

## Gender Inclusivity in the Classroom

Under Title IX and Executive Orders 1096/1097, Gender and Sex are considered protected statuses. Therefore, regardless of their gender identity, gender expression students have the right to learn in a healthy and safe classroom environment. This means using the chosen name and pronouns provided by the student, even if they differ than what is on your class roster or listed in Canvas.

Within this guide, you will find definitions for words related to this topic and suggestions on how to best support all of your students within your learning environment.

For the EOs in full, [click here](#).

### EO 1096/1097 Definitions

#### Adverse Action:

- An action that has a substantial and material adverse effect on the Complainant's ability to participate in a University program or activity free from Discrimination, Harassment or Retaliation. Minor or trivial actions or conduct not reasonably likely to do more than anger or upset a Complainant does not constitute an Adverse Action

#### Discrimination:

- Adverse Action taken against an Employee or Third Party by the CSU, a CSU employee or a Student, because of a Protected Status

#### Gender:

- Includes Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Transgender, Sex and Sex Stereotyping
- Sex includes, but is not limited to, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or any related medical condition(s)
- Gender Identity means a person's identification as male, female, a gender different from the person's sex at birth, or transgender.
- Gender Expression means a person's gender-related appearance or behavior whether or not stereotypically associated with the person's assigned sex at birth
- Sex stereotype means an assumption about a person's appearance or behavior or about an individual's ability or inability to perform certain kinds of work based on a myth, social expectation, or generalization about the individual's sex
- Transgender is a general term that refers to a person whose gender identity differs from the person's sex at birth. A transgender person may or may not have a gender expression that is different from the social expectations of the sex assigned at birth. A transgender person may or may not identify as transsexual.

#### Harassment:

- Unwelcome conduct engaged in because of a Complainant's Protected Status and:
  - Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is made a term or condition of the Complainant's employment; or
  - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by the Complainant is used as the basis or threatened to be used as the basis for employment actions or decision affecting the Complainant; or

- The conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive that its effect, whether or not intended, could be considered by a reasonable person in the shoes of the Complainant, and is in fact considered by the Complainant, as intimidating, hostile or offensive.
- Harassment includes, but is not limited to, verbal harassment (e.g., epithets, derogatory comments, or slurs), physical harassment (e.g., assault, impeding or blocking movement, or any physical interference with normal work or movement), and visual forms of harassment (e.g., derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings, symbols, or gestures.)

## Recommendations

### Classroom Guidelines and Standards

Set the tone of the classroom beginning with respect and inquiry. Establish guidelines that the classroom will be set in a respectful environment where everyone can participate without fear or hesitation. Everyone should be referred to by their chosen name and chosen pronoun. A chosen name is given by the student.

### Roll Call

On the 1st day of class have students introduce themselves instead of calling roll, some students feel they shouldn't disclose their trans identity in the class room, or even avoid telling professors their chosen name all together. Often when the roster is read aloud for attendance, transgender students don't feel comfortable disclosing their chosen name in front of the entire class if a previous name was used.

If you require attendance for your classroom, please pass along the attendance sheet. Avoid making assumptions that the name they prefer is on the roll sheet already. They may not have realized how to change their name or list pronouns in myHumboldt, or there may have been an error.

### Pronouns

During class introductions have students share pronouns. Allow students to disclose pronouns to use inside the classroom. Please use the student's preferred name and pronoun the student gives you.

If you aren't sure of a person's pronoun ask, or refer to them by their name only. Assuming someone's pronoun can lead to possibly misgendering further ostracizing students. One way to ask is: "I use he/him/his pronouns, how do you like to be addressed?" This often may be very difficult at first, but it is important to respect anyone, regardless of gender identity.

More information on pronouns can be found here:

- <https://www.mypronouns.org/>
- <https://qweerss.humboldt.edu/gender-pronouns>

### Previous Names

If a student has a previous name and/or pronoun that you are aware of because you have had the student before or because the name is different on the roster do not reveal this information to others. It will unnecessarily draw attention to the student and may cause discomfort in the classroom. For example, if you knew a student last semester with a different name, use the name the student gives you for new semester.

## **Identification Cards**

If you must require identification after an exam, please be aware not all students' identification matches their preferred name on the class roster. Please be respectful of this matter and talk to the student privately if you have questions or concerns. This can be very stressful for students to go through. Please be aware and cautious when asking for identification.

## **Address Mistakes**

If you make a mistake about someone's pronoun, correct yourself, apologize and carry on the conversation. Please do not focus on the issue entirely, it may cause problems or make the situation worse. This also saves the student from correcting an incorrect pronoun in front of the classroom.

## **Correcting Others**

Whether it be in office hours, speaking with other students, professionals, or staff, when someone makes a pronoun mistake, correct them. It is important and polite to provide the correct information whether the student is present or not. Allowing the mistake going untreated can cause repeated offenses and uncomfortable interactions.

## **Respect Boundaries**

Avoid asking transgender students about personal info; such as: medical care, their birth name, status, name/legal marker changes status, sexual orientation, or even other related inquiries. These questions are inappropriate and would not be asked of other students. These questions are irrelevant to your relationship to this student unless they voluntarily share this information to you or the classroom. It is a student's choice whether or not to disclose in class. Please don't rely on the student to educate the class or speak for the transgender community.

## **Inclusive Language**

There are many HSU students who identify outside of the gender binary of woman/man. Students may identify as genderqueer, genderfluid, or a number of gender identities. The reference to only women and men in the classroom can be misleading, unwelcoming, and discouraging to students. Be aware of language, and try to use inclusive language within the classroom:

- Use "individuals of all gender identities" or "students" instead of "men and women" or "ladies and gentlemen."
- Use "partner" or "significant other" instead of "boyfriend"/ "girlfriend" or "husband"/ "wife."
- Avoid titles such as "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Ms.," "Ma'am", and "Sir."

## **Taking it Further**

Include transgender issues on your syllabus and help your students learn to talk about issues of gender respectfully and understand the importance. State on your syllabus that discrimination will not be tolerated within the classroom and everyone's gender identity is valid. Include a [nondiscrimination statement](#) on the syllabus which includes gender identity. Important transgender issues can be found in housing, healthcare, employment, criminal justice, education, public benefits and legal protection.