

BRIEF 1: DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM BRIEF

The purpose of this document is to offer a list of who would be covered by diversity issues in assisting faculty to provide better education for all students. Traditionally, diversity has applied to racial/ethnic and gender issues. Today, the definition of diversity has been enlarged to include many other groups including individuals with disabilities.

Some groups you may find in your classroom who would be considered diverse are:

Individuals with disabilities, including:

Students with hidden disabilities, such as learning disabilities, like dyslexia; diabetes; chronic pain; or Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity (ADHD), among others.

Students with psychiatric or other cognitive disabilities.

Students with visible disabilities, such as using an ambulatory aids, like a wheelchair, or crutches; or who are blind or vision impaired.

Students who are deaf or have a hearing impairment.

Students with long-lasting conditions, such as AIDS or being HIV positive.

Students who have impacts from previous illnesses or disabilities, like post-polio syndrome.

Non-traditional students, such as single mothers.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students, such as those whose first language is not English, or who have diverse cultural backgrounds, such as being from a matriarchal society.

Older students who are enrolling in educational settings after spending a lifetime working.

As more students from various backgrounds gain access to educational settings, increased diversity in the classroom will become apparent. It will become necessary for faculty to learn skills, such as Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) to meet the needs of a diverse student body and to assist students to be successful in their postsecondary experiences.

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