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UL Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Framework

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UL Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Framework

Last Updated: April 18, 2022

Drafted by: IDEA 2.0 Taskforce members - Annie Bélanger, Stacey Burns, Samantha Minnis, Susan Ponischil, and Ashley Rosener

This framework is meant to provide a shared understanding of the University Libraries' commitment and approaches toward Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA). The framework is intended to ground us in theory as we move toward action, to guide us as we make decisions about IDEA-related initiatives, and to prioritize our IDEA commitment in all that we do. The framework allows us to leverage systems thinking as well as to connect library efforts to the University's goals, values, and frameworks for IDEA. While the framework does not provide action steps, it is meant to provide ways for all library colleagues to connect themselves and their work with the Libraries' IDEA efforts.

This document will be reviewed the year preceding our faculty bylaws review process by the standing committee. This means it will be updated at least every 5 years. If needed, the framework will be reviewed ahead of cycle. It will be housed in ScholarWorks under the Library Reports collection.

Aspirational Purpose

Through collaboration and engagement, the Libraries advance GVSU's social justice framework for equity and inclusion and the University's commitment to educational equity. The Libraries develop and implement sustainable and strategic structural efforts in order to intentionally support and advocate for historically underrepresented communities and non-dominant identities. GVSU Libraries are a leading campus partner towards the outcomes of inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, anti-racism, and social justice through decentering whiteness and enhancing equity-centered approaches at all levels.

Framework Grounding

The [Framework for Inclusion and Equity](#) at GVSU articulates the university's understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion. It sets the stage for the next phase of our commitment to advance

inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, anti-racism and social justice. Grand Valley believes that equity and inclusion makes each member of our community better and is fundamental to what it means to be a Laker.

IDEA Working Definitions

The following working definitions for IDEA, pulled from the [GVSU Framework for Inclusion and Equity](#), are the building blocks towards social justice within the Division of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The Libraries build upon this to ensure alignment and deepen our commitments, which include accessibility, anti-racism, and social justice.

Inclusion

“The act of creating an environment in which all members of a community feel welcome, safe, supported, respected, and valued. Inclusion is “the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity — in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect — in ways that increase one’s awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within value systems and institutions” (Association of American Colleges and Universities, AAC&U). Inclusion establishes an environment in which all individuals and communities

are able to thrive in authentic ways. Moreover, an inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences so that all people can fully participate in the university's opportunities."

Diversity

"Diversity refers to the presence of difference and variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, age, class, religion and spirituality, geographic and international, and more."

Equity

"The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for students, faculty, and staff at every stage of educational and career development. Equity is enabled through the active, ongoing work of identifying and eliminating barriers preventing full participation by all members of the campus community."

Accessibility

A commitment to accessibility advances the creation and adoption of University's tools, devices, services, and environments that are available to, and usable by, as many people as possible. In addition to the use of universal design, accommodations are made to support accessibility and inclusion. Grand Valley aims to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in order to enable independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity.

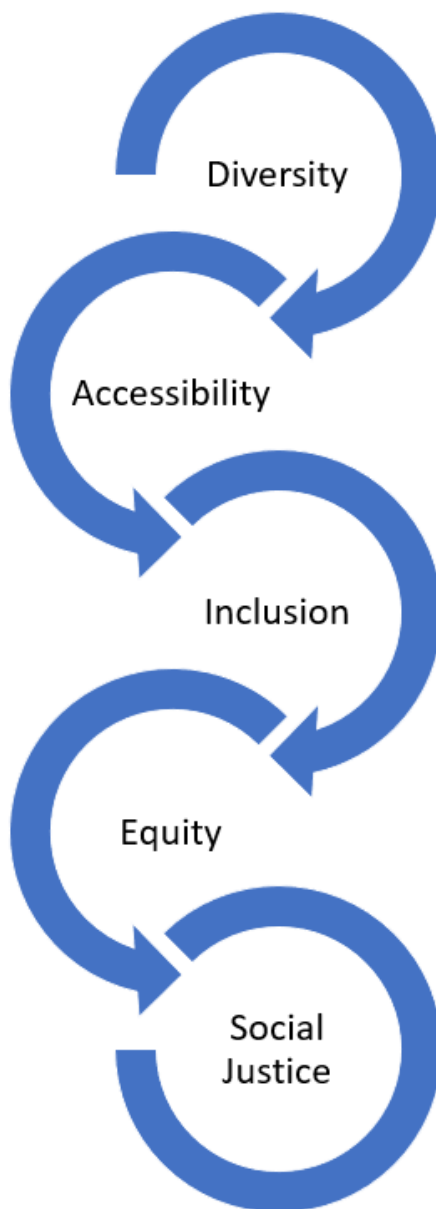
(Informed by Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)

Anti-Racism

The practice of actively identifying and opposing racism (any ideas, behaviors, or policies that support a differential of power constructs of blended human difference that lives socially) and promoting equity among racial groups.

Social Justice

"Social justice serves as the conceptual foundation for Grand Valley's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The institution recognizes its responsibility to examine traditional power structures and to address unfair treatment of any university constituent within these structures. Moreover, Grand Valley intends to educate and empower all members of the community to think critically about systems of marginalization and oppression. This includes a deeper understanding of privilege and the need for



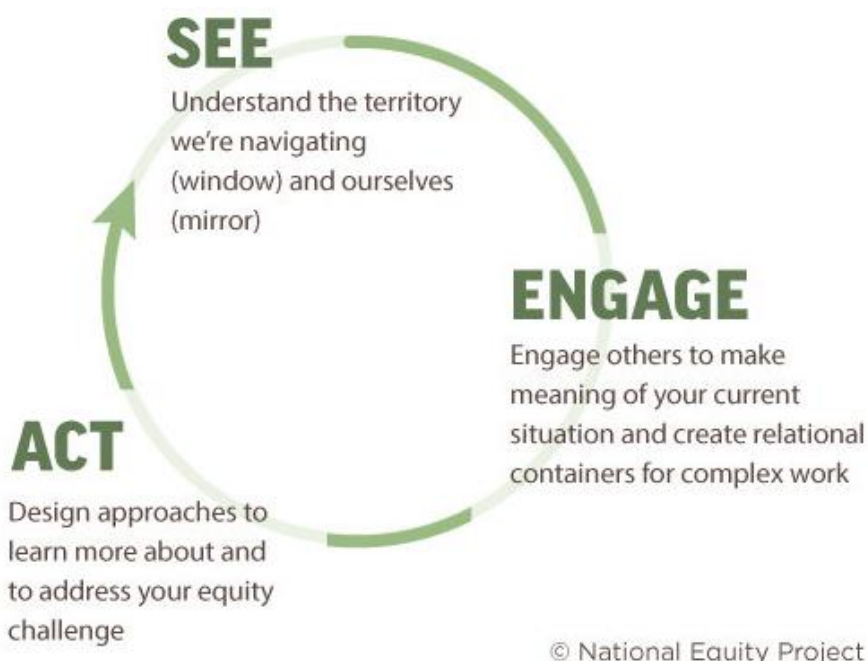
all in the community to work toward equity and fairness in the pursuit of transformation of lives, professions, and societies.”

Design Principles for IDEA Efforts

Design principles are value statements that describe the most important goals that an initiative should deliver and are used to frame design decisions. Design principles act as a compass for the sought outcome. They are important because they help us to make decisions. They serve as guideposts as we move forward. They ensure we are on a spectrum of agreement as to what we are doing and how before, during, and after. They foster constructive dialogue when comparing solutions to determine which is most appropriate and to explain the decision.

Our design principles will connect our libraries’ values of being ‘caring and considerate’ and ‘equity-driven’ to a framework that:

- Seeks structural, sustainable developments to advance social justice
- Moves to intentional, purposeful, inclusive action
- Fosters accountability at libraries-wide, unit, functional team, and individual levels
- Asks how it will impact the most vulnerable
- Centers in evolving existing practices while building on what already exists
- Enables clarity of focus and targeted efforts



Using an Equity Lens

“The purpose of an equity lens is to be deliberately inclusive as an organization makes decisions. It introduces a set of questions into the decision that help the decision makers focus on equity in both their process and outcomes.” (<https://www.nonprofitadvancement.org/files/2020/12/What-is-an-Equity-Lens.pdf>)

In order to center an equity lens in our work, we ask questions of our work. These questions are for all of us to reflect on individually and collectively as appropriate. Individually and collectively, we take

ownership of our education *and generously question the work* we do, the plans we make, and the decisions that are implemented:

- For what purpose?
- Who benefits?
- Whose comfort and sense of safety is centered?
- Who is/could be harmed?
- Who has agency & voice?
- Who can experience and express joy in engaging with the Libraries?
- What assumptions are we making?

Inspired from James Madison University Libraries and edited with input from the University Libraries' colleagues.

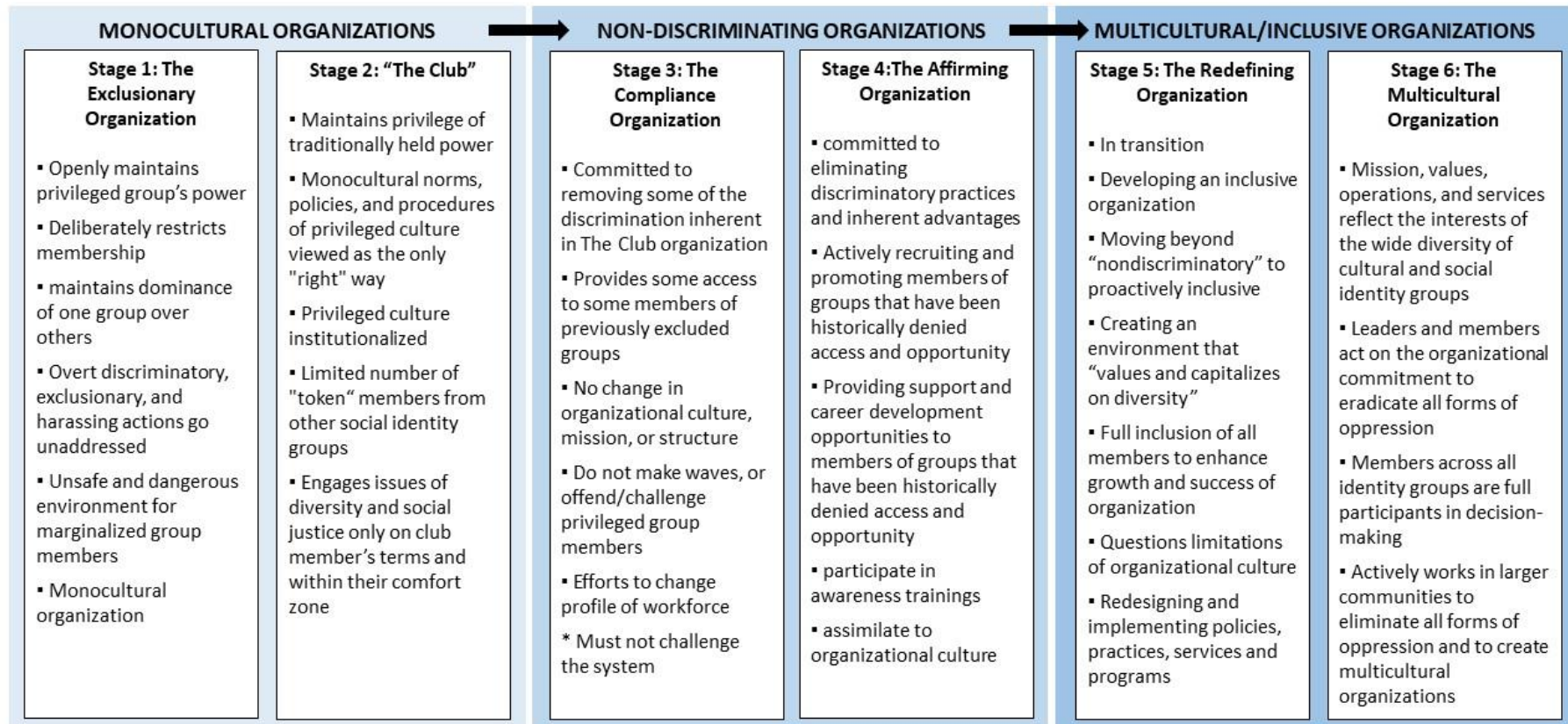
Inclusion as an Organizational Journey

University Libraries acknowledge that inclusion is a journey. To map our organizational journey, we will lean on the MultiCultural Organizational Development (MCOD) Theory and Stage Model. There are multiple journeys contained within our commitment and growth

towards inclusion. Depending on the inclusion focus, organizationally and individually, we may be simultaneously at different stages of this model.

(Jackson, B. W (2006). Theory and practice of multicultural organization development. In Jones, B. B. & Brazzel, M. (Eds.), The NTL

MCOD Developmental Stage Model



Handbook of Organization Development and Change (pps. 139-154). San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer. Found online at: <https://equitydiversity.cals.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2017/11/Theory-and-Practice-of-Multicultural-Org-Dev-1.pdf>)

(Holvino, E. (2008). Developing Multicultural organizations: a change model. North American Association for Environmental Education.
Found online at: <https://naaee.org/sites/default/files/mcodmodel.pdf>)