

Diversability and Diversity: Toward Including Disability/Body-Mind Diversity in Educational Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Abstract : Since the racial reckoning of 2020, almost every major educational institution has incorporated diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles into its administrative, hiring, and pedagogical practices. Yet these DEI principles rarely incorporate explicit language or critical thinking about disability. Despite the fact that according to the World Health Organization, one in five people worldwide is disabled, making disabled people the larger minority group in the world, disability remains the neglected stepchild of DEI. Drawing on disability studies and crip theory frameworks, the underlying causes of this exclusion of disability from DEI, such as stigma, shame, invisible disabilities, institutionalization/segregation/delineation from family, and competing models and definitions of disability are examined. This paper explores both the ideological and practical shifts necessary to include disability in university DEI initiatives. It offers positive examples as well as conceptual frameworks such as 'divers ability' for so doing. Using Georgetown University's 2020-2022 DEI initiatives as a case study, this paper describes how curricular infusion, accessibility, identity, community, and diversity administration infused one university's DEI initiatives with concrete disability-inclusive measures. It concludes with a consideration of how the very framework of DEI itself might be challenged and transformed if disability were to be included.

Keywords : diversity, equity, inclusion, disability, crip theory, accessibility

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