

Equity & Inclusion Checklist

A truly inclusive college campus is one that embraces and supports all identities, from race, cultural background, and socioeconomic status to gender identity, sexual orientation, and physical ability. Throughout your college search, keep this Equity & Inclusion Checklist in mind to help you assess your schools' efforts to help every student learn, grow, and succeed.

*Note: Can't find what you're looking for? You can always email an Admissions Counselor with questions about what a school does/does not offer!

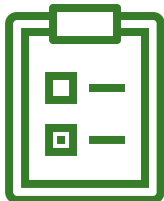
Diverse Population of Students and Faculty

One of the most obvious ways to guess whether a school is inclusive is to look at the faces that make up the students, faculty, and staff. A diverse community is, in theory, one that makes inclusion a necessity. But remember, even schools with a disproportionate breakdown can be very inclusive; higher ed as a whole has a history that lacks diversity, so try to look at the ways that schools are working to diversify its entire campus, all while setting up the programs to support minority communities.



Always Diversifying

- Look at the racial/ethnic breakdown of students at the school.
- Look at the racial/ethnic breakdown of faculty and staff at the school.
- Read the school's nondiscrimination policy and take note of what identities it specifically does and does not mention.
- Read the strategic plan for the next few years, if available—how will diversity and inclusion be addressed in the future?



Equal Engagement

- Look for things like a **Campus Climate Survey**, which reports on how students felt about their sense of inclusion, safety, and community at the school. Notice if students of certain backgrounds felt differently about their school than others.
- The **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)** is a report of how common it was for students of various backgrounds to engage in high-impact practices, such as study abroad, service-learning, internships, etc. Notice any disparities?



Browse through the school profiles on CollegesofDistinction.com and read about any unique programs aimed at supporting underrepresented populations. Schools marked with our signature **Equity & Inclusion badge** have already gotten a thumbs up from our team across all aspects of access and inclusion!

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Campus Activities and Community Support

How a school spends its resources is very telling when it comes to learning what it tolerates, accepts, and endorses on its campus. See whether the school has physical office spaces that show a commitment to student support, and look for campus-sponsored, registered student organizations that exist for underrepresented populations.



Physical Office Spaces

- Office for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
- Multicultural Affairs Office
- Disability Services Office
- Health/Medical Center
- Counseling Office
- Title IX Office/Crisis Center
- Women's Center
- LGBTQ+ Center
- International Office
- Religious Services Office



Official Student Organizations

- Organizations for students with disabilities
- Organizations for LGBTQ+ students
- Organizations for first-generation college students
- Identity-based academic/professional groups
- Interfaith alliance and clubs for religious minorities
- Culturally/ethnically based organizations
- Organizations that celebrate multicultural arts and performance
- Organizations for international students
- Commuter student lounges and/or organizations
- Fraternal organizations and honor societies for minority identities



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Food, Housing, and Physical/Mental Health Care

College is not just about what goes on in the classroom. Look for schools that invest in ways to support students' quality of life. Equity is achieved when all students are given what they need, so take note of the ways that a school facilitates access to food, housing, financial aid, and overall well-being.



Affirmed Living

- Campus Food Pantry/affordable meal support
- Specialized housing for students with disabilities
- Disability accommodations in student employment and overall campus access
- Themed residential communities for specific cultural groups
- Childcare services for student parents
- Gender-neutral restrooms
- Housing options for transgender and transitioning students



Accessible Health Care

- Free/reduced cost medical care
- Free/reduced cost counseling
- LGBTQ+-trained counseling and medical staff
- Multilingual counseling and medical staff



Financial Aid

- Reduced/waived fees for orientation
- Financial aid advisors
- Financial literacy resources for students and parents
- Internal scholarships for low-income and minority students
- Federal aid and tuition assistance for low-income and minority students
- Residency scholarships and/or neighborhood partnerships to help find affordable housing
- Scholarships/stipends for participation in study abroad, undergraduate research, or other programs



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Academic Inclusion and Equitable Success

In higher education, inclusivity must come from all angles to help underserved students succeed while also teaching the entire student body about the perspectives and value of different identities. Cultural competence is a necessity for the global workforce, and it is important that a school incorporate issues of diversity and equity in the curriculum. It is also a school's responsibility to help its own students navigate an often biased professional world.

Diversity in Education



- Diversity is included/addressed in the core curriculum
- Issues related to equity are addressed in the first-year experience
- Courses related to diversity and multiculturalism
- Campus-wide multicultural events
- Academic majors/minors related to area, ethnic, cultural, gender, and/or sexuality studies

Ongoing Academic Support



- Free tutoring support
- Peer mentors
- Mandatory academic advising
- Multilingual/culturally trained advising staff

Equitable Career Services



- Alumni mentoring or events for underrepresented communities
- Career fairs with employers who are welcoming/looking to hire students from diverse backgrounds
- Career Closet with professional attire rentals for job interviews
- Academic/professional student clubs for minority students (Black Business Student Association, Women in STEM, Minority Association for Pre-health Students, etc.)



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