

Julian Weissglass, Professor Emeritus and Founder of the National Coalition for Equity in Education at UC Santa Barbara, has articulated five additional views on equity, which follow (Weissglass 2004):

1. **Equity means equality.** Proponents of this viewpoint claim that treating everyone the same is sufficient. This idea is appealing, but elusive in practice. What does it mean to treat everyone equally when there are wide disparities in the allocation of resources and classes with two (or twelve) different native languages or cultures? Is it possible, given the complexity and subtlety of human interaction, to treat everyone the same – to “not see color,” for example, as some educators claim? The research shows that even those of us who think we treat students equally may not do so in practice.
2. **Equity means access.** Most everyone would agree that all children should have access to a good education. In practice, people’s positions range from “if you are good in a subject you are allowed access to advanced courses” to “everyone should be required to take a college preparatory curriculum” to “schools must provide an innovative curriculum and social environment that enable all students to learn.” Without considerable elaboration, equity as access is too simplistic a concept to be useful.
3. **Equity means proportional outcomes.** The differential attrition rate is central to this viewpoint. Educators who focus on outcomes may or may not be aware of the complex social and psychological forces involved in teaching and learning and of the challenges in bringing about change. Although outcomes are the ultimate measure of the effectiveness of our efforts, progress on equity requires more than focusing on numbers.
4. **Equity means political change.** Some argue that schools participate in creating social and economic inequality, or that our economic system requires low achievement, so that there are enough workers to take low-paying jobs. Advocates of this view claim that equity in education requires political action to reform the political/economic system.
5. **Equity means social, psychological and institutional change.** Equity means social, psychological, and institutional change. From this point of view, peoples’ beliefs, prejudices, values, and biases must be meaningfully addressed in order to eliminate individual and institutional practices and policies that hinder students’ ability to learn.

Which of these views squares with your current belief system? Which provoke you to think differently? Just as there are no silver bullets to dismantle inequity, there is no simple definition of equity.