

WEAVINGS OF INCLUSION POLICIES AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF MATO  
GROSSO DO SUL

*TESSITURAS DAS POLÍTICAS DE INCLUSÃO NA UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DE  
MATO GROSSO DO SUL*

*TESITURAS DE LAS POLÍTICAS DE INCLUSIÓN EN LA UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL  
DE MATO GROSSO DO SUL*



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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this text is to present the actions of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) concerning the inclusion of Black, Indigenous, and disabled individuals with global developmental disorders and high abilities or giftedness, as well as management policies, especially those related to teaching and post-graduate programs, implemented in recent years. For this, documentary research was used to record the collected data. It is concluded that there have been advances in access and retention policies. However, more extraordinary dedication is needed in teaching, research, and extension and in addressing architectural, curricular, and attitudinal barriers to strengthen inclusive practices.

**KEYWORDS:** Inclusion. Higher Education. Educational policies.

**RESUMO:** O objetivo deste texto é apresentar as ações da Universidade Estadual de Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) referentes à inclusão de pessoas negras, indígenas, com deficiência, transtornos globais do desenvolvimento e altas habilidades ou superdotação, bem como as políticas de gestão, especialmente as relacionadas ao ensino e à pós-graduação, implantadas nos últimos anos. Para isso, utilizou-se de pesquisa documental para o registro dos dados coletados. Conclui-se que houve avanços nas políticas de acesso e permanência. Entretanto, é necessária uma maior dedicação no âmbito do ensino, pesquisa e extensão, bem como no enfrentamento de barreiras arquitetônicas, curriculares e atitudinais, para fortalecer práticas inclusivas.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Inclusão. Educação Superior. Políticas educacionais.

**RESUMEN:** El objetivo de este texto es presentar las acciones de la Universidad Estatal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) en relación a la inclusión de negros, indígenas, personas con discapacidad, trastornos del desarrollo global y altas capacidades y/o superdotación, así como políticas de gestión, especialmente, de docencia y posgrados, implementadas en los últimos años. Para ello, se utilizó la investigación documental para registrar los datos recopilados. Se concluye que ha habido avances en las políticas de acceso y permanencia. Sin embargo, existe la necesidad de una mayor inversión en el ámbito de la docencia, la investigación y la extensión y en el enfrentamiento de las barreras arquitectónicas, curriculares y actitudinales para que se fortalezcan las prácticas inclusivas.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Inclusión. Educación Universitaria. Políticas educativas.

## Introduction

The proposal of "Education for All," present at various historical moments, triggered by different movements, including the Protestant Reformation of 1517 and the French Revolution of 1789, resurged strongly in the second half of the 20th century. Notably, the emphasis is on the conferences held by the United Nations, notably the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990 and the Conference on Special Needs: Access and Quality in Salamanca in 1994.

The last fifty years in Brazil have been fertile ground for developing policies and norms advocating these rights. Among them, the 1988 Federal Constitution and the 1996 Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education stand out, as they brought principles of equality and respect for human diversity.

It is essential to highlight that, in the field of diversity, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2002) has recognized cultural diversity in its official documents since the 1990s, but only in 2002 was diversity affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity. Significant events, documents, and policies have been formulated in the last five decades. Some notable ones are:

### International:

- The Third World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance was promoted by the UN in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, and the UNESCO report titled "Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue" (2009).

### National:

- Law 7.716 of January 5, 1989, known as the "Caó Law," named after its author, Deputy Carlos Alberto de Oliveira. This law defines crimes resulting from racial prejudice;
- Law 10.639/03 - amends Law 9394/96 (Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education) and makes teaching Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture mandatory in elementary and high schools. It was later amended by Law 11.645/2008 to include "indigenous" culture;
- National Conferences on the Promotion of Racial Equality (CONAPIR) starting from 2005;
- Law 12.288/2010 - Statute of Racial Equality.

Thus,

When tracing the history of public policies focused on diversity from the 1980s in Brazil, we have, as presuppositions, on the international level, the guidance provided by international organizations, especially UNESCO. On the national level, there is a political landscape that is more attentive and receptive to the demands of minorities, along with the protagonism of social movements in their capacity for organization, advocacy, and success in the total or partial incorporation of their agendas into public policies (CORDEIRO; DIALLO, 2021, p. 2, our translation).

Regarding higher education, the first inclusion policies for people with disabilities only gained momentum in the 1990s, particularly with the issuance of the MEC 1793/1994 Ordinance. This directive recommended the inclusion of a specific particular education discipline in Pedagogy, Psychology, and all Teaching degrees, as well as the inclusion of related content in other courses. Additionally, Circular Notice n. 277/1996 from the Ministry of Education, directed to the leaders of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), urged them to provide conditions for the access and permanence of people with disabilities in their institutions. The notice also attached the document "Suggestions and Strategies," which guided disabilities, the main problems faced in accessing and remaining in higher education, and proposed solutions to overcome these challenges (CESCO, 2001).

Upon analyzing the field of Brazilian special education, it is evident that the investment in inclusion policies in primary education, created in the 2000s, has increased enrollments of children and adolescents in elementary and high school. Consequently, this has affected the percentage of students with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness entering higher education. This situation necessitates universities to adopt strategies to ensure access, retention, and progress in studies.

Studies conducted by Wellichan and Souza (2017), Maciel (2020), Costa *et al.* (2020) and others show the challenges and structural and attitudinal barriers present in the process of including people with disabilities in higher education, emphasizing the need to implement effective policies and actions in this area.

Regarding inclusion policies for Black and Indigenous students, state universities' first initiatives were born through the ambition of state legislators or higher councils of institutions. The pioneers in such affirmative actions through quota systems were the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) in 2000, the State University of Bahia (UNEB) in 2000, and the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) in 2002 (CORDEIRO, 2008). UEMS remains the



only university with its law establishing a 10% quota for Indigenous students in all undergraduate courses.

In postgraduate programs, UEMS published the **DELIBERAÇÃO CPPG/CEPE-UEMS N° 231** on August 28, 2018, which regulates quotas for Black and Indigenous students, individuals with disabilities, and also reserves slots for Quilombolas and transgender individuals, including granting scholarships to quota beneficiaries.

In this context, the purpose of this text is to present the actions of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) regarding the inclusion of Black, Indigenous, disabled, individuals with global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness individuals, as well as the management policies, especially those related to undergraduate and postgraduate education, implemented in recent years. The approach utilizes documentary research for data collection.

### **Inclusion Policies in Undergraduate and Postgraduate Education at UEMS: Quotas and Other Forms of Inclusion**

Within the perspective of access, admission, retention, and completion, UEMS, in its 30 years of existence, has promoted and continues to encourage the interiorization of quality higher education in the 15 municipalities where it has university units, including its headquarters in Dourados-MS, located 230 km from the capital, Campo Grande.

Due to this commitment, UEMS has already stood out on various fronts in this short trajectory, thanks to its pioneering spirit, audacity, capacity for innovation, and implementation of affirmative policies in multiple areas and social spaces. Among these, we highlight some actions related to affirmative activities for Black and Indigenous students, individuals with disabilities, students from public schools, and other segments, which UEMS was among the first to offer:

- The use of the National High School Exam (ENEM) score in the university entrance exam in 2002;
- The Superior Normal Course for public school teachers in 2000;
- Specific higher education courses for indigenous populations: Superior Normal Course for the Terena people in 2001 and the Guarani and Kaiowa people in 2003;
- In 2003, a preparatory course for indigenous high school students aiming to access UEMS courses;

- In 2002, with PRONERA<sup>1</sup>, funding, a project for the training of middle-level Agribusiness technicians with an emphasis on agroecology, specifically for settlers or their children, conducted in three centers within settlements using the Pedagogy of Alternation methodology;
- Specific extension actions for the indigenous population and support for their retention through the Rede de Saberes Program, funded by the Ford Foundation since 2005. Also, the management of the Indigenous University Vale Program (PVUI) by the Government of the State of Mato Grosso do Sul, which provides scholarships for all indigenous quota beneficiaries;
- 50 (fifty) scholarships from the AFROATITUDE<sup>2</sup>, Program each year, in 2004 and 2005, for Black quota beneficiaries, a program in which UEMS participated in the elaboration.
- 15 (fifteen) scholarships from the PIBIC/AF<sup>3</sup> Program of CNPq, specifically for Black and Indigenous quota beneficiaries since the program's creation in 2010;
- Extension and research actions since 2001 focused on continuing education for Guarani and Kaiowa indigenous teachers;
- Project for continuing education in ethnic-racial studies: education, history, and language for public school teachers, with resources from the UNIAFRO<sup>4</sup> Program;
- Racial quotas for Black and Indigenous students in undergraduate programs and currently in university public tenders, as determined by State Law No. 3.594, of December 10, 2008;
- A 10% quota in all undergraduate courses for Mato Grosso do Sul residents, according to State Law No. 5.541 of July 15, 2020.
- Use of social names in enrollment and class records, according to decree No. 13.684/2013.
- Creation in 2021 of a 5% quota in all undergraduate courses for People with Disabilities (PCD), according to DELIBERAÇÃO CE/CEPE-UEMS No. 337, of July 12, 2022;
- In 2023, offering the Intercultural Pedagogy course specifically for Guaranis and Kaiowas indigenous people, non-graduates, who work as teachers in early childhood education

<sup>1</sup> - PRONERA – National Program for Education in Agrarian Reform.

<sup>2</sup> - AFROATITUDE – Integrated Program of Affirmative Actions for Black University Students / Ministry of Education (MEC), Ministry of Health (MS), and Secretariat for Human Rights (SEDH).

<sup>3</sup> - PIBIC/AF – Institutional Program for Scientific Initiation / Affirmative Actions.

<sup>4</sup> - UNIAFRO – Program of Affirmative Actions for the Black Population / Ministry of Education (MEC).

and early years in public education networks of the municipalities of Amambai and Caarapó, using the alternation methodology – university and community time.

- Creation of a rule for certifying people with disabilities who cannot complete their undergraduate studies. Among all these actions, we will briefly highlight the quota systems and, more specifically, the quota for PCD and the standardization of the certification process, unprecedented in Brazilian Higher Education.

Implementing inclusion through affirmative actions/quotas in higher education in state and federal public institutions represents an essential advancement for Brazil towards overcoming mere formal equality present in the legislation since the Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988 to achieve absolute equality. This measure aims to overcome centuries of neglect and disregard for the Black, Indigenous, and disabled populations, who have been relegated to inferiority, marginalization, and exclusion in all forms.

### **Quotas for Black and Indigenous Students**

UEMS, which offers a quota system with a reservation of 10% of its slots for Indigenous students (Law No. 2.589, of 26/12/2002) and 20% for Black students (Law No. 2.605, of 06/01/2003), held its first entrance exam with quotas in December 2003 for admission in 2004. In the regulation by the UEMS Superior Councils (the laws brought this requirement), phenotypic verification for Black students and the origin from public schools for Black and Indigenous students were established as criteria.

Phenotypic verification until 2013 was done by analyzing a 5x7 colored photograph by a commission composed of scholars and members of Black social movements. From 2013 onwards, in-person boards were conducted, a model that continues until the present, both in person and virtually. This verification follows the standardization established by RESOLUÇÃO CEPE-UEMS N. 2.214 of December 4, 2021.

Regarding Indigenous students, the criteria required for admission as quota beneficiaries follow the provisions of RESOLUÇÃO CEPE-UEMS N. 2.215 of December 4, 2021. Candidates who apply for the quota slots for Indigenous students in UEMS undergraduate courses to enroll, in addition to the documents required for other candidates, must present: I - photocopy of high school transcript or proof of completion issued by a federal, state, or municipal public school; II - for ethnic identification, present only one of the following documents: a) Administrative Record of Indigenous Birth (RANI); or b) Administrative Record

of Indigenous Marriage (RACI); or c) Civil Registry Birth Certificate with ethnic identification; or d) Identity Card (RG) with ethnic identification; or e) Self-declaration, according to the UEMS model (Annex VI).

To understand the impact of quotas for black and indigenous people at UEMS, we present data<sup>5</sup> covering 2004 to 2022. During this time, 4,591 black individuals and 1,595 indigenous individuals gained admission through the quota system. From 2007 to 2022, 1,701 black students and 331 indigenous students graduated.

### **Quotas for Residents of Mato Grosso do Sul**

This system was established through State Law No. 5.541 on July 15, 2020, as an initiative of a deputy. It is essential to emphasize that this provision was implemented without proper consultation or engagement with social movements, which typically advocate for vulnerable groups involved in social, political, educational, and other struggles.

The Law above reserves 10% of all undergraduate course vacancies at UEMS since the 2021 selection process. The verification process follows the guidelines outlined in the Law and the selection process notices. Applicants are required to provide any of the listed documents as alternative proofs for each year of residency in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, with their authenticity verified by UEMS: I - Elementary and/or High School academic transcripts; II - utility bills (water, electricity, telephone - mobile or landline); III - notarized rental agreement; IV - Income Tax Statement; V - payslip from a public agency; VI - documents from the National Social Security Institute or Federal Revenue Service; VII - termination of employment contract; VIII - invoices for health insurance, condominium, housing financing, or school fees; IX - credit card statement; X - statement from the Federal Savings Bank regarding the Severance Pay Fund; XI - Property Tax or Vehicle Property Tax payment slip; XII - vehicle licensing certificate; XIII - traffic ticket; XIV - property appraisal report issued by the Federal Savings Bank; XV - property deed; XVI - information from the Regional Electoral Court regarding the electoral domicile. The documents eligible for the verification above must be in the candidate's, parents', or guardians' names. In the two years of implementing this quota, 963 quota students were admitted.

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<sup>5</sup> All the data concerning admission and graduation under all quota systems at UEMS presented here were obtained from the Academic System of UEMS - SAL, with authorization from the Pro-Rectorate for Teaching.



## Quotas for People with Disabilities (PDC) and Certification of Skills and Abilities

Starting with the publication of the MEC Ordinance 1793/1994 and Circular Notice No. 277/1996 from the Ministry of Education, as well as the document "Suggestions and Strategies," which provided guidance on disabilities and the main issues related to access and retention in higher education, other relevant aspects were considered. Among them, the offering of specific conditions for students with disabilities during exams was highlighted (Decree 3.298/1999); accessibility requirements for the authorization, recognition of courses, and accreditation of institutions (MEC Ordinances 1679/1999 and 3284/2003); architectural, communication, and information accessibility (Law 10.098/2000); as well as the adoption of these criteria in the assessment instruments used by the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP). Starting in 2010, Accessibility-related items were relocated from the Infrastructure Dimension to Legal Requirements in assessment instruments, becoming mandatory compliance. This change occurred along with the requirement to offer Libras (Brazilian Sign Language) as a compulsory discipline in the curriculum for teaching and Speech Therapy courses and optional for bachelor's degree courses, as per Decree No. 5626/2005.

It is also worth noting that in 2008, the National Policy on Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education, issued by the MEC, emphasized the need for actions in higher education to ensure access, retention, and participation of students with special educational needs, covering the selection process as well as teaching, research, and extension activities. In the same year, Decree 6571/2008 included technical and financial support from MEC to establish accessibility centers in federal higher education institutions. While this measure is limited to national institutions, it creates a critical guideline to be adopted by Higher Education Institutions in general. Additionally, the Brazilian Inclusion Law (2015) defines, in Chapter IV, the rights to education, access, and retention at all levels of education, including higher and professional education.

The provision of pedagogical support for students with disabilities at UEMS was initially coordinated by the Advisory Support for People with Special Educational Needs (ANEE), established in 2006, and later by the Division of Inclusion and Diversity (DID), implemented in 2008 within the Pro-Rectorate for Extension, Culture, and Community Affairs, as part of an administrative restructuring outlined in Resolution COUNI/CEPE No. 332 of 2008, which specifies its competencies and responsibilities. More effective measures on this subject were adopted through Resolution CEPE-UEMS No. 977, dated April 14, 2010, which

establishes guidelines for developing pedagogical projects for undergraduate courses. This resolution guides that teaching courses must include in their curricula content and topics related to Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), Special and Inclusive Education.

Cesco *et al.* (2015) The provision of pedagogical support for students with disabilities at UEMS was initially coordinated by the Advisory Support for People with Special Educational Needs (ANEE), established in 2006, and later by the Division of Inclusion and Diversity (DID), implemented in 2008 within the Pro-Rectorate for Extension, Culture, and Community Affairs, as part of an administrative restructuring outlined in Resolution COUNI/CEPE No. 332 of 2008, which specifies its competencies and responsibilities. More effective measures on this subject were adopted through Resolution CEPE-UEMS No. 977, dated April 14, 2010, which establishes guidelines for developing pedagogical projects for undergraduate courses. This resolution guides that teaching courses must include in their curricula content and topics related to Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), Special and Inclusive Education.

Regarding norms, the DID supported the elaboration of the DELIBERATION CE/CEPE-UEMS No. 312, dated April 30, 2020, which "Provides for the education of people with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness regularly enrolled at the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul," aiming to regulate services and actions for the care of people with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness regularly enrolled at UEMS.

DELIBERATION CE/CEPE-UEMS No. 312 defines the target audience and the concept of special education, positioning it as a cross-cutting modality in teaching, research, and extension policies. This norm guides the processes of identifying special educational needs, Specialized Educational Support (AEE), and the admission and permanence of the public with special education in the university. Additionally, DELIBERATION CE/CEPE-UEMS No. 312 offers didactic-pedagogical guidelines to be adopted by the university to ensure inclusion and adequate access to higher education for this public.

These guidelines are based on DELIBERATION CEE/MS No. 11.883, dated December 5, 2019, which "Provides for the school education of people with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness in the State Education System of Mato Grosso do Sul," and guides the education system for school education for people with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness. Chapter IV of the

document presents definitions for regulating education for students with special education needs within higher education (MATO GROSSO DO SUL, 2019).

Another necessary action was creating the technical position of Libras interpreter, defined in the Institutional Development Plan (PDI 2021-2025), with a course held in 2022 to make official communication within the university accessible.

For undergraduate courses, the DELIBERATION CE/CEPE-UEMS No. 337 was published on July 12, 2022, which "Provides for the quota for people with disabilities and global developmental disorders in undergraduate courses at the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS)." The document establishes a quota of 5% (five percent) of the vacancies in undergraduate courses for access by people with disabilities and global developmental disorders (MATO GROSSO DO SUL, 2022).

Between 2014, when the identification of students with disabilities in undergraduate courses began, and in 2022, we observed an enrollment rate of 30 (in 2020) and 42 (in 2017) students with disabilities annually enrolled at UEMS.

### **Regarding Specific Terminality for People with Disabilities**

Recently, UEMS also published Deliberation No. 389, from the Teaching Chamber of the Council for Teaching, Research, and Extension on November 29, 2022, which "Provides for the procedures regarding early completion and specific terminality<sup>6</sup> for students with special education needs regularly enrolled in undergraduate courses at the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul" (MATO GROSSO DO SUL, 2022) and carried out the first certification of studies completion through Specific Terminality, a unique case in the country. Silva and Pavão (2019) found in their research that Specific Terminality is a little-known subject in the academic community and needs to be studied to ensure actions for retention, learning, and completion in higher education.

It is important to emphasize that despite the advancements in actions for the access and retention of people with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness in the university, there are still urgent needs to be addressed. Among these issues, the proper training of teachers and professionals involved, implementing curricular

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<sup>6</sup>Specific Termination - "certification of completion of schooling based on pedagogical evaluation - with a school record that presents, in a descriptive manner, the skills and competencies achieved by students with severe intellectual or multiple disabilities" (BRAZIL, 2001, p. 59, our translation).

adjustments, and tackling attitudinal and pedagogical barriers are crucial. Only through these measures will it be possible to implement inclusive policies in higher education fully.

### **Quotas and Overbooking in Post-Graduation**

In the context of post-graduation, the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) adopted, starting in 2018, quota policies to promote the inclusion of different groups. These quotas are intended for people with disabilities and global developmental disorders, indigenous people, black individuals, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. The quotas are distributed as follows: 20% of the vacancies for black candidates, 10% for indigenous candidates, 5% for candidates with disabilities, 5% of overbooking for quilombola candidates, and 5% for overbooking for transgender and cross-dresser candidates (MATO GROSSO DO SUL, 2018).

### **Final considerations**

As the University is a place of knowledge construction, it is expected to promote desired attitude changes in society as a whole. In this context, to construct an inclusive community, higher education institutions need to work on implementing and developing teaching, research, and extension actions that support inclusive practices and break with the current model of society, deconstructing segregating conventions. A path to achieve this change is through ongoing research, emphasizing the significant political role of researchers, which leads to reflection on existing practices.

Therefore, regardless of the enrollment, dropout, and course completion rates of black and indigenous quota students, after a trajectory marked by challenges of retention involving financial and social vulnerabilities, as well as difficulties and discriminations faced in the academic environment, especially in the classroom and in the relationships involving the teaching and learning process, the results achieved at UEMS until 2022 can be considered positive.

There is still much to be done at the institution by all its segments to promote the retention of quota students who face similar conditions to non-quota students in vulnerable situations but with severe attitudinal aggravations and barriers involving prejudice, discrimination, and, ultimately, exclusion from the academic space.

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