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2300.1 Definitions

- It is important that counselors are in agreement with what certain terms mean in the context of diversity issues. The terms below are not new, but many times they are used between individuals who do not agree on what they mean.
 - **Anti-bias** – An active approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping, bias and the “isms.”
 - **Bias** – Any attitude, belief or feeling that results in, and helps to justify, unfair treatment of an individual’s identity.
 - **Culture** – The customs, beliefs, laws, ways of living and all other results of human work and thought that belong to a people.
 - **Diversity** – Differences among people reflected in a variety of forms, such as race, culture, perspective, talent, interest, age or religion. Any collective mixture characterized by differences, similarities and related tensions and complexities.
 - **Implicit/Unconscious Biases** – Refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect an individual’s understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control. These biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness.
 - **Inclusion** – The action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure. The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities, members of other minority groups, and members of other diverse groups.

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- **Micro-aggressions** – A term used for brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicates hostile, derogatory or negative prejudicial slights or insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups.
- **Prejudice** – An attitude, opinion or feeling formed without adequate prior knowledge, thought or reason. Prejudice can be prejudgment for or against any person or group.
- **Stereotype** – An oversimplified generalization about a particular group, race, gender or other group designation, which usually carries derogatory implications.
- **Upstander** – A person who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked, bullied or slighted.

2300.2 Guidance

- Counselors need to
 - demonstrate sensitivity and awareness of stereotypical thinking about people because of their culture, race or gender;
 - be aware of, recognize and correct their own cultural biases;
 - understand the importance of a healthy, diverse workforce;
 - see people as individuals in order to attract, retain and motivate them;
 - avoid stereotyping as it can limit their ability to see an individual's true talents, ambitions and preferences; and
 - listen and be open and willing to accept individuals with different cultural backgrounds.
- A “culturally competent service delivery” system involves the following key concepts:
 - Cultural competence is a process that allows individuals to accept, respect and work with others who are different from themselves.
 - Cultural competence is the awareness of your own biases and knowledge of the factors that influence cultural differences and similarities.
 - Cultural competence requires the development of skills, attitudes and behaviors that allow individuals to understand and interact effectively with people from other cultures.

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- Counselors can effectively respond to diversity by
 - accepting personal responsibility for enhancing their own and their organization's effectiveness.
 - demonstrating contextual knowledge meaning knowing themselves, their organization, and understanding key diversity concepts and definitions.
 - having a clear understanding about requirements and basing decisions about differences on how they impact the ability to meet these requirements.
 - understanding that diversity can be accompanied by complexity and tension and being prepared to cope with these.
 - being willing to challenge conventional wisdom.
 - engaging in continuous learning.