## THE PROPOSITION

The changing demographics of higher education mean that students come to you with a wide variety of experiences, cultures, abilities, skills, and personalities. You have the opportunity to take that mix and produce a diverse set of thinkers and problem-solvers (Sathy & Hogan, 2019)

In the article, *Fighting the Shadow Pandemic,* Mani (2020) stresses the role the worldwide spread of COVID-19 has played in exacerbating mass xenophobia, racial and social unrest, and class-based distress that is experienced by many college students. Current conditions highlight the urgency of practicing inclusive and equity-minded teaching. Mani (2020) shares, "Inclusive teaching requires being aware of the demographics of the students you teach in tandem with the course material and using that awareness to underline *equity and diversity* as beneficial to everyone, not just our minoritized students. Inclusive teaching requires a constant unlearning of your own privileges as a professor in order to accommodate understanding of and compassion for students who might be less privileged, no matter what their visible differences might tell us."
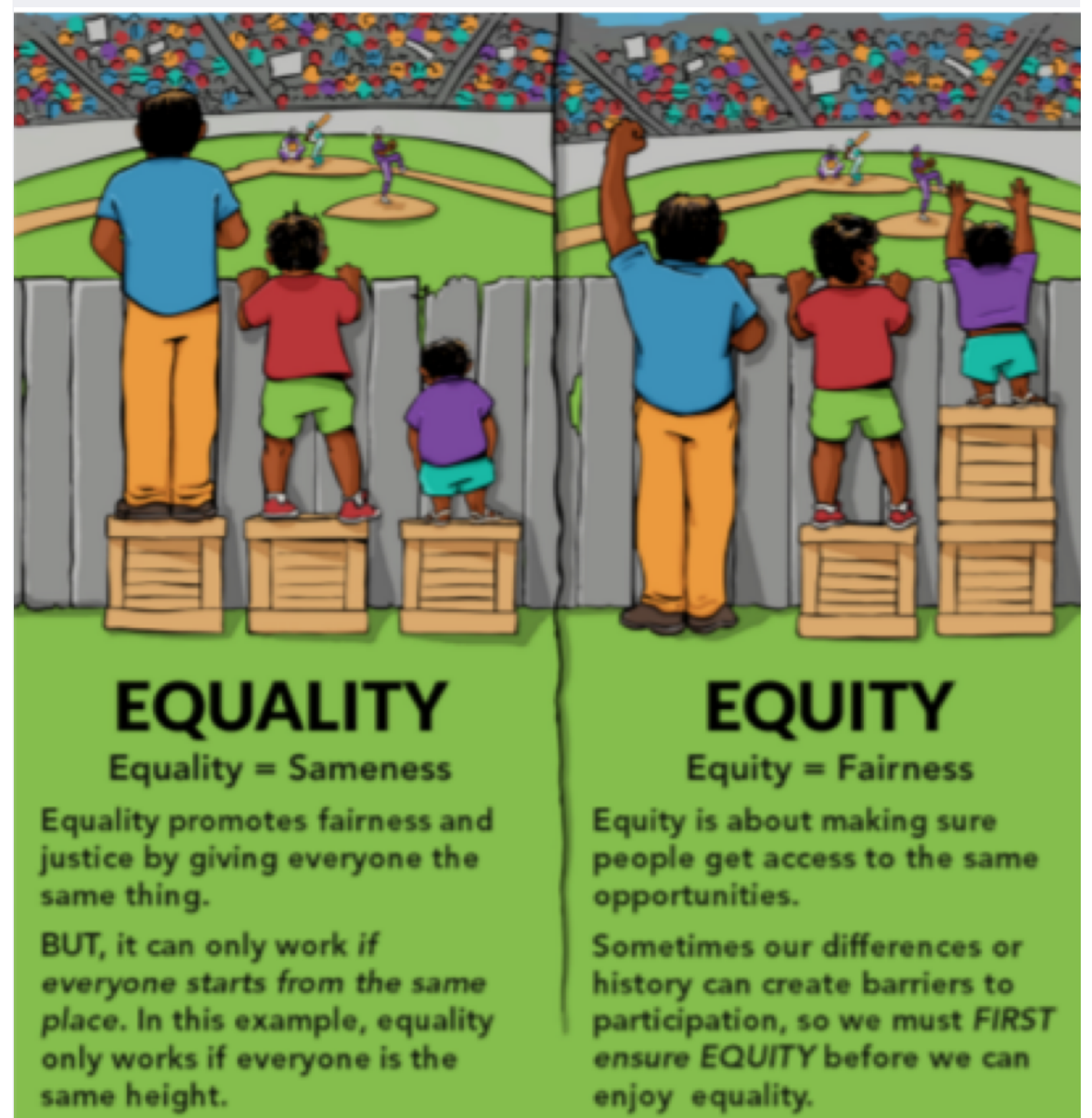
Student Populations to Consider:
- Students of Color
- Former Foster Youth
- Students from Lower SES
- Students with Disabilities
- First GEN Students

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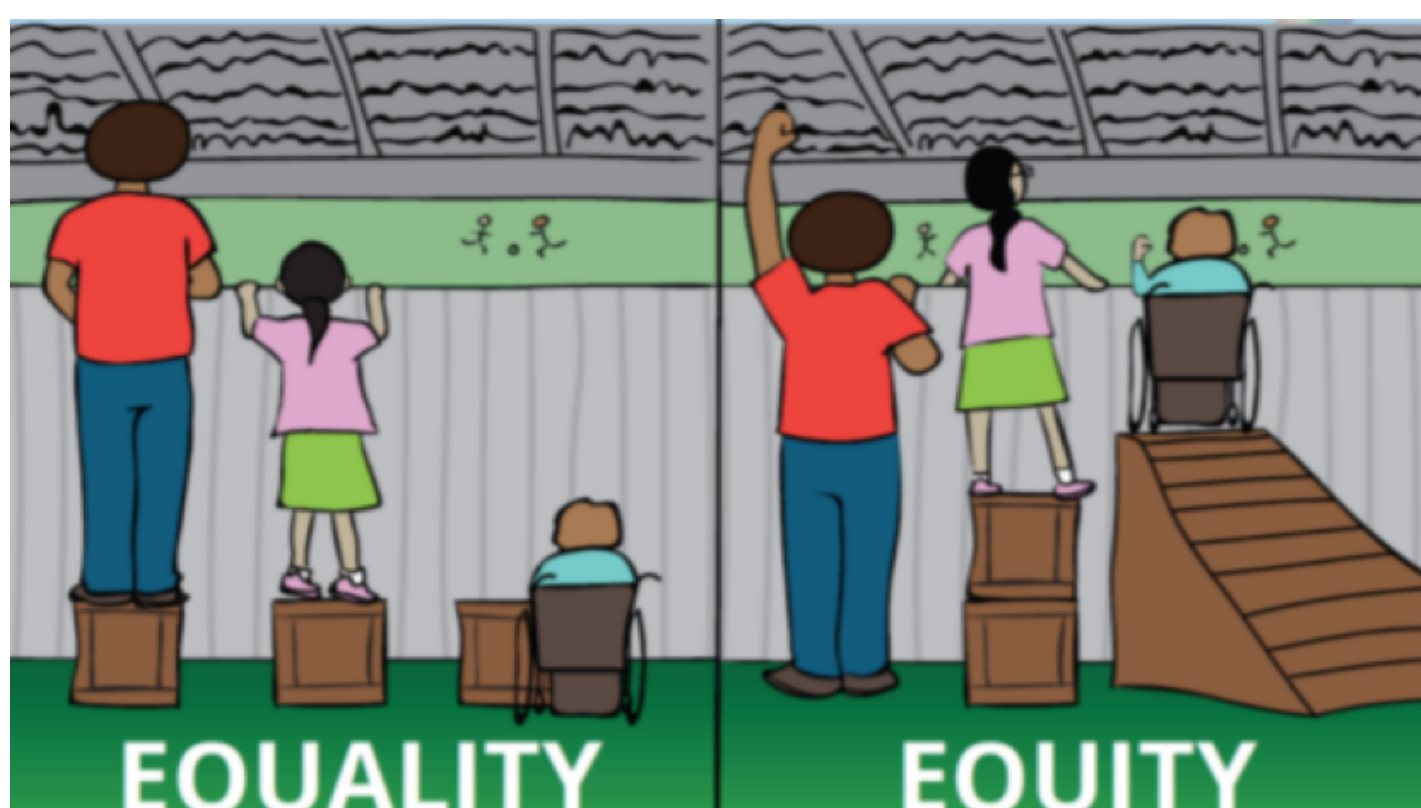
UNDERSTANDING EQUITY-MINDEDNESS

According to Bensiman (2007), equity-mindedness involves:

- acknowledging the ways in which systemic inequities disadvantage minoritized people in a range of social institutions or contexts

- framing outcome disparities as an indication of institutional underperformance rather than students' underperformance

- not attributing outcome disparities exclusively to students or perceived deficits in students' identities, life circumstances, or capabilities

- critically reflecting on one's role and responsibility to integrate an equity-minded paradigm within one's sphere of influence to bolster engagement and learning

EQUALITY
Equality = Sameness

Equality promotes fairness and justice by giving everyone the same thing.
BUT, it can only work *if everyone starts from the same place.* In this example, equality only works if everyone is the same height.

EQUITY
Equity = Fairness

Equity is about making sure people get access to the same opportunities.
Sometimes our differences or history can create barriers to participation, so we must *FIRST ensure EQUITY* before we can enjoy equality.

EQUALITY   **EQUITY**

EQUITY-MINDEDNESS IN THE CLASSROOM

1. Be Proactive & Intrusive
"Do you see me?"
- Administer informal assessments to understand students' experience with remote learning
  - Is this your first time learning remotely?
  - Do you have concerns?
  - How are you accessing Canvas?
  - Are there foreseeable barriers that prevent you from engaging well?
- Consult student responses as they provide good data to inform applicable resources for the class
- Give students a sense of what it will take to be successful in the course especially within a remote context
  - User activity expectations in the LMS
  - Dedicated time for course reading, etc.
- Facilitate Synchronous Sessions
  - Consider asynchronous alternatives--record class sessions (if possible and applicable)
- Access and evaluate assignments with a developmental paradigm
  - Create smaller assignments with lower point totals rather than larger assignments with big point totals; menu of assignments
  - Consider non-text based assignments and learning activities such as recorded speeches, multimedia presentations, etc. (Davidson, 2015)
  - Offer personalized, specific feedback; be conscious of timing and tone
- Intervene quickly and efficiently
  - Conduct performance monitor
  - Normalize help-seeking behavior
  - Refer students to needed resources

2. Be Authentic & Relational
"Do you care about me?"
- Learn at least 1-3 things about your students - name, birthplace, hobbies, interests, talent, or favorite activities, artists, music
- Humanize yourself; share relevant stories and/or testimonials that allow for rapport building
- Perceive all Students as capable; acknowledge student agency and ability to adapt
- Apply strengths-based approaches vs. deficit-based perspectives
- Challenge students to embrace a growth mindset (Dweck, 2017)
- Hold all students to high expectations; provide feedback that enables students to grow/develop
- Relay sincere unconditional positive regard and positive messaging

3. Be Diversity-Focused and Culturally Relevant
"Do I see myself in this course?
- Emphasize the benefits and manage the realities of having a diverse class
- Establish and consistently lean into classroom norms to guide and remind students of sensitive and respectful dialogue
- Intentionally develop cultural fluency and create opportunities to effectively engage diverse students
- Embed mirror artifacts, which are racially salient images that highlight contributions to society, to counter stereotype threat and anxiety and elevates self-efficacy and engagement (Bracken & Wood, 2019)
- Intentionally reference and integrate literature, scholarship, and other reading material that connects to the cultural and lived experiences of students; student-centric
- Strategically design inclusive PowerPoint or other visual slides

4. Build Collaborative Connections and Community (Adapted McMillian & Chavis, 1986)
"Do I belong in this class?"
- Membership: What are the curricular evidences that communicate belonging for all students?
- Relationship: Are students able to realistically relate to others in the class? Are there opportunities for students to relationally and/or emotionally connect with the instructor and peers?
- Ownership: Are there opportunities for all students to contribute and employ their strengths, perspective, and voice orally or via threaded discussions? Are students given adequate prep time, guidance, and resourcing to participate and not just attend?
- Partnership: Are there opportunities for students to partner and co-construct assignments, research, and/or meaning with peers and/or faculty?