



EUS EQUITY HANDBOOK

Compiled Fall 2019

Introduction

Hello and welcome to the EUS Equity Handbook!

Similarly to the Finance Guidebook, this handbook exists as a resource for reference and basic information pertaining to matters of equity in the EUS. It serves as an introduction for equity workshops, allowing you to learn on your own time, and as such is not a comprehensive guide to equity in the EUS, let alone equity in general! If you have any questions, need help dealing with a situation pertaining to equity (including accessibility), or have questions regarding incident responses or the involvement restriction process, please ask the equity commissioner(s) directly at equity@mcgilleus.ca.

If you have been referred to this handbook as part of an equity workshop, please read up to the end of **Part 1**. This should take around **15 minutes**. Reading the handbook now will help make your equity workshop shorter and more engaging, so please take this seriously! You will be required to sign a document attesting to your comprehension of the handbook's contents.

If you have any questions as you go through this handbook, or think of things you'd like to discuss, please take note of them and we will address them at your equity workshop! If you are reading this out of curiosity and not attending an equity workshop, please feel free to address your questions to the equity commissioner(s) who will be happy to help.

See you at the workshop,

Julia Rafferty & Marion Olivier (2019-2020 Equity Co-Commissioners)

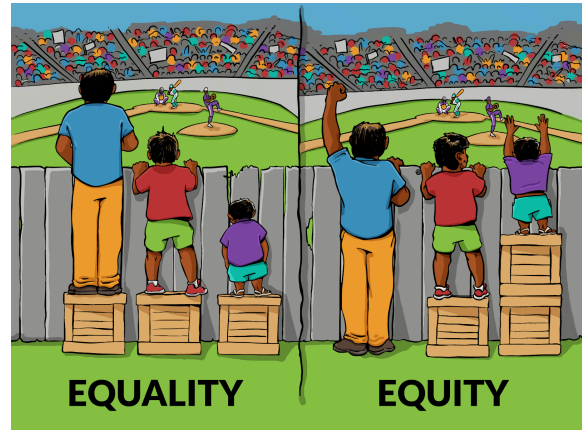
P.S. as this is a first draft, please let us know if you have suggestions for future content, or any corrections you'd like to see made!

Part 1

Terms & Definitions

Equity

- Equity essentially means acting with fairness, justice and integrity.
- Rather than giving everyone “equal” treatment, it entails treating people differently to address the obstacles they face and help everyone access the same opportunities.
- You may have seen it illustrated with a graphic like this!



Inclusion

- Recognizing and removing barriers to participation to ensure anyone/everyone can participate in our programs, events, etc.
- Being willing to change to include others.

Accommodation

- An adjustment or adaptation made when a person’s needs are not met by existing practices, or when existing practices fail to appropriately recognize barriers.

Accessibility

- The practice of providing accommodations for barriers or proactively removing barriers to ensure that all can participate in an event, and are aware of the constraints of that participation.
- For example, if it is impossible to use a venue without stairs, you can still make the event more accessible by informing participants of this, and by working with the venue to find alternate options (many clubs have “secret” service elevators).

Consent

- A mutual, positive, unambiguous, continuous, and specific affirmation of one’s desire to engage in some activity with someone else. Essentially, giving permission for something to happen.

- While we usually think of consent in the context of sex, it is also important in non-sexual contexts—hugging is a great example of something that should only be done with consent, even though it is often friendly and not sexual.

Intersectionality

- Defined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe her experiences as a Black woman in academia: *“the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.”*

Discrimination

- Differential, disadvantageous treatment of an individual or a group.

Oppression; anti-oppression

- The exercise of power by one group to suppress another group of people with specific consideration of cultural, historical, and living legacies.
 - An example of an oppressive policy is the wage gap: it is part of a historical legacy of women being held back in or kept out of the workplace, and continues to suppress women by limiting their financial gain in some fields.
- Anti-oppression is the practice of considering those histories to work against oppressive practices and ensure marginalized voices are valued.

Privilege

- The concept that some groups have social advantages in comparison to other groups, often on the basis of gender, race, age, sexual orientation, ability, and class.
- Can manifest materially (wealth, access to housing) or societally (sense of belonging in certain spaces, like academia or the workplace).

Unconscious biases

- Prejudice and stereotypes held on a subconscious level, which may still impact the way you treat others or are treated.
- Usually ideas we absorb from what we see and hear around us, both currently and from a young age.
- Everyone has them! Talking about biases helps us be aware of our own.

Microaggressions

- Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group. [Microaggressions may be compared to mosquito bites.](#)
- Often caused by unconscious biases (and also conscious biases).

Skills

Active listening

- A form of communication which prioritizes listening to understand and support someone, rather than listening to respond. It is a valuable technique to use when hearing student concerns, regardless of the context.
- Said to be 90% listening and 10% talking.
- Can be boiled down to seven key techniques (which we will practice in the workshop!):



Active bystanding

- Taking initiative to prevent a situation that may be uncomfortable, may result in violence, or may otherwise be unsafe for one or more parties.
- It's important to always be an active bystander, but even more so when you're helping run your groups events!

- Use the 4Ds:
 - Be **direct**: approach the situation directly.
 - **Distract**: do anything that distracts those involved in the situation or gives an easy "out" to the person who is potentially in harm's way.
 - **Delegate**: find another person to intervene on your behalf.
 - **Do something**: no matter what, do something!