

*Ways that Colleges Can  
Support Transgender  
Students*

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# Dyad Dialogues

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- To what extent are transgender students out on your campus? What are/would be their general experiences?
- How would you rate the climate for transgender students on your campus? Are there some areas that you think are more or less welcoming and inclusive?

# Transgender Ally Quiz

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How Much Do You Know?



# Appropriate Terminology

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## Transgender , Trans, or Trans\*

- An umbrella term for someone whose self-identification or expression challenges traditional notions of “male” and “female” (opposite: cisgender)
- Includes transsexuals (MTF, FTM), crossdressers (not transvestites), drag queens and kings, genderqueers, and other gender-diverse identities
- Gender identity is NOT a matter of sexual orientation

# Appropriate Terminology

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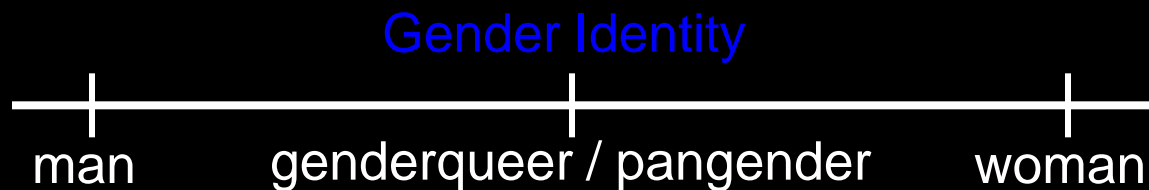
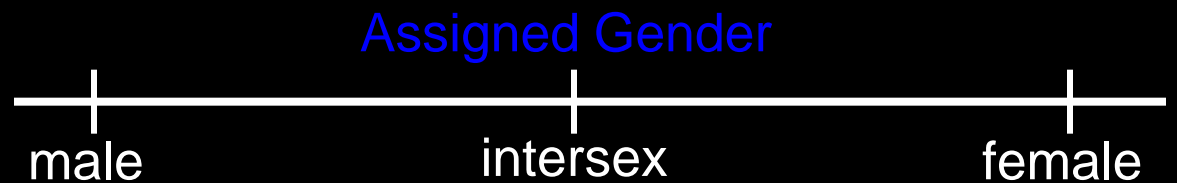
## **“Intersex” (“disorders of sex development”)**

- A person who is born with “sex chromosomes,” external genitalia, or an internal reproductive system that is not considered “standard” for either male or female (preferred term to “hermaphrodite”)
- About 1 in 100 people are born with bodies that differ from standard male/female bodies. In about 1 in 1,500-2,000 births, the child has genitals that are not instantly recognizable as female or male. About the same number of people have sex chromosomes that are not XX or XY
- Not all intersex conditions are the same. Intersexuality covers more than 25 genetic and hormonal conditions

# Gender Continuums

“normative man”

“normative woman”



# Assigned Female and Then...

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- “I am a butch or masculine woman”
- “I am a transguy, taking T”
- “I am genderqueer, and do not identify as a man or woman. F\*\*\* the binary!”
- “I identify as a man. I am not trans.”
- “I am FTM, and maybe I’ll have top surgery one day.”

# Trans 101

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UMass Transgender Information

<http://www.umass.edu/stonewall/trans/>

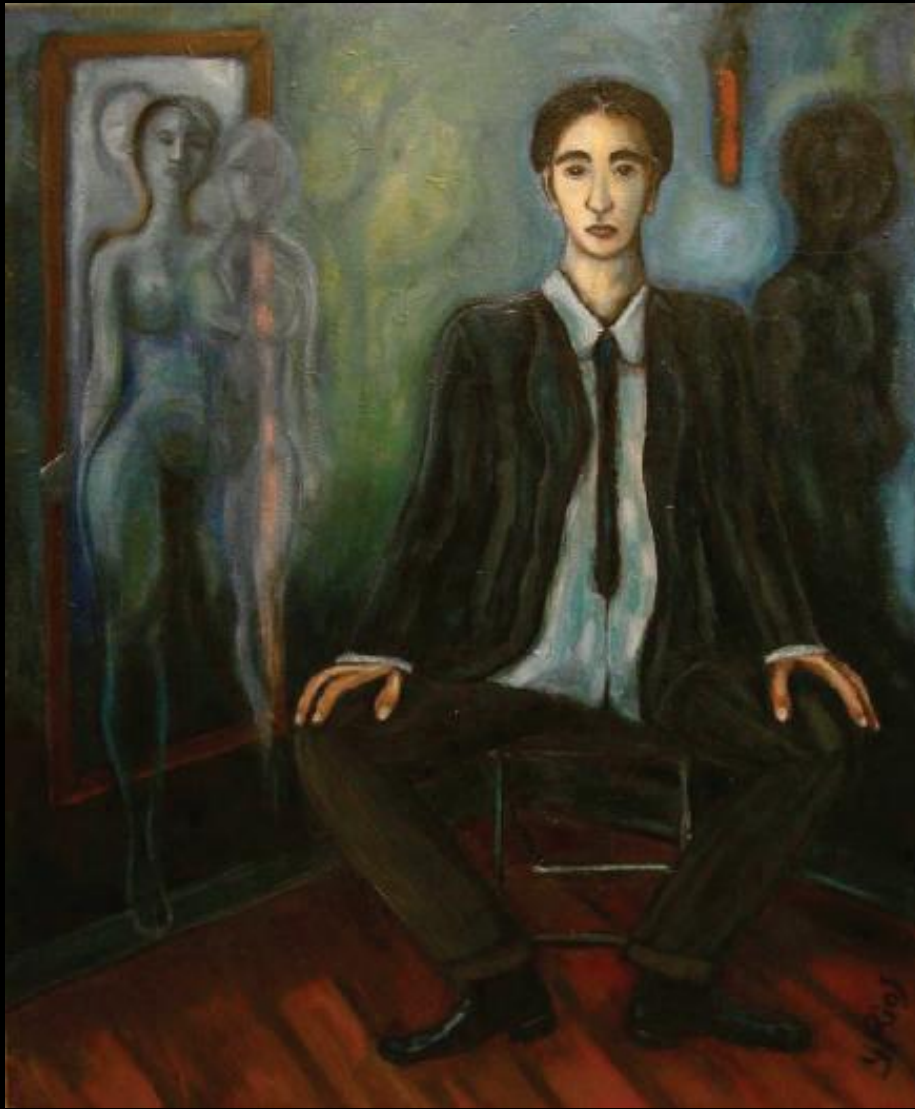
UC Riverside Educational Materials

<http://out.ucr.edu/topics/Pages/HelpfulHandouts.aspx>

Trans@MIT Allies Toolkit

<http://web.mit.edu/trans/alliestoolkit.html>





***The Lives of  
Transgender  
People***

**Genny Beemyn &  
Sue Rankin**

**Columbia University  
Press**

# Milestone Similarities

Feeling gender different from a young age and seeking to express this difference through dress and behavior

Repressing or hiding these feelings in the face of hostility and/or isolation

Recognizing that there are transgender people

Getting to know about and know other transgender people

# Milestone Similarities

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Deciding on a  
specific  
identity

Overcoming  
denial and  
internalized  
genderism to  
accept oneself  
as  
transgender

Having one's  
presentation  
match one's  
identity

Deciding  
whether/when  
to tell others  
and  
developing  
new  
relationships  
after  
disclosure

Developing a  
sense of  
wholeness  
within a  
gender  
normative  
society

# **Trans College Students Today**

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- Likely to have had some understanding of their gender difference as children or youth.
- Gender-nonconforming, male-assigned children may have had some support for being gender different.
- Less likely to be in denial or be confused.
- Less likely to misidentify at all or for long.
- Come to college expecting support and resources.

# Trans College Students Today

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- Recognize that there is not one way to be trans.
- May not see the need to have surgeries or take hormones to be a “real” woman or man (or see the need to be a gender at all).
- May identify outside of a gender binary and/or use gender-inclusive pronouns for themselves (they/them, ze/hir).
- Typically refuse to accept a gender binary.
- May not feel that they have to move to the opposite gender extreme.

# How to Be an Ally to Trans Students Personally

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- Do not assume that students are traditionally gendered, even if they appear so.
- Validate students' gender expression. If someone presents as a given gender, treat them as a member of that gender.
- Use appropriate names and pronouns. If uncertain, ask politely.
- Know transgender resources.

# Basic Assumptions

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- Students' gender identities should be respected, regardless of assigned gender or transition status.
- Institutional policies and resources should be trans-inclusive, regardless of the number of “out” trans students.

# Benefits to a Campus

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- Foster a safe learning environment for all students.
- Create a positive climate in which students can come out.
- Prepare for meeting the needs of gender-nonconforming students now, rather than deny services or respond to incidents reactively in the future.





# Best Policies & Practices

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Transgender Law and Policy Institute College Pages:  
**<http://www.transgenderlaw.org/college/index.htm>**

*Promising Practices for Inclusion of Gender  
Identity/Gender Expression in Higher Education*

**<http://architect.lgbtcampus.org>**

# Nondiscrimination Policy

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- Add “gender identity or expression” to the institution’s nondiscrimination policy.
- Currently about 500 colleges have a trans-inclusive nondiscrimination policy:  
<http://www.transgenderlaw.org/college/index.htm#policies>
- In eleven states, including Arkansas, there are no schools with such policies.

# Suggestions for How to Add “Gender Identity or Expression” to Nondiscrimination Policies

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- learn the different steps for changing the nondiscrimination policy
- identify the key decision makers at each step of the process
- educate these decision makers and other important administrators (the directors of Human Resources, Student Activities, Judicial Affairs, Residence Life, Recreational Sports, etc.) about anti-trans prejudice and the experiences of transgender students
- decide what arguments will work best with different decision makers (an important student need, a human rights issue; keeping up with peer institutions; in line with state laws, city ordinances, and/or major local business policies)
- involve as many transgender students, staff, faculty, and alumni as possible

# Suggestions for How to Add “Gender Identity or Expression” to Nondiscrimination Policies

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- find ways to involve individuals who may not be open about being transgender in the process at their comfort level
- educate and involve LGB/LGBT student groups as advocates
- identify and cultivate influential allies (student leaders, administration officials, deans, department chairs, etc.)
- Look at the nondiscrimination policies of the companies of members of your board of trustee
- seek resolutions of support from the student government, faculty senate, staff council, and diversity committees
- anticipate possible questions and concerns (such as someone who appears male in a women’s bathroom or locker room; what the legal ramifications will be) and be prepared to respond to them
- turn to other people working in this area as needed

# Health Services

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- Enable patients to identify their preferred names and gender identity on intake forms, rather than having “M” and “F” boxes.
- Develop a recordkeeping process to ensure that staff use patients’ preferred names and pronouns.
- Ensure that prescriptions match patients’ preferred names.
- Train health center staff on the experiences and health care needs of young trans people.
- Make gynecological exams available outside of women’s health services so that FTM students can receive needed medical care.
- Recognize that insurance typically will not cover a pap smear for a man or a prostate exam for a woman.

# Health Services

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- Hire trans-knowledgeable campus therapists and offer trans-supportive mental health services (support groups, individual counseling, and community referrals).
- Develop and make available a list of area therapists experienced in working with trans people.
- Have hormones and gender confirmation surgeries for transitioning students covered under student health insurance. At least 35 colleges cover hormones and surgery and 26 cover just hormones for transitioning students:  
[www.transgenderlaw.org/college/index.htm#health](http://www.transgenderlaw.org/college/index.htm#health)

# Housing

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- Develop a housing policy that enables students to be housed in keeping with their gender identity/expression. The University of California, Riverside's policy: <http://out.ucr.edu/ourcampus/Pages/Housing.aspx>.
- Create gender-inclusive bathrooms and private showers in existing and newly constructed residence halls.
- Establish a gender-inclusive housing (GIH) option for both new and returning students. The National Student Genderblind Campaign offers resources on GIH: [www.genderblind.org](http://www.genderblind.org). At least 91 colleges and universities offer some form of GIH: [www.transgenderlaw.org/college/index.htm#housing](http://www.transgenderlaw.org/college/index.htm#housing).
- Offer transitioning students single rooms at the double room rate if there is no better option available.

# Facilities: Bathrooms

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- Develop a bathroom policy that allows individuals to use the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity. The University of Arizona's policy: [http://equity.arizona.edu/restroom\\_access](http://equity.arizona.edu/restroom_access).
- Have single-occupancy men's and women's restrooms converted into gender-inclusive ones by installing locks and changing signs.
- Have a policy that all new and renovated buildings will include gender-inclusive bathrooms.
- Publicize the locations of gender-inclusive bathrooms through a website, brochure, and/or app.
- Have signage at gendered bathrooms directing people to the nearest gender-inclusive bathroom.



# Facilities: Locker Rooms

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- Provide more privacy in public locker rooms by creating individual showers with curtains.
- Have new and renovated locker rooms include private changing facilities and single-person showers.

# Records & Documents

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- Change recordkeeping software to enable students to have a preferred name on identification cards, unofficial transcripts, class and grade rosters, and listings in online and print directories, regardless of whether or not they have legally changed their names.
- ✓ The University of Vermont's policy (BANNER system):  
[http://www.uvm.edu/~rgweb/?Page=policiesandprocedures/p\\_preferredname.html&SM=p\\_menu.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~rgweb/?Page=policiesandprocedures/p_preferredname.html&SM=p_menu.html).
- ✓ The University of Michigan's policy (PeopleSoft system):  
<http://www.itcs.umich.edu/itcsdocs/r1461/>.

# Forms

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- Enable transgender students to self-identify, if they choose, on the college's application (and other forms) by asking:

## Gender Identity (choose all that apply)

woman

man

transgender

another identity (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

- If you must legally ask sex (female/male) because of being a single-sex institution:
  - ✓ Ask “sex” using the required binary of female and male.
  - ✓ Additionally, ask “gender identity” as stated above.

# Student Activities

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- Educate fraternities and sororities and other gender-segregated student organizations about the rights of transgender students to participate in keeping with an institution's nondiscrimination policy.
- ✓ Fraternity and Sorority Transgender Resource Guide: <http://www.lambda10.org/transgender>.
- Hold a Transgender Awareness Week in November to coincide with the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20, <http://www.transgenderdor.org>) and sponsor transgender-related events during LGBT pride weeks and awareness months.

# Student Activities

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- Create a Web-based campus resource guide for new and prospective transgender students.
- ✓ The UMass Amherst guide:  
<http://www.umass.edu/stonewall/transguide>.
- ✓ The University of California, Riverside guide:  
<http://out.ucr.edu/pages/transguide.aspx>.
- Include transgender-focused and transgender-inclusive programs as part of general campus programming.

# Athletics

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## The NCAA's Policy: All About the "T"

- “A trans male (female to male) student-athlete who has received a medical exception for treatment with testosterone for gender transition may compete on a men’s team but is no longer eligible to compete on a women’s team without changing the team status to a mixed team. A mixed team is eligible only for men’s championships.”
- “A trans female (male to female) student-athlete being treated with testosterone suppression medication for gender transition may continue to compete on a men’s team but may not compete on a women’s team without changing it to a mixed team status until completing one calendar year of documented testosterone-suppression treatment.”

# Athletics

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- Develop a policy for transgender students to compete in intramurals.
- ✓ UMass policy:

“When an activity makes a gender designation, an individual who has transitioned to a different gender can participate in the division of the individual’s current gender. If an individual is in the process of transitioning to a different gender, participation in a particular gender designated activity will be handled on a case-by-case basis.”

# In the Classroom

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- Do not assume that everyone in the classroom identifies as cisgender or is traditionally gendered
- Respect students' gender identity and expression by using their preferred names and pronouns
- If you call the roll on the first day of class, have students introduce themselves or call students by their last names and allow them to say what first name they prefer
- If it is a relatively small-sized class, have students indicate the pronouns they prefer
- If it is a large-sized class, try to avoid referring to students by pronouns



# In the Classroom

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- Where relevant, encourage the discussion of transgender topics in your courses
- Do not rely on transgender students to initiate discussions on trans topics
- Use trans-inclusive materials and examples
- Correct students who use trans-exclusive language and challenge anti-transgender comments
- Encourage students to do research on transgender topics
- Show support of transgender students and events

# Small Group Discussion

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- Break into four groups: Health Services, Housing & Facilities, Student Activities & Athletics, and Records & Forms
- Discuss how you can implement trans-inclusive policies in that area(s) on your campus. What are the challenges? What are the opportunities?
- You will have about 10 minutes to discuss the topic
- Have someone take notes to be able to report back to the entire group

# Further Questions?

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