

SUPPORTING LGBTQ STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

A GUIDE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

CULTIVATING SAFE CLASSROOMS: SETTING THE TONE

- Recognize your privileges and manage any biases before entering the classroom.
- Acknowledge that everyone does not share the same sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
- Affirm your commitment to supporting LGBTQ students, both in your syllabus and aloud.
- Use gender neutral language that avoids heteronormative assumptions, generalizations, and stereotypes.
Ex. Partner/spouse instead of wife/husband.
- Include a statement of diversity in your syllabus that includes gender and sexual identity.
- Incorporate the voices of LGBTQ people as they relate to your field in your syllabus and class instruction.
- Voice the need for ongoing LGBTQ education trainings for TAs and faculty in your department.
- Email students asking for their gender pronouns and enter them in classlist for roll call.
- If you don't remember a student's pronouns, ask them. Never assume.
- Introduce your name and pronouns the first day of class. Ask your students to do the same.
Ex. Hello everyone, I'm Professor Xavier. My pronouns are he, him and his.

RESPONDING TO HATE AND BIAS

- Create space for students to come speak with you about classroom dynamics.
- If students use derogatory language, communicate that these phrases will not be accepted and why, and report them as needed. Judicial Affairs and Title IX are two places to report these incidences.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS HOLISTICALLY

- Know the resources to refer students to: RCSGD, CAPS, Health & Wellness, CARE, etc.
- If a student comes out to you, thank them for telling you and ask them what support they need.
- Identities, behaviors, and experiences can change over time. Identities are not static.
- Respect the self-identification used by students. They may or may not use words that you know, so ask questions and educate yourself.

CONTACT INFORMATION: RESOURCE CENTER FOR SEXUAL & GENDER DIVERSITY

STUDENT RESOURCE BUILDING, 3RD FLOOR

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SUGGESTED TERMS TO KNOW

asexual, demisexual - a term used by individuals to identify with a lack of sexual attraction, or partial/conditional forms of sexual attraction. Asexual and demisexual individuals may experience varying degrees of romantic and relational attraction to others, and can also identify with other forms of sexual/romantic identity such as being straight or LGBTQ.

bisexual & pansexual - refers to individuals who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of two genders or regardless of gender/sex.

cisgender - Someone whose gender aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

gay, lesbian - refers to individuals who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the same gender and/or sex

genderqueer - An umbrella term for anyone who identifies as neither man or woman, as both man and woman, or as exceeding the categories "male" and "female."

intersex - A person born with both male and female sexed markers; they may identify as cisgender or not.

queer - a reclaimed term used to describe individuals who experience non-normative sexual and/or romantic attraction without bounding or defining the terms of that attraction. Queer is also used in other contexts to describe an ideological and/or political stance, to refer to entire communities of people who identify with gender and sexual non-normativity, and as an identity that troubles the boundaries between sex, gender, and desire.

trans* - An umbrella term to encompass folks who are transgender, genderqueer etc.

transgender - A term for people whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.

transman - A man who was assigned female at birth.

transwoman - A woman who was assigned male at birth.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Who is not represented in the spaces I am occupying?
- Are the policies of my department or organization inclusive of all people?
- How often does my dept/organization discuss issues and opportunities related to LGBTQ people?
- Are there programming or collaboration opportunities with LGBTQ groups we could host annually?
- How am I role modeling positive language and inclusive behavior?