

NON-BINARY GENDER VALUES STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

“...it is our right to say who we are in relationship to the social and legal scheme of binary sex ...we should take great care to minimize the institutional opportunities for administrative processes and agents to evaluate this aspect of our lives and possibly overrule our sex-identity self-statements.”



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Historically, data collection of gender categories was an effort for universities and colleges to be equitable and inclusive of women. The biological and sociological knowledge surrounding gender, and sexuality, has evolved beyond one, two-option category (GenIUSS Group, 2014). College Board, ACT and others now include non-binary gender values on test score feeds and common/national applications also have non-binary gender values available for selection. To keep pace as a system, the University of Nebraska must look for ways to honor and support the complexities of gender and sexuality for all NU community members - faculty, staff, and students. As we move toward becoming a more inclusive campus, ensuring that we incorporate the fullest spectrum of gender identity becomes increasingly important.



The Non-Binary Gender Values Steering Committee convened to determine how our information systems can be used to properly and respectfully handle gender identities and value options for students, staff and faculty. Supporting policies, best practices, learning and development opportunities, as well as stakeholder impacts were also explored by the steering committee. Steering committee members were recommended by campus Chief Academic Officers and additional members were added by the Assistant VP for Diversity, Access, and Inclusion.

Non-binary | An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do.

Human Rights Commission Glossary of Terms (<https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>)

The document includes recommendations for:

- **Determining gender identity values,**
- **Collecting and sharing the personal identity records,**
- **Communicating outcomes with all impacted parties, and**
- **Supporting learning and development focus areas.**

STEERING COMMITTEE ROSTER



Jean Amoura, UNMC, Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Marco Barker, UNL, Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion
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Gloria Brink, UNCA, NeBIS HR/Payroll Integration Lead
Erin Busch, UNCA, Associate General Counsel/Director of University Records
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Matt Schill, UNMC, UNMC/UNO Registrar
Jen Skidmore, UNL, Director of Student Development
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Commission on the Status of Gender and Sexual Identity
Pat Tetreault, UNL, Director of the LGBTQA+ Resource Center and Women's Center
Heath Tuttle, UNCA, ITS Assistant VP for Information Technology and CIO
Aileen Warren, UNMC, Assistant VC for Human Resources
Kristin Yates, UNCA, Associate VP for IR and Chief Data Officer



Recommendations were developed by four working groups based on best practices and peer institutions' work in the field:

Values and Learning and Development Workgroup

Focus: Identifying user needs and recommending available non-binary gender values, pronouns for students, faculty, and staff. Recommending stakeholder learning and development opportunities and needs, e.g., safe space training.

Policy Development Workgroup

Focus: Drafting policy to accompany recommendations from steering committee and working groups. Including recommendations based on security, compliance and data usage, e.g., determining University personnel with access to gender identity and pronoun values based on set criteria.

IR/Data and Record Keeping Workgroup

Focus: Developing recommendations for functionality, security, data cross referencing, collection of student, faculty, and staff data. Collaborating with values group on field labels, consistent data references and definitions, SIS and data flow.

Stakeholder Communication and Rollout Workgroup

Focus: Developing recommendations for communicating implementation plans, project status, etc.; to key stakeholders, e.g., students, faculty, staff.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS



- Establish a chosen name policy that provides a consistent chosen name experience across the University system.
- Display Chosen Names to the University community where feasible and appropriate and make a good faith effort to update reports, documents and systems that are designated to use Chosen Names.
- Utilize student, staff, or faculty's gender identity in University communications and informational materials except where the use of the legal gender is required by University business or legal need, e.g., financial, medical, law enforcement documents.
- Provide fill-in-the-blank options rather than restricted options for gender identity values to avoid updating values as gender and sexuality categories evolve.
- If a qualitative option is not possible, the following options are recommended:
 - Sex assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate (Check one)
 - Current Gender Identity (Check all that apply)
 - Gender pronouns (Check all that apply)
 - Sexual Orientation (Check all that apply)
 - Preferred Name (Fill in the blank)
 - Honorific (Check all that apply) (All systems, but specifically for Human Resources)
- All system value updates should be part of beta testing by students, faculty, and staff recommended by the workgroup to ensure goals of inclusion and equity are being met.
- Values should be implemented across all systems for students, faculty, and staff.
- Learning and development opportunities should be provided so that all users have knowledge and comfort with updated values.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS



- Admissions applications and HR systems and forms represent a good starting point for expanding value offerings.
- Global communication about updated values, forms and systems should focus on the following areas and vary based on segmented stakeholder groups:
 - Who will be responsible for implementing the changes?
 - What changes can the campus community/stakeholders expect as a result of the change? What are NU’s desired outcomes, e.g., what type of environment do we hope to have as a result of the change; how will it position us as an institution?
 - Where/in what areas, e.g., rosters, surveys, employment forms, etc., can stakeholders expect to see changes as a result of the expanded offerings?
 - When can stakeholders expect to see changes, i.e., implementation phases?
 - How the change connects with NU’s values and how stakeholder groups be impacted?
 - Why is the change critical?
- Communication efforts should run parallel to, and complement learning and development activities.
- Individuals with subject matter expertise should be consulted to review and develop communication pieces.
- University Leadership should set the tone for members of the campus community regarding the shift in offering non-binary gender value options.

RECOMMENDATIONS VALUES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Identified user needs and recommended available non-binary gender values and pronouns for students, faculty, and staff. Recommended stakeholder learning and development opportunities and needs, e.g., safe space training, ally development.

Working Group Members:

Erica Con, Workgroup Convener, she.her

Jessi Hitchins, PhD, she.her

Jay Irwin, PhD, he.him

Devin Koch, he.him

JD McCown, MA, they.them

Ashley Robinson, JD, she.her

Jen Skidmore, MA, she.they

Pat Tetreault, PhD, she.any

Recommended Implementation Leads (Values): Information Technology & CIO, Institutional Research & Chief Data Officer, IT Strategy and Learning Technology, Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics, Identity & Access Management, NeSIS, General Counsel (University Records).

Interdependent Areas (Values): Registrars, Housing, Admissions, Enrollment Management, Student Services.

Supporting Areas and Potential Resources (Learning and Development): LGBT Resource Centers, D&I Offices, Campus and Central Communications Offices, external vendors with subject matter expertise.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- The best values option are fill-in-the blank options rather than restricted options to avoid the need to add new values as gender and sexuality categories evolve.
- If fill-in-the blank options are not possible, the following questions for reporting and inclusion purposes are recommended:
 - Sex assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate (Check one) – 3 Options
 - Current Gender Identity (Check all that apply) – 9 Options
 - Gender Pronouns (Check all that apply) – 7 Options
 - Sexual Orientation (Check all that apply) – 11 Options
 - Preferred Name (Fill in the blank)
 - Honorific (Check all that apply) (All systems, but specifically for Human Resources) – 10 Options
- System value updates should be part of a beta testing for students, faculty, and staff recommended by the working group to ensure goals of inclusion and equity are met.
- Values should be implemented across all systems for students, faculty, and staff.
- Effective learning and development is necessary to provide knowledge and comfort with updated values.
- Educational video(s) for a broad audience with core information for every user.
- Supplemental resources for learning and development: shorter videos, infographics, and/or other guides targeted for different users – students, staff, and faculty.
- The development and/or selection of learning and development initiatives should include students, staff, and faculty to ensure goals of inclusion and equity are met.



NARRATIVE

Based on the literature of best practices, the Values and Learning and Development working group of the Non-binary Gender Values Steering Committee has outlined recommendations for best practice implementation for the University of Nebraska System as well as research that supports the values and commitment for queer and trans (QT) inclusion. The development and/or selection of learning and development initiatives should include students, staff, and faculty to ensure goals of inclusion and equity are met.

RESEARCH

Developing values is complex when the Department of Education reporting system, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), is unable to quantify more than two gender categories: men and women. Similarly, QT demographics questions are not included in the Common Application related to sexual orientation and gender identity (Garvey, 2020). The Common Application, which University of Nebraska-Lincoln is an affiliate member, does not afford more than one million students to “wholly identify their sexuality and gender” (Garvey, 2020, p. 437). These national data systems have dictated how values were collected. Historically, data collection of gender categories was an effort for universities and colleges to be equitable and inclusive of women. The biological and sociological knowledge surrounding gender, and sexuality, has evolved beyond one, two-option category (GenIUSS Group, 2014). Therefore, the University of Nebraska System must solve for how to report to federal funding sources as well as honor and support the complexities of gender and sexuality for all members of institutional communities, which includes faculty, staff, and students.

“Although terms like lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (often denoted in the acronym LGBT) are more widely used in higher-education literature, [Garvey uses] the terms queer and trans (QT) to represent the fluidity and non normativity of people across marginalized sexual and gender identities, respectively.”

Garvey, J. C. (2020). Critical imperatives for studying queer and trans undergraduate student retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, p. 448



VALUES

The working group determined that the best values for the categories below are fill-in-the-blank options rather than restricted options. This way, adding new values as gender and sexuality categories evolve will not be a concern. For example, the [Midlands Sexual Health Research Collaborative](#) which is comprised of five full-time tenured and tenure-track University of Nebraska at Omaha faculty manage several federal and state grants that research sexual and gender wellness. In 2010, this collaborative conducted a holistic inquiry on the lives of transgender peoples in Nebraska. At that time, these gender and sexual health experts asked participants values with drop-down options. In 2019, they pivoted towards only asking fill-in-the-blank options as this is the best practice.

If these qualitative options are not possible, the following quantifiable options developed by the [Williams Institute](#) are recommended:

The following questions are for reporting and inclusion purposes:

- Sex assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate (Check one):
 - Female
 - Intersex
 - Male

- Current Gender Identity (Check all that apply):
 - Agender
 - Cisgender
 - Genderqueer
 - Man
 - Non-binary
 - Transgender
 - Woman
 - Prefer not to answer
 - Not listed (Fill-in the blank)



- Gender Pronouns (Check all that apply):
 - he.him.his
 - she.her.hers
 - they.them.theirs
 - ze.zim.zirs
 - Ask me my pronouns
 - Prefer not to answer
 - Not listed: Fill in the blank

- Sexual Orientation (Check all that apply):
 - Asexual
 - Bisexual
 - Gay
 - Lesbian
 - Not straight
 - Pansexual
 - Queer
 - Questioning
 - Straight
 - Prefer not to answer
 - Not listed (Fill in the blank)

- Preferred Name (Fill in the blank)

- Honorific (Check all that apply) (All systems, but specifically for Human Resources)
 - Dr.
 - Miss
 - Mrs.
 - Mr.
 - Ms.
 - Mx.
 - Rev.

RECOMMENDATIONS VALUES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



- Prefer not to answer
- I do not use an honorific
- Not listed (Fill in the blank)

All system value updates should be part of the beta testing by students, faculty, and staff recommended by the working group to ensure goals of inclusion and equity are being met. Additionally, these values should be implemented across all systems for students, faculty, and staff.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The working group recommends the following for effective learning and development so that all users have knowledge and comfort with updated values.

- Educational video(s) for a broad audience with core information important for every user which includes:
 - Defining sex versus gender
 - Valuing pronouns and ways they are used
 - Using inclusive language, e.g., “folx/folks” versus “guys” or “welcome all” vs. “ladies and gentlemen”
 - Implementing privacy/confidentiality
- Supplemental resources such as shorter videos, infographics, and/or other guides targeted for different types of users:
 - Students
 - How do I change my pronouns in the system(s)?
 - Who can see my gender identity?
 - What are my resources on campus if my name and pronouns are not respected?



- Staff
 - o How to start a meeting with introductions using pronouns?
 - o How to greet visitors more inclusively?
 - o What resources are on campus to help guide me in best practices?
- Faculty
 - o How to do an inclusive roll call?
 - o What do I do with the pronouns on my roster?
 - o How does this impact my online courses?
 - o What resources are on campus to help guide me in best practices?

***All learning and development initiatives should include students, faculty, and staff recommended by the working group to ensure goals of inclusion and equity are being met.

REFERENCES

Garvey, J. C. (2020). Critical imperatives for studying queer and trans undergraduate student retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 21(4), 431-454.

Miller, J., Carter, J., Carrison, C., Goodell, K., Johnson, T., Jump, J., Lott, A., Miner, J., Nunn, M., Oates, B., Robertson, T., Suski, K. J., Selman, B., & Womack, J. (2019). Student Identity. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. <https://www.aacrao.org/docs/default-source/signature-initiative-docs/trending-topic-docs/gender/student-identity-report06062019.pdf>

GenIUSS Group. (2014). Best Practices for Asking Questions to Identify Transgender and Other Gender Minority Respondents on Population-Based Surveys. J.L. Herman (Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute.

RECOMMENDATIONS INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH/DATA AND RECORD KEEPING



Recommendations for functionality, security, data cross referencing, collection of student, faculty, and staff data. Collaborated with values group on field labels, consistent data references and definitions, SIS and data flow.

Working Group Members:

Dr. Kristin Yates, Workgroup Co-Convener

Jean Padrnos, Workgroup Co-Convener

Dusty Newton

Steven Booton

Gloria Brink

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Matt Ellis

Brett Bieber

Recommended Implementation Leads: Information Technology & CIO, Institutional Research & Chief Data Officer, IT Strategy and Learning Technology, Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics, Identity & Access Management, NeSIS, General Counsel (University Records).

Interdependent Areas: Registrars, Housing, Admissions, Enrollment Management, Student Services, HR.

Supporting Areas and Potential Resources (Learning and Development): LGBT Resource Centers, D&I Offices, Campus and Central Communications Offices, HR Centers of Excellence, external vendors with subject matter expertise.

RECOMMENDATIONS INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH/DATA AND RECORD KEEPING



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Good starting points for value updates include admissions applications, HR systems and forms*, and recruitment forms having an additional option for gender, CRM system forms.
*With the exception of some faculty HR topics all “common” HR forms for employees can be found here: <https://hr.unl.edu/forms/>
- Will need to make a change to the Nebraska system map, the campus specific application for non-resident maps, common app and/or other supplemental shared app system.
- Pre-application services changes can be made sooner.
- Work with registrars to define all of the systems that have gender identified to help determine where information is coming from and which system to start with.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Back end application for identity management items - some tactical complexity on the back end that will need to be worked through.
- Housing data is affected by Admissions and PeopleSoft. Implementation leads will need to be certain that housing software can adapt to the change.
- Application for admissions will launch in July for the following academic term. Applications represent a place for initial data collection. However, internal campus deadlines for proposed changes would be due by April 1st in order to build out additional values.

RECOMMENDATIONS INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH/DATA AND RECORD KEEPING



- Be certain people are educated about the changes and how to implement them in daily work life.
- Help is needed reconciling third party data services that will use a variety of data validations for values questions, e.g., college board, ACT, and other places that provide third-party inquiries. Third party mapping needs to occur and can begin soon as this information is received on a daily basis.
- Free text fields are notoriously hard to manage from the back end when retrieving data from the system but not impossible. CRM and third-party mapping questions are a good exercise for thinking through the range of possibilities.



Draft policy to accompany recommendations from steering committee and working groups. ** Including recommendations based on security, compliance and data usage, e.g., determining University personnel with access to gender identity and pronoun values based on set criteria.**

Working Group Members:

Heath Tuttle, Workgroup Convener

Jean Padrnos

Steven Booton

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Ashley Robinson

Aileen Warren

Erin Busch

Dr. Marco Barker

Recommended Implementation Leads: Information Technology & CIO, Institutional Research & Chief Data Officer, IT Strategy and Learning Technology, Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics, Identity & Access Management, NeSIS, General Counsel (University Records).

Interdependent Areas: Registrars, Housing, Admissions, Enrollment Management, Student Services.

“A contributing factor in gender-specific policies and practices combined with a lack of understanding regarding non-binary identity are significant contributing factors to the negative experiences faced by non-binary employees.”

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates, Best Practices for Non-binary Inclusion in the Workplace, <https://outandequal.org/app/uploads/2018/11/OE-Non-Binary-Best-Practices.pdf>



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a “Chosen Name” and “Gender Identity Policy” based on Penn State model which can be separated into two separate policies if necessary.

PENDING ITEMS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Regents Policies (and the accompanying campus FERPA policies) define public directory information as including “name,” but “name” is not further defined as either legal name or chosen name. Historically, the Registrars have interpreted the “name” in public directory information as meaning legal name.
- Discussions at registrars’ level still need to occur to determine where things can be published and chosen name vs. legal name, etc.

**** DRAFT POLICY AND FAQ APPENDICES****

(Please see attached document.)

RECOMMENDATIONS STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND ROLLOUT



Recommendations for communicating implementation plans, project status, etc.; to key stakeholders, e.g., students, faculty, staff.

Working Group Members:

Stancia Jenkins, Workgroup Convener, she.her.hers

Emily McElroy

Wendy Schardt

Dr. Jessi Hitchins

Corrie Svehla

Ashley Robinson

Devin Koch

Recommended Implementation Leads and Interdependent Areas: Campus and Central Communication Offices, ****University Leadership and CAOs****, Registrars, Housing, Admissions, Enrollment Management, Student Services, Campus and Central Data Officer, IT Strategy and Learning Technology, Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics, Identity & Access Management, NeSIS, General Counsel (University Records).

Supporting Areas and Potential Resources (Learning and Development): LGBT Resource Centers, D&I Offices, Affinity Groups, and external vendors with subject expertise.

RECOMMENDATIONS STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND ROLLOUT



RECOMMENDATIONS

- A June 2020 launch date is suggested for portions of the communication efforts –
June marks LGBTQ History Month.
- University Leadership should set the tone for members of the campus community regarding the shift in offering non-binary gender value options.
- Global Stakeholder Groups include students, faculty and staff.
- Global communication about updated values, forms and systems should focus on the following areas and vary based on segmented stakeholder groups:
 - Who will be responsible for implementing the changes?
 - What changes can the campus community/stakeholders expect as a result of the change? What are NU's desired outcomes, e.g., what type of environment do we hope to have as a result of the change; how will it position us as an institution?
 - Where/in what areas, e.g., rosters, surveys, employment forms, etc., can stakeholders expect to see changes as a result of the expanded offerings?
 - When can stakeholders expect to see changes, i.e., implementation phases?
 - How the change connects with NU's values and how stakeholder groups be impacted?
 - Why is the change critical?
- Communication efforts should run parallel to, and complement learning and development activities.
- Subject matter expertise be utilized to review and/or develop communication pieces.
- Every effort should be made to shift to the use of gender neutral language when referring to others, e.g., greetings: friends, folks, ya'll, you all, and everyone.

RECOMMENDATIONS STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND ROLLOUT



- Common gendered phrases should be adjusted by using more inclusive, gender-neutral language.
- Affinity groups, employee resource groups, and allies should be engaged to elevate and drive messaging and “business case” conversation.
- Existing communication vehicles should be leveraged to build knowledge and understanding, communicate the process and intent behind the effort, and the connection to NU’s inclusion and diversity goals.
- Learning and development opportunities should be referenced in communications when possible.
- Communication to students preparing them for the change in values they will be asked the first day in person or online regarding personal pronouns etc; is recommended.
- There should be heightened visibility of information/access to offices students, faculty, staff can utilize for support in the event that someone’s pronouns or chosen name are not respected.

TAILORED MESSAGING FOR STUDENTS, STAFF AND FACULTY SHOULD INCLUDE:

- How do I change my information?
- How do I access the platforms?
- Who is the information visible to?

RECOMMENDATIONS STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND ROLLOUT



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Remove gendered language from policies. Example: instead of “he/she” use “they”.

STAKEHOLDERS AND IMPACTED PARTIES

- Offices and Departments
 - Human Resources
 - Diversity and Inclusion Offices
 - Special Events
 - Marketing and Communications
- Academic Administration
 - Chief Academic Officers
 - Deans and Directors
- Faculty
 - Faculty Senate
- Student Facing Offices/Divisions/Departments
 - Enrollment Management
 - Advisors
 - Financial Aid
 - Online Education
 - Registrars
 - Student Life et. al.
 - Affinity Groups, Commissions and Councils

Affinity groups, employee resource groups, and allies can help elevate the conversation and drive messaging.

RECOMMENDATIONS STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND ROLLOUT



- Centers and Support Services
 - Health
 - Counseling
 - Campus Police
 - LGBT Resource Centers
- IR/Data/Record Keeping
 - Identity and Access Management
 - General Counsel
 - Institute for Effectiveness
 - IR
 - Data Officers

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Many people may not have the knowledge or language to discuss sexual orientation, gender identity or expression or may refrain from talking about these topics because they're afraid of saying the wrong thing. This glossary was written by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to give people the words and meanings to help make conversations easier and more comfortable.

Ally | A person who is not LGBTQ but shows support for LGBTQ people and promotes equality in a variety of ways.

Androgynous | Identifying and/or presenting as neither distinguishably masculine nor feminine.

Asexual | The lack of a sexual attraction or desire for other people.

Biphobia | Prejudice, fear or hatred directed toward bisexual people.

Bisexual | A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.

Cisgender | A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Closeted | Describes an LGBTQ person who has not disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Coming out | The process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to share that with others.

Gay | A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.



Gender dysphoria | Clinically significant distress caused when a person’s assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify. According to the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the term - which replaces Gender Identity Disorder - “is intended to better characterize the experiences of affected children, adolescents, and adults.”

Gender-expansive | Conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system.

Gender expression | External appearance of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Gender-fluid | According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a person who does not identify with a single fixed gender; of or relating to a person having or expressing a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Gender identity | One’s innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One’s gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender non-conforming | A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.

Genderqueer | Genderqueer people typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity of gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation. People who identify as “genderqueer” may see themselves as being both male and female, neither male nor female or as falling completely outside these categories.



Gender transition | The process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with its outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognized as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.

Homophobia | The fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who are attracted to members of the same sex.

Intersex | An umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations. In some cases, these traits are visible at birth, and in others, they are not apparent until puberty. Some chromosomal variations of this type may not be physically apparent at all.

Lesbian | A woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women.

LGBTQ | An acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer.”

Living openly | A state in which LGBTQ people are comfortably out about their sexual orientation or gender identity – where and when it feels appropriate to them.

Non-binary | An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do.

Outing | Exposing someone’s lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender identity to others without their permission. Outing someone can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety or religious or family situations.

Pansexual | Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.

Queer | A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations. Often used interchangeably with “LGBTQ.”



Questioning | A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Same-gender loving | A term some prefer to use instead of lesbian, gay or bisexual to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender.

Sex assigned at birth | The sex (male or female) given to a child at birth, most often based on the child's external anatomy. This is also referred to as "assigned sex at birth."

Sexual orientation | An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.

Transgender | An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

Transphobia | The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, transgender people.

Glossary of Terms HRC: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>