

*Inclusive Classrooms for*

Trans &  
Genderqueer  
Students

Yale OFFICE OF LGBTQ RESOURCES [lgbtq.yale.edu](http://lgbtq.yale.edu)

## Gender Identity at Yale

Yale students may identify as *transgender* (an umbrella term that says they identify as a different gender than their sex assigned at birth), *genderqueer* (usually based on a social critique of two-genders), *agender* (without a gender), or *non-binary* (a gender that resists the choice between male and female). Students may have an appearance that suggests a gender critique or they may have traditional gender expressions.

## What do surveys show about experiences at Yale?

On the AAU Climate survey, students who identified as transgender, genderqueer and “not listed” reported much higher rates of sexual harassment, which leads many to change a class or an academic direction.

## To understand why being misgendered is so disconcerting...

Imagine that you are meeting with your department chair and they suddenly start using the wrong pronouns to refer to you. You are astonished, do you correct them? What if they continue to use the wrong ones? *Have you been paying attention to anything else they are saying?*

## How can you make your classroom more inclusive of all genders?

Don't divide students into male and female groups for class projects or exercises.

Don't use pronouns to refer to students unless you are sure you know the pronouns each student uses. It's often easier to use names and gender-neutral pronouns.

When you ask students for their names in the first class, avoid public discussion of disparities with course lists from the registrar. Canvas and ClassesV2 will provide preferred names while the Faculty Grading Roster and Advising modules and students' emails may use birth names. Try not to discuss mismatches of names during class, but do it later, in private or by email if you are unable to figure it out yourself. You can use the Student ID number to match students across systems.

When you ask students for their names in the first class also ask them for their pronouns: "Now, let's go around and tell me the name you would like me to call you and the pronouns you'd like me to use – I'll start. You can call me Professor Sanga and I use he, him and his."

Indicate which pronouns you use in your email signature, your syllabus and when introducing yourself.

## Federal Guidance from the *Dear Colleague Letter on Transgender Students*

The following is federal guidance outlined in a May 2016 memo issued by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. *Find the full document at [lgbtq.yale.edu/dearcolleague](http://lgbtq.yale.edu/dearcolleague).*

“School staff and contractors will use pronouns and names consistent with a transgender student’s gender identity.”

There is an expectation of privacy of a transgender identity as well as “birth name” under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), so this information should only be shared with other staff or faculty with a “need to know”.

Yale is committed to using preferred names on all internal documents such as IDs, email addresses, class lists, grade rosters, directories, and advising forms. These changes make take a few months to complete due to the complexity of the various computer systems we use.

You may direct questions about this federal guidance to Maria Trumpler, Director, Office of LGBTQ Resources, or Caroline Hendel, Office of the General Counsel.

Which



*pronouns*

do you



use?



#PRONOUNSMATTER

## Resources

Office of LGBTQ Resources [lgbtq.yale.edu/transwise](http://lgbtq.yale.edu/transwise)

Explore resources on gender identity and expression for faculty and students; find out about further opportunities to learn about gender identity, expression and student experiences; and contact us with any questions or concerns.

“Who’s ‘They’?” <http://nyti.ms/1StmuUO>

Amanda Hess discusses the use of pronouns in this insightful and informative March 2016 *New York Times Magazine* piece.

TED Talk: “Ending Gender” <https://youtu.be/TWubtUnSfA0>

Diversity speaker Scott Turner Schofield speaks to TEDx Houston about transgender identity and ending gender.

