

Diversity

Diversity is an area of interest within higher education as it reflects an individual's understanding and appreciation of "differences." Those differences include such things as the recognition of values held by different people, cultures, ethnicity, politics, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and a host of others. The understanding and appreciation of difference is necessary to establish and maintain pluralism in a way that will be complimentary to such things as social responsibility, cohesion and advancement of social structures, the bolstering of individual and group identity, equality and respect.

But diversity goes beyond mere acceptance of difference, which in many cases may be mere tolerance. Indeed, moving beyond simple tolerance allows individual members of a social group the capacity to appreciate the positive contribution different people can make to the collective good of that social group, whether limited to small groups of individuals or on a global scale.