-dominant *and* dominant identities. While identity labels that begin with the prefix "non" are typically minimizing, "non-dominant" is less minimizing and disempowering than alternative terms, and highlights the fact that non-dominant groups are often referred to with "non"-prefixed words (non-White, non-management) that reinforce their "outsider" non-dominant status. See "dominant", "power", "privilege", "racism", "sexism", "prejudice" and "unconscious bias".
non-White	See "person of color."
outsider	Another term for "non-dominant". See "non-dominant".
person of color	A person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins outside of Europe and (often, but not always) dark-skinned. This term is preferable to "minority" because not only does "minority" imply inferiority, people of color are neither the numerical majority on Earth, nor in many major cities and states in the U.S. This term is also preferable to "non-White" because "non-White" privileges Whiteness as the normal or preferred state of being. See "White" and "privilege".
power	The ability to create a result. By this definition *everyone* possesses power, yet dominants have more ability to create results *on a mass scale* than non-dominants. See article "Avoid This Disempowering Mistake of Empowerment." See "dominant" and "non-dominant".

prejudice	Literally "pre-judgement"; a quick decision about a person or group of people based on limited information. Prejudices may be conscious or unconscious, and may be fueled by stereotypes and unconscious bias. All human beings have prejudices – it's a "downstairs brain" shortcut to simplify our world that's served the evolution of our species for hundreds of thousands of years. Prejudices are relatively harmless unless they translate into *actions* like bigotry or the multiple daily decisions that perpetuate and reinforce racism. See "stereotype", "unconscious bias", "bigotry" and "racism".
privilege	The benefits granted to members of a dominant group solely for being members of that dominant group. Privilege is not earned, and it's usually not noticed, nor desired, by those who enjoy its benefits. See articles "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" and "Insensitivity, Entitlement, and Guilt: What Gaining Privilege Taught Me About Privilege". See "racism", "sexism", "white privilege" and "dominant".
race	A set of *physical* traits that define an individual or group of individuals as belonging to a particular social category. Like gender, race is a "social construct", meaning that how racial groups are defined and how people are assigned to them varies dramatically across countries, cultures, and historical time. Race is a contested topic because it has limited basis in genetics or biology, the history of humanity is one of "racial" mixing, and the size of the multiracial population is growing rapidly in the United States and around the world. Race is *not* the same as ethnicity, race, culture or nationality. See "ethnicity", "culture", "gender", "nationality", "White", "Black", "African American", "Asian" and "Native American".
racism	The systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in our society to the benefit of people who are White and the exclusion of people of color. (Solid Ground). This is not to be confused with *individual, interpersonal* acts of (intentional or unintentional) meanness, which is bigotry. See article "Focusing on Racists Perpetuates Racism". See "bigotry", "prejudice" and "stereotype".
sex	Sex is biology. It's the designation assigned to a baby at birth (and a person later in life) based on the appearance of their genitals. (Adapted from Cooper Lee Bombardier at NMGSAN.) Sex is not the same as gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. See "gender", "gender identity", "gender expression" and

	"sexual orientation".
sexism	The systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in our society to the benefit of men and the exclusion of women. (Adapted from Solid Ground's definition of institutional racism.) Individual acts of (intentional or unintentional) meanness directed by men towards women, based on their womanhood, are also commonly referred to as "sexist", but I advocate for calling these individual, interpersonal behaviors "**misogyny**" to highlight the difference between these and systematic, structural sexism, just as referring to individual acts of intentional or unintentional meanness based on a person's race as "bigotry" and not "racism" highlights this distinction. Just as bigotry can be directed by and towards dominants or non-dominants alike, the equivalent term for individual acts of meanness directed by women towards men based on their manhood is "**misandry**" but this word is not commonly known or used – yet. See "bigotry", "dominant", "non-dominant", "race", "racism", "homophobia" and "sex".
sexual orientation	A person's sexual or romantic attraction to another person, defined by the *gender identity* (not sex) of each person. A man generally attracted to men often identifies as **gay**, a woman generally attracted to women often identifies as **lesbian**. A man or woman attracted to both men and women simultaneously or at different times in their life often identifies as bisexual. See The Genderbread Person. See "LGBT".
Silent	A member of the generation born before 1945, with distinct cultural characteristics born out of the social and historical experience of that age cohort. Also called "Traditionalists" or "Veterans."
stereotype	A stereotype is a way of automatically assigning the (actual or perceived) characteristics of a group to an individual based solely on that person's (actual or perceived) membership in that group. A stereotype organizes people into fixed, simple categories that cover up their personal uniqueness and their complex, multiple group identities. Some stereotypes may contain a grain of truth but all stereotypes are inaccurate in their description of all members of the entire group, or even a majority. Stereotypes exist for *both* dominant and non-dominant groups. A stereotype can be negative (all Latinos are poor) or positive (all Asians do well in school), but in either case stereotypes are harmful because they limit an

	individual's humanity and hide a group's diversity. See "prejudice", "bigotry", "dominant", "non-dominant" and "unconscious bias".
transcultural	A person who identifies more closely with a racial, ethnic, or cultural "group of resonance" that is not their biological heritage, *and is also* widely accepted as such by members of the group of resonance. See articles "Hi, My Name is Susana, I'm a 'Transcultural'" and "Rachel Dolezal's Transracial Deception: It's Personal". See "culture", "race" and "ethnicity".
transgender	Individuals whose gender identity, gender expression, or behavior is not traditionally associated with their birth (anatomical) sex. (Adapted from The Leadership Campaign on AIDS.) While some transgender people may choose particular clothing, hormone therapy and/or gender confirmation surgery (preferred term over "sex reassignment surgery") to make their physical appearance more closely reflect their gender identity, not all do. See The Genderbread Person. See "gender", "gender identity", "gender expression", "LGBT" and "sex".
translation	The conversion of meaning in one language to meaning in another language in *written* form. Documents are translated; conversations are interpreted. Both are equally accurate when done by a professional. See "interpretation".
unconscious bias	The process by which the brain uses established, unintentional mental associations to make quick decisions outside of conscious awareness about other people, based on limited, superficial information. (Adapted from Howard Ross). Unconscious biases typically reinforce and perpetuate the position and privilege of dominant group members, and disproportionately disadvantage non-dominant group members. See Implicit Association Tests. See "privilege", "dominant" and "non-dominant".
USian/U.S. American	Optional term for "American", which is more respectful of the fact that "America" refers to a continent that is home to 35 different countries, and "North America" is home to 23 different countries.
White	A person who is visually identified, or self-identifies, as having biological origins in Europe (and sometimes the Middle East) and (usually, but not always) light-skinned. Preferable to the term "Caucasian." Capitalizing "White" as a racial identifier creates equity and consistency with

	other racial and ethnic identifiers (like Asian and Latino) and highlights the difference between white as a skin color and White as a racial identity term (a person may identify racially and culturally as all or partly White, but not be white-skinned). See article "6 Reasons to Not Say 'Caucasian'". See "race", "culture", "ethnicity", "Anglo".
white privilege	Unearned, often invisible benefits granted to people with lighter skin color. See "privilege", "race", "White" and "racism".
White supremacy	The belief that White people of European origin are innately superior to other races, and therefore best equipped to run things. See "race", "White" and "racism".

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