

# Human Diversity

**Student Learning Outcome:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of human diversity and the systems of structural inequality that shape human experiences and behaviors.

## The Value of Human Diversity

Understanding human diversity gives students the ability to navigate and appreciate the realities of diverse communities and nations that exist in a multi-faceted world. Cultivating this understanding requires knowledge of a variety of cultures, subcultures, and social systems, in local, regional, national, and global contexts. Courses in Human Diversity help students to better understand the factors that

contribute to individual identity as well as the environmental and historical circumstances in which social and cultural systems are produced. Finally, an understanding of human diversity provides students with insights into the ways in which inequalities are created, enacted and upheld.

## Supporting Skills

1. Students will describe the ways in which race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, ability/disability, sexual orientation, nationality, and/or immigration status are socially constructed.
2. Students will explain how social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts.
3. Students will analyze how discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems can create barriers for some and opportunities for others.

## Course Content Criteria

1. Courses in this category have a sustained focus on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, ability/disability, sexual orientation, nationality, and/or immigration status within a given context.
2. Courses in this category invite students to study texts and resources that were created by these groups or communities, where possible and appropriate.
3. Courses in this category explore the power dynamics within societies that produce inequities, inequalities, and injustice in a given context.
4. Courses in this category explore the impacts of power dynamics within societies on particular groups or communities.
5. Courses in this category explore the ways in which these groups or communities are formed, the ways they interact with other groups or communities, and the ways in which they advocate for sovereignty, resources, or rights.
6. Courses in this category include an assessment that requires students to demonstrate each of the skills in the Human Diversity Assessment Rubric (below). This assessment assignment should be one of the following: an objective exam, an essay question on an exam, an essay, or a research paper.

## Glossary

1. **Ability/disability:** A division of human society or a category of identity that is based on having or not having a sustained or continuing condition that limits activity.
2. **Discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems:** Attitudes, practices, and systems that differentiate people or deny benefits or access based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, ability/disability, sexual orientation, nationality, or immigration status.
3. **Gender:** A social category reflecting attitudes and behaviors that shape conduct in given cultures, religions, and ethnicities and at given historical moments. Gender is distinguished from biological factors of sex and gender may not match sex.
4. **Human diversity:** The concept that each human is unique and the reality created by individuals, groups, and communities from a broad spectrum of differences. Here, it is the conscious exploration of difference and the fostering of a climate where equity and respect are inherent.
5. **Immigration status:** A legal category referring to the way a person is resident in a nation and therefore accesses the benefits of that nation's citizenship, including but not limited to: citizen, permanent resident, refugee, non-permanent resident (visa-dependent), person with temporary protected status, and undocumented person.
6. **Nationality:** A category of identity based on inclusion in one or more political nation-states or national diasporas.
7. **Race:** A social category emerging out of the historical experiences of enslavement, conquest, and discrimination used to identify different types of human bodies. Geneticists refute the existence of biologically distinct races at the level of DNA. While socially constructed through interactions among humans and between humans and institutions, race is real in its consequences.
8. **Religion:** The object of study in the academic discipline of Religious Studies in a liberal arts context, which includes traditions referred to by the colloquial designation "faith" (e.g., Christianity, Judaism) and the common designation "religion" (e.g., Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism), including their contents, sects, or subsects. "Religion" may include discourses, practices, institutions, material objects, and identities shared by a group of people that inspire powerful emotions and/or mental processes, and/or provide ultimate and existential meaning, moral guidance, cosmology, and/or a sense of human purpose which may not be commonly referred to as "religious" but are considered as such by Religious Studies scholars (e.g., Emin, Heaven's Gate, Scientology).
9. **Sexual orientation:** A person's sexual attraction and by the object of desired sexual relationships, or lack thereof, which should not be confused with gender.
10. **Social class:** A category or division of human society that is defined by income, economic status, or assigned caste or lineage.
11. **Socially constructed:** Something that is created, caused, and controlled by social or cultural factors rather than natural or biological factors. Note that this causation and control can emerge from inside or outside the particular group it effects.

12. **Structural inequality:** An imbalance of power, resources, and/or status between groups of people that has been created, actualized, and perpetuated through political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, and/or legal frameworks, systems, and institutions.

### Experience Criteria

Students may apply to fulfill the HD requirement through a co-curricular activity. These criteria apply to experiences that meet the HD curricular requirement and describe the characteristics of the experience, the steps a student must follow to petition the experience for approval, and the number and types of assignments students must submit to satisfy the requirement.

1. Students must obtain pre-approval for any activity used to satisfy this component. Approval must be obtained prior to the start of the activity.
2. Students must submit independent, third-party, verification of participation in the approved activity, by a supervisor or other authoritative individual, who is not a blood relation.
3. Activities in fulfillment of this requirement must comprise 15 hours of involvement with a clearly defined community that falls under one of the identities outlined in the supporting skills.
4. Activities in fulfillment of this requirement must include mechanisms for third-party feedback about the quality of the participation in the activity.
5. Students fulfilling Human Diversity through an activity must submit a written statement with the petition outlining what the activity is that the student is requesting in fulfillment of the requirement, how he or she anticipates the activity will fulfill the requirement, and what he or she expects to gain and learn from the experience.

6. Students fulfilling Human Diversity through an activity must submit either samples of work completed during the course of the activity that demonstrate the required supporting skills or a written reflection of approximately 1000 words that responds to the following prompt:

***Please describe in detail the activity you used to complete the Human Diversity requirement. In your reflection, answer the following questions. What did you come to understand about race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, ability/disability, sexual orientation, nationality and/or immigration status through your experience? What did you come to understand about the ways in which social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts? What did you come to understand about the ways in which attitudes, practices, and systems can create opportunities for some and barriers for others?***

### Human Diversity Assessment Rubric

Supporting Skills	Exemplary 4	Accomplished 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1
<b>Describe the ways in which race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, ability/disability, sexual orientation, nationality, and/or immigration status are socially constructed.</b>	Demonstrates a deep understanding of the social construction of various identity factors and their interconnectedness; accurately explains how these constructs shape individual experiences and societal norms; provides rich and well-chosen examples that effectively illustrate how social constructs influence individual experiences and societal norms.	Shows a good understanding of social construction concepts but may lack depth in explaining the interconnectedness of identity factors; provides accurate descriptions of their impact on individuals and society; offers clear and relevant examples that illustrate the impact of social constructs on identity and society. May have room for more variety or depth in examples.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of social constructs but lacks depth or may contain inaccuracies in explaining their influence on identity and society; presents some examples, but they may lack clarity, relevance, or depth in illustrating the concept of social construction.	Displays a limited understanding of social construction concepts. May have inaccuracies or misconceptions in explaining the impact of these constructs; provides limited or unclear examples that do not effectively illustrate the concept of social construction.
<b>Explain how social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts.</b>	Explains, with theoretical nuance and sophistication, how social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts; provides rich, well-chosen examples that effectively illustrate how social and cultural systems have evolved due to environmental and historical contexts. Examples are diverse and thoroughly explained.	Clearly explains how social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts; offers clear and relevant examples that illustrate the impact of environmental and historical factors on social and cultural development. May have room for more variety or depth in examples.	Offers a limited explanation of how social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts; presents some examples, but they may lack clarity, relevance, or depth in illustrating the concept.	Asserts that social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts but is unable to explain how this occurs; provides limited or unclear examples that do not effectively illustrate the concept.
<b>Analyze how discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems can create barriers for some and opportunities for others.</b>	Analyzes, with nuance and sophistication, how discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems can create barriers for some and	Clearly analyzes how discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems can create barriers for some and opportunities for others; demonstrates	Offers a limited analysis of how discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems can create barriers for some and opportunities for others; provides	Asserts that discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems exist, but is unable to analyze how these can create barriers for some and opportunities for

	opportunities for others; engages in critical analysis by examining the underlying causes and consequences of discrimination; offers insightful perspectives on how discriminatory attitudes and practices perpetuate inequity.	some critical thinking by discussing the causes and consequences of discrimination, but may not fully explore the depth of these issues or offer a breadth of perspectives.	limited critical analysis and may lack depth in discussing the causes and consequences of discrimination.	others; lacks critical analysis and does not effectively address the underlying causes and consequences of discrimination.
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