Teaching Beyond the Gender Binary:

A Resource Manual

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Atmospheres envelop. Held by gravity, the layers of vapor that constitute them are the conditions of breathing life but also the possibility of that life's rendition. . . Thinking atmospherically reminds us that there is no escape, no outside or place to hide, yet through techniques of struggle collective life might still come to be.

~ Eric Stanley

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements vi

Glossary viii

Introduction 1

1. In the Classroom 9

1.1 Introduction 10

1.2 Respecting Student Names 12

What You Can Do 13

1.3 On Pronouns 15

What You Can Do 16

1.4 Navigating Technical Systems 20

What You Can Do 21

1.5 Unpaid Emotional Labour of Transgender Students 23

What You Can Do 24

1.6 Further Resources 25

2. Curricular and Pedagogical Considerations 26

2.1 Introduction 27

2.2 Developing Your Curriculum 28

What You Can Do 28

2.3 Pedagogical Approaches 32

What You Can Do 32

2.4 Discipline Specific Resources 35

3. Supporting Students 44

3.1 Introduction 45

3.2 Knowing What Resources Exist 46

What You Can Do 46

3.3 Supporting Students When They Come Out to You 49

What You Can Do 49

3.4 Understanding the Greater Context: Campus Facilities 52

What You Can Do **53**

3.5 Further Resources 54

Works Cited **56**

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- **Sage Clan**
- **Native Youth Sexual Health Network**
- **Edmonton 2 Spirit Society**
- **Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth**
- **Back To The Land: 2Land2Furious**

We would like to thank all of the students who spoke with us about their lived experiences as trans, non-binary, and/or genderqueer students at the University of Lethbridge. Your words moved us, and shaped both the format and content of this manual. We hope that it not only does justice to your experiences but that it provokes institutional change, particularly in learning environments.

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Glossary

The following terms and concepts[1] are referred to throughout this teaching resource manual, albeit with a few caveats:

Language is not neutral. Assembling a glossary of terms such as this runs the risk of rendering stable the meaning of terms that are/were meant to resist fixity in the first place. It runs the risk of taxonomizing ways of being in relation to ourselves and each other (Zaborskis, 2023, p. 93), and of settling meanings that, for some purposes, should be left unsettled (Currah, 2022, p. xii), incoherent, unknowable, discomfiting.

Language around sexuality and gender changes quickly. If this teaching resource manual is being read in a future in which the terms in this glossary have evolved, then know, to quote Adrienne Maree Brown (2019), that we would be evolving right along with you (pp. 16-18).

***

Cisgender (Cis) - An umbrella term to refer to people whose gender identity and the sex they were assigned at birth align. For example, cis women are typically women who were assigned female at birth and feel that the words "woman" and "female" accurately describe their gender. Likewise, cis men are men who were assigned male at birth and feel that the words "man" and "male" accurately describe their gender.

We want to qualify this definition by recognizing that, following Amin (2022), "Cisgender—the notion of an alignment so exact between one's personal sense of identity and the gender role assigned to one that there is no rub, no ambivalence, and no sense of constraint—is and has always been a fantasy" (p. 114). In other words, it is a myth that *only* trans, non-binary, and genderqueer people experience "gender trouble," that is, where gendered experience(s) may be in conflict with societal gender norms and expectations. **This lack of alignment should not be used to dismiss someone's experiences, but instead is productive ground for allyship and for fostering a critical lens towards the rigid categories that shape all of our lives.** As Leslie Feinberg (1998) wrote over 25 years ago, "Trans liberation has meaning for you - no matter how you define or express your sex or your gender…This movement will give you more room to breathe" (pp. 5-6).

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[1] Sources: SFSS, Trans and Gender Diverse Guide to SFU (2017); Lowik (2018); University of Victoria Anti-Violence Project, "Glossary" (n.d.)

Cisnormative - The assumption and the expectation that all people are cisgender, and the belief that cisgender people are superior to, or more "normal" than, trans, non-binary, genderqueer people. This assumption and expectation are embedded into societal structures and institutions, including higher education.

Deadnaming - Using a trans/non-binary/genderqueer person's birth name (their 'deadname') instead of the name they actually use or revealing that name to others. For a thoughtful reflection on the concept and practice of deadnaming, see Jules Gill-Peterson's essay, "**My Undead Name**" (2020).

Gender - The social, relational, and often contested, norms, narratives, practices, and conventions that arrange bodies, identities, roles, and expressions in hierarchies of difference based on binary notions of male/female, man/woman, masculinity/femininity (Currah, 2022, p. 3).

Genderqueer - Refers to folks who 'queer' or resist dominant logics of sex, gender, and desire in our society. Genderqueer people can have identities which fall outside of the widely accepted binary of men and women.

Gender Euphoria - Feelings of happiness, contentment, joy, affirmation, and self-acceptance that stem from being perceived as and perceiving oneself as their lived gender. The term was coined to describe the opposite experience to gender dysphoria, which is defined as feelings of distress or misalignment between one's perceived gender, gender expression, and/or physical body and one's lived gender.

Heteronormative - The assumption and expectation that all people are heterosexual, and the belief that heterosexual people are superior to, or more "normal" than, queer people. This assumption and expectation are embedded into societal structures.

Legal Name - The name someone must use in legal contexts, such as on a birth certificate or a piece of ID.

Microaggressions - The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and institutional slights, whether intentional or not, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to intimidate and target people based upon their gender, sexuality, race, ability, class and so on.

Misgendering - The practice of using words (nouns, adjectives, and pronouns) that do not correctly reflect someone's gender. Misgendering can include deadnaming (see above), misnaming (calling a person by the incorrect name), and using incorrect pronouns (for example, using he/him/his for someone who uses she/her/hers). Whether intentional or not, misgendering has negative impacts and persistent misgendering creates a hostile environment for trans people.

Non-binary - An umbrella term to refer to all people whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female, man or woman. These folks might identify with the following terms/identities: genderqueer, genderfluid, gender neutral, gender nonconforming. Some non-binary people identify as trans, and some do not.

Sex - Refers to the medical and legal classification of people into the (socially constructed) categories of male and female.

Sex/Gender Binary - The social construction of mutually exclusive categories of male/female, man/woman, masculine/feminine. This model asserts a binary of two distinct and opposite labels (female/male), qualifiers (vagina, penis), and behavioural expectations (e.g., caretaker/provider, emotional/rational).

Transgender (Trans) - An umbrella term to refer to people who do not identify with their assigned gender at birth or the binary gender system. More capaciously, it is "an umbrella term that refers to all identities and practices that cross over, cut across, move between, or otherwise queer socially constructed sex/gender boundaries" (Stryker, 1994, p. 254). It can stand both as a description of individual identity and simultaneously as a term for gendered transgressions of many kinds (Currah, 2022; Feinberg, 1992).

Transphobia - A collection of attitudes, feelings, and ideas that lead to prejudice against trans people, often enforced by individuals and through societal institutions.

Transantagonism - The active hostility, opposition, aggression, and/or violence towards trans people. More than individual fear (i.e., phobia), this term encompasses the pervasive and systemic violence perpetrated towards those who do not fit easily into the gender binary (Ashley, 2018).

Two Spirit - Two Spirit is a term that encompasses a broad range of sexual and gender identities of Indigenous peoples across North America. While some use the term to refer specifically to the cultural roles of individuals who embody both female and male spirits,

separate from white settler spectrums of gender and sexuality, Two Spirit is also used to describe Indigenous people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (Hunt, 2016, p. 7). Indigenous conceptions of gender and sexuality are "not rooted in heteronormativity but rather they accounted for diverse sexual practices and identities" (Hunt 2016, p. 7).

There are many definitions and understandings of Two Spirit, and each is nation specific. The term was officially adopted in 1990 at the Third International Gathering of American Indian and First Nations Gays and Lesbians in Winnipeg, MB. For many Indigenous peoples, "the Indigenous specific language and history used to describe queer individuals has been lost or fragmented. Two Spirit became a way for those diverse practices and identities of different Indigenous traditions to come together and be situated in a queer inter-Indigenous relational network" (Crosschild, 2019, p. 5).

Introduction

Setting the Context

The heightened visibility of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer people in cultural, legal, and political registers over the past decade challenges us, as educators, to reckon with the myriad of ways cisnormativity shapes institutions of higher education and our work within them. Over the last decade and a half of teaching at the University of Lethbridge, I (Suzanne) see an increasing number of under/graduate students who self-identify as trans, non-binary, and/or genderqueer. These students generously, if not fiercely, push many of us to think in much more nuanced ways about gender as a social category that distributes vulnerability and security (Spade, 2015). Many of them bring a sharp critique to the biological determinism that underpins many of our disciplines and intellectual homes, whether they be fine arts, biological sciences, education, kinesiology, health sciences, new media, political science, psychology, sociology, and women's and gender studies, to name but a few.

What are the possibilities for creating a trans and gender affirming classroom?

How do trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students role model ways for us to resist gender norms in our classrooms more broadly?

What can we learn from these students to be more effective, kind, and impactful educators?

These students *also* disclose their experiences of erasure, marginalization, and harassment on campus, including in the space of the classroom, across disciplines. This is not surprising given that educational institutions, including higher education, are themselves invested in "value systems that privilege gender conformity and heterosexuality" (Payne & Smith 2013, p. 14; Davies et al., 2019; Frohard-Dourlent, 2016; Namaste 2005; Veale et al., 2015). Gender conformity is embedded in the spaces and institutional processes of everyday life on campus.

Institutional investments in cisnormativity and the sex/gender binary affects all students. However, such investments distribute vulnerability and security in differential ways so that its effects - its *atmosphere* (Stanley, 2021) - are heightened for those who are trans, non-binary, and genderqueer. While there is no universal experience, research highlights that such students may skip class, avoid certain facilities on campus, feel isolated or alienated from campus life, switch institutions, or drop out of higher education altogether, thus altering their social and career trajectories (Garvey & Rankin, 2018; Gessell, 2014; Maloy et al., 2022; Rees et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2021; Wallace, 2014).

> Binary gender classification and its expected conformities are a major vector of microaggressions, antagonism, and violence (Currah, 2022; Spade, 2011). The microaggressions, antagonisms and violence of cis (and hetero) normativity are indelibly bound up with racism, ableism, property, and class that collectively shape

the materiality of student experiences. Normative binary sex/gender is a historically Western Anglo epistemology; in white settler nation-states such as Canada it is a legacy of colonialism and its attendant logics of white supremacy. **When we use the concepts 'cisnormativity' and 'transantagonism' in this manual we do so from an intersectional analytic**; that is, we understand cisnormativity, for example, as a set of dominant norms that are entwined with other forms of domination such as white supremacy, capitalism, and ableism to create the experiential conditions - the proximity to vulnerability, the proximity to security - for trans, nonbinary, and genderqueer students in and outside the classroom. As intersectionality teaches us, no form of subordination ever stands alone (see also: Awkward-Rich, 2022; Bakshi et al., 2016; Belcourt, 2021; Clare, 2015; Smilges, 2022; Snorton, 2017; Taillie, 2019; Whitehead, 2022).

The purpose of this teaching manual, then, is to offer resources to educators at the University of Lethbridge who want to create learning environments in which trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students can flourish. While we focus on the specific site of the classroom, we encourage a capacious understanding of 'the classroom' that would include learning environments such as Independent and Applied Studies, Honours Theses, graduate work, labs, the library, etc.

The manual reflects some of the experiences that trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students at the University of Lethbridge shared with us[2]. We conducted interviews with seven undergraduate students and facilitated one focus group with four undergraduate students and one graduate student. The students who spoke with us came from diverse academic disciplines including the Faculties of Arts & Science (Biological Sciences, Computer Science, History, Kinesiology, Psychology, Sociology, Women and Gender Studies), Education, Health Sciences, and Social Work. They inhabit a range of racial and class backgrounds, as well as abilities, which impact(ed) and inform(ed) their experiences as trans, non-binary, and genderqueer. The experiences of these students have shaped the contours and content of this manual, and we highlight their voices throughout.

We use the concept of **transantagonism** throughout this manual instead of the more common terminology of transphobia, to capture the fulsomeness of their experiences. The suffix 'phobia,' when used in terms like homophobia and transphobia, connotes strong negative emotions such as fear and hatred. As legal scholar Florence Ashley (2018) argues,

[2] Ethics approval was received through the University of Alberta Research Ethics Office in December 2021. While all students were given the option of using a pseudonym, not all chose to do so. All student participants reviewed their transcripts; and all were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the final version of this resource manual.

"the attitudes which impact trans people negatively are frequently neither irrational nor hateful. On the contrary, some of the most insidious beliefs, such as the belief that gender is determined by genitalia at birth, cannot be accurately described as irrational or hateful since they fit neatly into a complex social ideology about gender and are neutral on their face in relation to trans people" (pp. 3-4).

Transantagonism, then, captures Eric Stanley's (2021) point in the epigraph that "atmospheres envelop" so as to constitute the conditions of life. And again, the atmosphere of transantagonism will be understood throughout this manual as bound up with, as part and parcel of, atmospheres of white supremacy (see also Sharpe, 2016), settler colonialism, capitalism, and ableism.

The cumulative nature of interpersonal and institutional transantagonism takes its toll. Trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students often face higher rates of marginalization and harassment, with deleterious effects on mental health and well-being (Catalano, 2015; Garvey et al., 2019; Greytak et al., 2009; Goldberg, 2018; Herriot & Fry, 2021). These are often labelled as microaggressions, a constellation of "highly social acts" deeply entrenched in the perpetuation of cis and heteronormativities (Payne & Smith, 2013, p. 21). As noted by Goldberg (2019), microaggressions can include:

"There were times with my colleagues and other grad students where we were all hanging out and very transphobic things were being said. And I just sat there, I didn't know what to say or do. I just had to endure it." ~ Aidan

- **Micro-assaults**, which are "conscious, intentional actions or slurs" (e.g., a cis student calling trans students 'freaks' when learning about trans identities in a class)

- **Micro-insults**, that is, "verbal and nonverbal communications (e.g., facial expressions, body language) that convey insensitivity and demean a person's gender expression or identity."

"I get misgendered a lot. People automatically assume that because I look a certain way and because I sound a certain way that I'm automatically cis and automatically go by she/her." ~ Eva

- **Micro-invalidations**, those "communications that subtly exclude or negate the thoughts, feelings, or reality" of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer people (e.g., "misgendering through the use of incorrect pronouns" or deadnaming) (p.140).

"I had a classmate come up to me and say, "There is no non-binary, it's not a real thing. You can't be that, that's not a real thing." It's never great to hear that people think that I'm not a real human being or that my experiences aren't real." ~ Ryder

Microinsults and microinvalidations are of particular concern because they can be "difficult to recognize and address, yet their cumulative impact over time on mental health and personal well-being is significant" (Goldberg, 2019, p. 140). The "micro" in these terms does not imply smallness of impact. Rather, they are part and parcel of the transantagonism - the atmosphere - that trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students experience on post-secondary campuses, including at the University of Lethbridge. As **Eva** told us**, "It is an awful and isolating experience of having one's identity debated in class."** Many students recounted to us the frustration they experience when **"professors are unwilling to put in even a trivial amount of effort" ~ Queenie.**

Research shows that trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students report more negative perceptions of campus climates than cisgender students at the same institutions (Dugan et al., 2012). For example, they report feeling invisible and silenced as they do not see their experiences or identities represented in coursework, classroom dialogue, or within faculty relationships (Garvey & Rankin, 2018, p. 378). The classroom is a particularly salient site for experiences of misgendering and misnaming, where class lists for example, do not reflect their chosen names. To circumvent this discomfort, trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students sometimes avoid coming out in classes over concern about how faculty or peers might react if they were to be visibly out and assert themselves; students thus will mask their identities and render themselves invisible (Goldberg, 2019, pp. 137, 150).

Similarly, the students we spoke with recounted classroom experiences of invisibility and hypervisibility; of being misgendered and/or deadnamed; of silence or expectation about providing personal information and educating peers and professors/instructors about 'the trans experience'; of having to choose between outing themselves or silently enduring

explicit and implicit cis-sexism and transphobia/transantagonism; and of having to constantly repeat requests for respect and dignity.

How trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students respond to transantagonism varies. Some mask their identities rendering themselves invisible; many "anticipate the situation and take steps to prevent possible negative outcomes, or at least to manage them" (Wentling, 2019, p. 125; Nicolazzo, 2017). Even when a student can indicate the name they go by, it is not always recognized in different areas across university and college campuses such as classrooms, residences, workplaces, online learning platforms, and registration and application systems. Called "anticipatory management," trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students must find ways to navigate these spaces on their own, "which often means acting in anticipatory ways to attempt to prevent or minimize misrecognition" (Wentling, 2019, p. 129) or to mitigate academic and professional risks of countering racist and cisnormative expectations of gender.

It is important to acknowledge the damage-centered nature of much of the scholarship regarding trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students and their experiences with and in post-secondary education, including the classroom. Eve Tuck (Unangax̂) (2009) defines damage-centered research as research that leverages peoples' pain and brokenness to make the case for reparations and resources yet simultaneously frames entire communities as depleted and broken. Following Tuck, we would flip the question and ask: What is it that is depleted? What is broken?

Eric Stanley (2021) insists that anti-trans/queer violence structures the social, that anti-trans/queer violence is not an aberration of democracy but foundational to modernity of the nation-state and its institutions such as law. For our purposes, the institution is higher education. We live in a time where institutional approaches to sexuality and gender in education are overwhelmingly articulated as inclusion, where 'inclusion' often implies finding ways to include marginalized individuals - in this case, trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students - into systems, spaces, and structures that were not designed to make space for them/us and/or are designed to be hostile to them/us; where discourses of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) actually render unknowable the violences and exclusions of higher education, of the university. As Breeze and Leigh (2023) write in the context of higher education:

> Inclusion regimes do not remediate why LGBT+ inclusion is necessary and fail to address ongoing causes of exclusion and marginalization, such as heteronormative education practices, universities' central role in reproducing class stratification, a racist school system that prevents many students of colour from reaching higher

> education, and transphobic health policies that make the everyday lives of many trans students and staff unmanageable (p. 97).

Being included, then, can be to experience an increasing proximity to those norms that historically have been exclusive, a way of being made increasingly subject to their violence (Ahmed, 2012, p. 164). Indeed, we need to acknowledge that universities themselves are an anchor for anti-trans intellectual thought.

We thus remain wary of the frame of 'inclusion' to capture the ethos of what this resource manual seeks to do. As Eric Stanley (2021) puts it, the 'time' of LGBT inclusion leaves the social intact thereby vanishing the enormity of anti-trans violence (p. 6)[3]. The belief that 'inclusion into' functions as a means of redress for the violences that produces exclusion in the first place is, quite simply, a fantasy. This manual sits in a place of ambivalence, as we utilize both pragmatism and harm reduction - asking you as teachers to be allies in material struggle - knowing full well that the tips and strategies within are about reform not abolition.

We hope to offer resources and insights for **how not to reproduce what we have inherited** (in our scholarly disciplines, in our teacher training, in our pedagogies). This teaching resource manual is a queer offering of moments of flight from reproducing deeply intersectional transantagonistic and cisnormative violences, moments of flight that might help us/you imagine an otherwise of classroom cultures and teaching practices that allow trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students to thrive and flourish.

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[3] See, for example, the ACLU's "Mapping Attacks on LGBTQ Rights in U.S. State Legislatures" for up-to-date information on the record number of egregious bills that attack transgender youth and adults **https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights**. Youth and adults in the US and Canada are not immune to this wave of right-wing, anti-trans, anti-body sovereignty activism. Follow local and national news closely. See also the #Act4QueerSafety activism by the group Momentum **https://www.momentumcanada.net/act4queersafety**

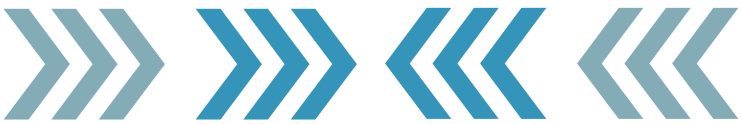
How this Manual is Organized

Teaching Beyond the Gender Binary offers resources for faculty and instructors at the University of Lethbridge in three overlapping areas:

(1.) **In the Classroom** offers information and resources on topics such as Student Names and Pronouns, Navigating Technical Systems, and Unpaid Emotional Labour;

(2.) **Curricular and Pedagogical Considerations** offers some overarching tips and resources to open up avenues for the decentering of cisnormativity in curriculum design and pedagogical design/strategies; and

(3.) **Supporting Students** provides resources to support students outside the context of the classroom and action items that you can take to further your own knowledge and advocacy.



1. In the Classroom

"I think it's something as small as talking to the class with gender neutral pronouns. . . addressing the class not by 'ladies and gentlemen' [or] 'boys and girls,' because that inherently leaves out other people. So even something as small as that and using less gendered terms, that would be really affirming to know that people are willing to put in that effort. And it's such a small change." ~ Ryder

"So much can be done in the first days and weeks of a course to set up expectations and create a culture of safety for trans, non-binary and genderqueer students." ~ Eva

1.1 Introduction

When trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students experience the classroom (and larger university campus) as a welcoming, hospitable, and affirming place, they are more likely to feel present in the space and empowered to participate and learn.

Classrooms are a site of negotiating the complex dynamics of visibility under interlocking conditions of settler colonialism, white supremacy, ableism, heteronormativity, and cisnormativity. Trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students often experience invisibility (for example, their identities and experiences are not included in course curriculum) and/or hypervisibility (for example, for visibly transgressing gendered norms, thinking they are the only trans person in the room, experiencing pressure to represent "the community"). **Queenie** told us that **they feel extra visible as a person of colour and because their "gender presentation does not match what white people expect an Asian woman to look like," they feel even more conscious of being hyper-visible.**

Coming out, in the context of the classroom, is the act of disclosing one's gender identity and/or sexual identity that does not conform with normative cisgender and heterosexual identities. Coming out is not a one-time event, but a life-long process and negotiation.

Decisions about the who/when/where/how/why of coming out are intimately linked with emotional wellbeing and physical safety. When a queer or trans person is forcibly "outed" in the classroom (or elsewhere), they are denied agency and subjected to varying degrees of harassment and discrimination by peers and faculty members. This can occur, for example, when they are identified by a legal name when they indicated a desire to use a chosen name, or when an incorrect pronoun is used, and the individual must correct the mistake. As **Eric** told us, professors need **"to be careful of the language you use because you don't want to out them or do anything that might put them in harm. . . it's awful. It takes the power away from you to disclose that information to others. Now it's public information that you [a student] did not consent to."**

Coming out in a classroom that fosters acceptance and affirmation, one that endeavours to decenter cisnormativity/heteronormativity, can be a source of euphoria. Coming out doesn't have to be awkward, uncomfortable, or forced. It can be a source of celebration and an invitation to develop respectful learning amongst cisgender peers about experiences and perspectives. By working to foster classrooms that actively create hospitable and affirming environments for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students, by addressing the cisnormativity of university systems and our own curricula, we can dismantle victimization as a core experience.

The students with whom we spoke as well as the larger body of literature situate Student Names and Pronouns as key topics. As part of the work of fostering a classroom environment in which trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students feel welcomed and affirmed, respectful and consistent use of the **correct name** and **pronouns** for each student is essential. It is to this that we now turn.

> **"The goal is to try and build inclusive classrooms…It's not just about memorizing the content; it's actually about building that right in." ~ Blaine**

1.2 Respecting Student Names

When trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students are addressed by their deadname, the impacts surpass simple discomfort and awkwardness. Deadnaming and misgendering represent ongoing invalidations of gender identity and denies self-determination. It can elicit a broad range of emotional and psychological reactions, including fear, anger, isolation, and shame.

Deadnaming can make a student feel invisible in that their gender identity is neither respected nor welcome, or hypervisible in that all eyes are on them for being the "other" and thus potentially feeling outed. When an educator deadnames a student and does not correct the mistake or makes excuses as to why they cannot or will not use the correct name (for example, "it's too hard"), the trans, non-binary, or genderqueer student's cisgender peers learn that deadnaming is acceptable.

"The bare minimum that I ask for in my university classes is 'Just use my name.'" ~ Ryder

> **"It [misgendering] terrified me, it made me feel a little less safe. Even though everything is online, and I don't have to specify that I am trans, it made me feel like I kind of had to hide away from my own identity, because these people were misgendering this one person, and I had to listen to them, and hear a lot of students say that they/them pronouns was too hard for them. If they couldn't adopt a gender-neutral pronoun, how could they change the way they view someone's gender identity completely to the other binary." ~ Elio**

Students told us that being misgendered directly impacted their ability to learn and engage with course materials.

> **"When someone deadnames me or uses the wrong pronouns, it ends up almost taking me out of what I am supposed to be doing...I'm trying to find ways to present more masculine and more androgynous so that I don't have these experiences and so that I can focus on what I'm supposed to be doing. Because it's become such a huge thing that it's taking me away from my everyday experiences." ~ Ryder**

By ensuring that we, as educators, are doing the work of prioritizing the use of chosen names and correcting ourselves when mistakes are made, we actively contribute to trans,

non-binary, and genderqueer students feeling seen, heard, and affirmed in their deserving of respect and dignity.

What You Can Do

Invite students to share with you their non-legal name prior to the start of class. **Include information on your syllabus for how to change a legal name or register a chosen name** (student profile, ID card, email address, etc.).

We often send introductory emails to our students before a course begins, with greetings and important information about the course. Here is a sample script you could include with respect to pronouns and names[4]:

> "Ensuring all students are addressed by the name and pronouns they wish to be addressed by is a priority in my classroom. Here are instructions and links regarding student name change processes on campus:
>
> - Students can request a change to their legal name on University documents by completing and sending **this form** by email to **regoffice@uleth.ca** or drop it off in person at the Student Enrolment and Registrar Services office (SU140) or the Calgary Campus Office (S6032).
>
> - Students can request to have a chosen first name added to their student record, email address and student ID card by **submitting a request form**. This allows a chosen, non-legal first name to be displayed in university systems such as email, Moodle, Zoom, and Office 365. Within Banner, this name is called a "Preferred" name. I recognize the inherent issues with this terminology and seek to refer to said names as "chosen" or "lived" names when a distinction from legal name is necessary. Adding a chosen name does not replace your legal first name on official University records and documents. Please feel free to contact me for further support or information on this topic.
>
> For students who are concerned about having the wrong name used in class, please feel free to contact me and let me know what name you wish to go by. This is also an opportunity to share your pronouns if you feel comfortable doing so.
>
> I will work to ensure that I use correct pronouns and names. In the case a mistake is made, students should feel comfortable and supported in making corrections. I

[4] Please note that the links provided here are current as of May 2023.

acknowledge the inherent vulnerability of making such a correction and express no pressure to do so, only that it is welcomed in my classroom, and you will be supported by myself and other educators in the classroom."

Allow students a chance to state their name instead of reading the class roster aloud in case the roster represents a prior name. Do not make assumptions based on the class roster or the student's appearance. Using course rosters to match names with faces and assuming gender identities is not an inclusive practice for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students.

Make a note of any students who share a chosen name with you and update course roster(s) accordingly. Ensure that the correct name is used in class, in conversations with and about the student, in all correspondence, printed or digital materials, and anywhere else that their legal name is not mandated by institutional policies.

- If you are aware of a student's former name that they do not use, either because you knew them before they changed it or because it is on the roster, do not use it or reveal it to others. Well-meaning comments like "I knew Gina when she was Bill," even if meant supportively, reveal what might feel like personal information to the student (Spade, 2011).

Avoid disclosing the legal or dead name of any student to other students or faculty members to prevent potential harassment, discrimination, and transantagonism.

- Generally, never ask personal questions of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer people that you would not ask of others. For example, never ask about a trans person's body or medical care, their old name, why or how they know they are trans, non-binary, or genderqueer, their sexual orientation, their family's reaction to their gender identity, or any other questions that are irrelevant to your relationship with them unless they invite you to do so or voluntarily share the information (Spade, 2011, p. 58).

Make kind (but firm) corrections when students, administrators, staff, and other faculty members utilize the wrong name for a student when you know the student is out to those individuals.

- If you are not sure that the student is out to that individual or to the broader campus community, refrain from making an initial correction until you are able to confirm.
- Through private conversation or email, inform the student that you witnessed an individual use a different name or pronoun than you use for them and ask if they wish you to offer corrections in the future. This ensures the student's agency to decide who they are out to and when is respected and allows you to gain guidance on how to navigate those situations in the future without causing further harm.

1.3 On Pronouns

> **"In order for my pronouns to be used I had to come out of the closet as trans a lot. . . And I would have to do it in front of the whole class or with the professor privately. And it would have been a lot more comfortable for me if the professors encouraged the students to use they/them pronouns for people initially. That way I wouldn't have to come out of the closet so often." ~ Elio**

It is becoming increasingly commonplace to attach one's pronouns (she/her, his/him, they/them, or any combination thereof) to an email signature, to Zoom display names, and/or to invite students to share pronouns in the classroom. As with names, our student interviewees as well as the literature (Golberg, 2019; Airton, 2018; Wentling, 2015) indicate that sharing one's pronouns can be a meaningful way to create welcoming, hospitable, and affirming learning environments for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students.

The inconsistent use of correct pronouns works against such efforts, where, for example, faculty ask for pronouns but then fail to implement them consistently. In situations where learning the pronouns of all students is not feasible (ex: a lecture hall of 200+ students), defaulting to "they/them" or using gender-neutral terms such as "your classmate" avoids making unfounded assumptions.

Defaulting to a binary gendered pronoun (e.g., she or he) not only communicates to students that the effort to utilize their pronouns is "too great" or "unreasonable" but that their identities are illegible and thus invisible to their peers and to educators. Ty shared an experience of a professor's refusal to acknowledge Ty's correct pronouns during an oral examination such that the focus then became about pronoun use rather than Ty's research accomplishments.

Using the correct pronouns and knowing what to do when mistakes (**See: Navigating Pronouns 101**) are made is a way of indicating respect to trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students. It asserts that trans, non-binary, and genderqueer identities and lives are not up for debate.

When to use Singular 'They':

- When you are unsure of an individual's pronouns.
- When an individual uses they/them/theirs pronouns.
- In place of "he/she" or "his/hers" in writing, presentations, and exams when referring to individuals in general and not a specific person, such as when setting a scenario or writing an exam question.
- In general, to replace he/she when speaking to hypothetical people to foster greater representation of non-binary individuals and to de-center binary gender pronouns as the norm.

What You Can Do

Acknowledge that certain terminologies carry gendered meanings and avoid using gendered terms. For example:

- Avoid using gendered honorifics such as Mr., Ms., Mrs. which assume a binary gender identity.
- Be aware of gendered terms used to address groups, such as "you guys" and "ladies and gentlemen." Implement gender-neutral options such as "everyone," "folks," or "students."

Affirm people's experiences and identities.

- e.g., Use "they are non-binary," not "they call themselves non-binary."

Ask. For example, if you meet a student outside the classroom in a setting where they did not already get to self-identify and you are not sure of the proper pronouns for them, ask. One way to do this is by sharing your own. "I use she/her pronouns. I want to make sure to address you correctly. How do you like to be addressed?" This may seem like a strange thing to do but a person who often experiences being addressed incorrectly may see it as a

sign of respect that you are interested in getting it right rather than making assumptions (Spade, 2011, p. 59).

Prioritize people's self-determination and privacy.

- e.g., Use "she has not disclosed details about her history," rather than "she is closeted."

Prioritize 'they/them' pronouns during all classroom & individual interactions with students, in presentation slides, hand-outs, exams, etc. (see Section 2)

Practice using pronouns unfamiliar to you such as the singular "they." Try practicing out loud (verbally) to yourself. For example, "This is Sam, they're taking my course this semester" or "They submitted an article they wrote based on their research."

Share your pronouns in email signatures, Zoom display (or other online platforms), in class introductions.

"There is always a little bit of hesitation when it comes to pronoun usage. . . It's hard to share right away. I feel I have to sort of judge the room first…I'm hesitant and I'm willing to sort of wait and withhold the information and see if I can wait and make a judgment to see okay, who would be cool with this and who wouldn't?" ~ Eva

Navigating Pronouns 101: A guide to handling instances of misgendering with grace

[5]

[5] Affinity Community Services, (2020) (used with permission)

Invite Students to Share Pronouns

- Include a pronoun space on an introductory survey or similar exercise.
- Utilize name tags or name tents to be displayed on desks as a way for students to share their pronouns.
- Allow for students to share their pronouns with you in a way that does not negatively increase visibility - Make pronoun sharing an option during spoken introductions but not mandatory.

Not all students may want to share their pronouns depending on where they are in the process of understanding or coming into their identity. Not all students want to make that knowledge public. "What feels like safety for some students can feel like surveillance and, in fact, feel very unsafe for others" (Zaborskis, 2023, p. 91).

> **"Introducing yourself with pronouns but not expecting everyone to introduce themselves with pronouns. . .the sheer fact that introducing yourself with pronouns helps to hold space for students to do so if they want to." ~ Blaine**

Pronouns don't tell you anything about a person other than how to refer to them. Yet assumptions are nonetheless made about that person which can flatten a wide spectrum of experiences and asynchronicities between their pronouns/gender identity/gender presentation (Zaborskis, 2023, p. 91). Related to this, not every culture organizes conceptualizations of gender and sexuality, and identity, in ways that the English language does. To mandate the sharing of pronouns or expect everyone to participate, centers North American/white settler-based modes of gender, sexuality, and the self (ibid).

1.4 Navigating Technical Systems

> **"It was really, really difficult to change my name in the system…I still haven't been able to change my email. . . I'm constantly having to tell people. Not as much anymore, now that it finally got changed, but as soon as I met people for group assignments, as soon as I met the professors, as soon as I had to talk in class even, I would have to introduce myself and say that my pronouns are this, just in case that they would misgender me." ~ Elio**

Many universities across Canada struggle with issues of balancing legal requirements and technological limitations with emerging considerations about how to manage the private information of students when access to that information can negatively impact trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students.

As of May 2023, the "Apply Alberta - Alberta Post-Secondary Application System" provides a non-binary option in addition to M and F.

Current and former students can **request a change to their legal name on university documents**.

Current students can **request to have a "preferred" first name added to their student record.** This allows a student's non-legal first name to be displayed in university systems such as email, Moodle, Zoom, and Office 365. It is important to note that with a "preferred" first name, a current student's *legal* first name remains on official University records and documents unless a request is made to change their legal name (see above).

The use of the term "**preferred**" serves to reproduce understandings of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer identities as a **preference** as opposed to a **lived reality**.

Qualifying the pronouns and names of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer folks as "**preferred**," (a qualification absent from the names and pronouns of their cisgender counterparts) relies on a frame of "personal choice" rather than a (necessary) part of one's lived gender identity.

Moreover, "**preferred**" also implies a choice whether to respect said names and pronouns. When referring to a name that is not a legal name, we can use terms such as "chosen" or "lived" name.

Although it may not be evident from the perspective of a cisgender data manager, access to a legal name bears significant risk of harm. Therefore, it is important that the perspectives of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students (and employees) be included in decision making and systems analyses.

What You Can Do

For educators, it is important to understand how information is collected and managed at our institutions, especially when we rely on said information to engage with students. Providing information to students on name change processes and options is an important step towards ensuring students can be consistently addressed by the correct name.

Learn how Information Technology Services (ITS), student information systems (at the University of Lethbridge, this is Banner), and administrators manage student information. Identify where a student's legal name could show up in your classroom and related digital systems.

Learn how students can update their legal name or add a chosen or lived name to their personal information. Identify where chosen names are used and where they are not. Include this information in course resources.

Identify where legal names are required (if at all) in your learning spaces and on which documents, and ensure legal names are only used where required and in a manner that ensures privacy.

- Think of a deadname as a Social Insurance Number, to be used when legally required, but kept private outside those applications.

Frame the access to the legal names of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students as a safety and privacy issue:

- Students being outed due to unregulated access to legal names and lack of consistent use of the "preferred" name field can and has resulted in the outing of students and

"For the most part, it's been really hard with my name. My legal name is still on all my university things, the university issued things like my ID, Moodle, everything that the university controls, so I get deadnamed a lot by professors." ~ Ryder

increases the potential for transantagonism, which directly impacts the privacy and safety of students.

Identify the resources that exist on campus and in the community to support trans, non-binary, and genderqueer folks seeking to change their name through legal processes (**see Section 3.2**)

Advocate for improvements to university systems and processes to ensure that students are consistently addressed by the correct name. This entails contacting the Associate Vice President of IT, Vice-Provost President (Students), Associate Vice President (Human Resources), and/or the Vice-Provost, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion. This could also include connecting with the University of Lethbridge Students' Union to seek out connections with students facing these issues and seeking support from others within your faculty department, including department chair.

Advocate for other faculty members to engage in respectful use of student names and to provide space and resources to enable students to share and be addressed by the name that they have chosen.

1.5 Unpaid Emotional Labour of Transgender Students

> **"Trans identities get pushed under the rug or forgotten about altogether. . . There is so much to unpack here that a lot of instructors tend to gloss over it, when there is a lot of opportunity for discussion, a lot of opportunity for more learning. . . A lot of my friends at U of L are like 'you're the first trans person that I've met,' and now the burden falls on me to educate the rest of them."**
> **~ Eric**

> **"I often find that I am the sole queer or trans person in the classrooms I am in. I feel very alone when those topics come up or something needs to be said or there is a question that is left unanswered because no one knows how to answer it. Being the only one who has that knowledge and having to decide 'do I share this? Do I just stay quiet, and they'll figure it out themselves' is a bit isolating." ~ Katie**

Trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students are often expected to educate those around them. They are either positioned as "topic experts," expected to speak on behalf of their communities, or must educate others so that they can receive the same quality of education, services, or support that many of their peers receive without such labour. **Isabelle** said to us that when professors are not prepared for or lack knowledge on how to address transphobia in the classroom, this work often falls to them to educate their professor and peers. As they said, **"It should not be my job as a student to shut down, counter, or give accurate information when transphobia arises in class."**

There is often an expectation of unpaid, emotional labour placed on trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students. This can take the form of **formal advocacy work** such as bringing awareness to, and calling for action on, systemic issues that place trans, non-binary, and genderqueer folks at risk, for new or better policies, and to generally call out trans-antagonism and other forms of ignorance and misinformation (Goldberg, 2018, p. 11). It can also take the form of **informal advocacy work**, such as correcting mistakes around pronouns and names or sharing personal stories and anecdotes (Goldberg, 2018, p. 11).

Not only does this work entail a great deal of emotional labour, it can also require hypervisibility. When transphobic comments and/or arguments are not dealt with by

professors, **Ty** told us that **"I have to choose between being silent while harm is perpetrated on me directly and perpetrated on members of my community or choose to stand up against that oppression by actively making myself vulnerable in situations which do not feel safe."**

Token representation isolates trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students within the classroom. Expectations of unpaid emotional labour places these students at an even further disadvantage to their peers, as they have to navigate the cognitive load of being an "other" while having to constantly make themselves heard on issues both systemic and individual while also being a student and bearing the inherent stress and cost of academic study. This is further compounded by the conservative social and political climate environment of Southern Alberta, and the rise in violence against trans children, youth, and adults.

What You Can Do

Acknowledge that trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students cannot speak for or on behalf of their communities or as "topic experts."

Acknowledge that each trans, non-binary, and genderqueer individual has their own unique experiences and perspectives that are informed by the intersections of various elements of their identity.

- Deconstruct a "universal" trans experience – not all trans, non-binary, or genderqueer folks experience gender dysphoria, decide to transition, or have the same gender journey and experiences.

- Trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students come from a range of backgrounds. Race, class, and ability often intertwine with gender identity to shape student experiences in learning environments. See Section 1.6 and Section 3.5 for further resources.

Educate yourself and your students on topics related to cisnormativity, gender identity, gender expression, and the experiences and perspectives of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students:

- As they relate to subject materials; and

- As a means to begin to mitigate the burden and responsibility that trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students may feel to educate others in the classroom.

Ultimately, shifting the inequitable emotional labour of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students must happen through cultivating a sense of personal and collective responsibility that is enduring, sustainable, responsive, and relational.

1.6 Further Resources

- Vivek Shraya. (2018). ***I'm Afraid of Men***. Penguin Canada

  From critically acclaimed multi-media artist, Vivek Shraya, this book looks at how we might reimagine gender for the twenty-first century.

- "**The Harm of Using 'Dead Names'**" - Queer Cafe

  Excellent resource on the harms of deadnaming

- **This is What Gender Non-binary People Look Like** - they.us

  Interviews with various people about what being non-binary means to them.

- **Trans 101** - Trans101.au

  A series of videos: "Being Trans, Gender Identity, and What It's All About."

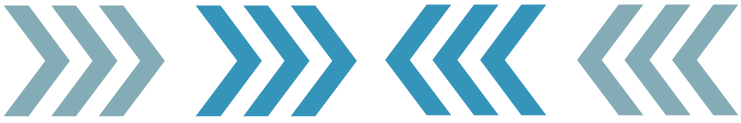
- **The Gift of Gender Authenticity** - TedTalk by Jean Malpas

  Supporting gender-expansive children and youth.

- **ALOK** - Website of Alok, internationally acclaimed author, poet, and public speaker

- **Pronouns and Cultures of Respect** - University of Alberta

  Q&A with Dr. Tommy Mayberry (Executive Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning at the U of A), about using gender pronouns and creating inclusive campus spaces.



2. Curricular and Pedagogical Considerations

“Find the contributions of trans folks to the sciences. Make space for trans folks to contribute more as researchers in studies. Use gender neutral pronouns and more ambiguous, even more diverse names in exam questions.” ~ Aidan

“Having professors who are trained in understanding how to be gender inclusive but also there being a dialogue about looking at what is being taught. You can put your pronouns in your email, you make sure you ask everyone’s pronouns and be really inclusive and maybe even throw in a couple of trans scholars or writings about gender identity to spice up your topic, but if your core topic of your teaching is either completely absent of gender diverse folks or is based on the gender binary or is based on biological sex as a determinant of everything then what’s the point of all the other stuff? It’s just performative if you're not also critiquing your content.” ~ Katie

2.1 Introduction

When we reproduce the gender/sex binary in the classroom, we engage in the ongoing investment of academia in normative structures that position cisgender experiences as "natural" "normal" and "standard." Cisnormativity takes many forms within academia, whether it be in the privileging of binary sex and gender in demographic categories of research projects, in teaching scenarios or exam questions, and in textbooks where the hypothetical actors are always "he" or "she," typically with a very gender-unambiguous name. In other words, as **Aidan** said to us, **"the examples that are used in classes and how the questions are written: always cis pronouns, cis names, gender binary."**

> **In terms of teaching math problem solving, why do we always have 'Mark bought eight watermelons' and 'he did' this or 'Sally did this and she….' We can really just use they/them pronouns throughout most problems. It fits just as well, and it works. Yeah, you've got to take your problem and reword it, but it's worth it. Replace '(s)he' with 'they/them' pronouns. Avoid gendered language wherever it's not necessary." ~ Blaine**

Queenie said the masculine environment of their field lends towards no discussion of gender at all. They thus **notice a tendency in their discipline for professors to default to male pronouns when referring to the class or in the text of problems the class is asked to solve.**

In this section, we offer some overarching tips and resources to open up avenues for the decentering of binary gender and cisnormativity in curricula design and pedagogical design/strategies.

The resources offered are not exhaustive. Our concern, rather, is to spark your thinking, knowing that curriculum and pedagogies shift, are contextual, and often emerge from within the knowledges, relations, and configurations of the classroom. To rethink approaches to teaching outside the terms of cisnormativity takes time and thought. It might challenge normative disciplinary tenets. Perhaps you begin by simply re-writing exams to include gender-neutral language. Perhaps you include trans scholarship as part of your course reading list. Perhaps you re-write a syllabus from scratch. We invite you to try!

2.2 Developing Your Curriculum

Students we spoke with observed/identified three main ways that cisnormativity reproduced itself in course curricula:

- insistence on the 'truth' of binary sex and gender as beyond reproach;
- ignoring the topic of complexities of gender, gender identities, cisnormativity all together coupled with a lack of preparation to discuss; and
- the silo-ing of queer and trans topics into just one week of the semester and/or the expectation that inviting a guest speaker to represent all queer and trans experience is sufficient.

"A professor took extra efforts to contextualize the language of older references and studies and critiqued the lack of gender analysis in them. Little things like this make a big difference and these should be best practices, not something exceptional." ~ Isabelle

Students expressed the discomfort all of this caused and that **"you have to have a thick skin" (Katie)** to be in such learning environments.

We also heard experiences of professors connecting analysis of gender identity to a course curriculum regardless of whether there are trans folks in the class or not**: "It felt like that was planned from day one and [this professor] never used my transness as part of it." ~ Blaine**

What You Can Do

Audit Teaching Materials & Course Content

- **Review textbooks, slideshows, and other teaching materials:**

Note where gendered pronouns and other gender norms are included. Make adjustments, explore other options, or include an acknowledgement of the limitations of the text and offer alternatives that expand upon the foundational knowledge of the text to go beyond cisnormativity and the sex/gender binary.

As **Queenie** remarked to us, **"find language and style guides in your discipline that demonstrate the use of gender non-specific language in course and research content."**

Lots of people's bodies do not fit the rigid story about 'biological sex.' They include trans people, genderqueer people, people with intersex bodies, people who cannot or choose not to reproduce, cisgender women who have had hysterectomies, and many others. Many people will benefit from our efforts to dismantle the gendered language about bodies that enforces harmful norms.

"Look for studies that include gender diverse people, because so many studies will just look at men and women. It's so important to include non-binary, trans, and especially intersex folks." ~ Aidan

In courses ranging from biology to psychology to kinesiology to sociology to women's and gender studies to education to health to anthropology that include topics about assigned sex and sexed and gendered bodies, we can decenter cisnormative language (or at least acknowledge that language is imperfect at best). Try to talk in ways that get out of compulsory gender assignment of body parts (Spade, 2011).

For example, because reproductive body parts/organs are often viewed as being synonymous with gender, we can avoid using gendered words to describe human anatomy. We can talk about uteruses, ovaries, penises, vulvas, etc. without assigning these parts a gender.

> The term "internal reproductive organs" can be a useful way to talk generally about ovaries, uteruses, and the like without calling them "female reproductive organs."
>
> Rather than saying things like 'male body parts" or "female bodies" we can say "bodies with penises", bodies with uteruses", "people with ovaries", "people with a prostate", "people who menstruate", "people who are pregnant" and skip the assumption that these body parts correlate with a gender.

Or, when discussing human reproduction and genetics, we often unintentionally assume gender and imply heteronormative family structures.

> Instead, try using language such as 'egg (donor)' or 'sperm (donor)' in place of 'genetic mom/dad/parent' or 'biological mom/dad/parent.' Try using "pregnant person" and if the relationship is known, try using "partner(s) in the pregnancy" instead of "mom," "dad," and/or "parent." (Cooper et al., 2020).

We can also include intersex bodies in discussions of 'biological' sex as a way to decentre the sex/gender binary and to normalize the idea that intersex bodies are not just a "statistical anomaly" but represent common, lived experiences. These examples can "help students grapple with the reality that there is a diverse, non-binary range of hormones, chromosomes, and sex characteristics" (Cooper et al., 2020, pp. 12-13)

> If we know we are going to be talking about bodies, taking the adjectives 'male' and 'female' or 'masculine' and feminine' out of our vocabularies for describing body parts or systems can help us avoid alienating our students. (Spade, 2011)

See also the **Guide to Inclusive Language** (University of Victoria).

- **Include Trans Scholarship:**

Many of the disciplines we teach readily lend themselves to including trans scholarship as part of course readings; for example, trans theories on sex/gender, gender socialization, media images, workplace, body image, cultural production…the list goes on. This scholarship offers an opportunity to incorporate the voices and lived experiences of those who cross and stand outside of the gender binary, but it offers more than simply the 'experiential.' Trans scholarship stands on its own merit, providing unique theoretical and conceptual tools that invite dialogue 'beyond' the gender binary.

"Teaching that gender nonconforming people have always existed, and trans people have always existed and celebrating and acknowledging trans people's accomplishments throughout history. It's very important because there's still this rampant idea that non-binary is new and you're just going with a fad." ~ Eva

Course content on trans/non-binary/genderqueer topics and/or incorporation of trans scholarship tends to be taught in the 'special guest' model (Drabinski, 2011). That is, even when these topics are included in syllabi and in course content, they are addressed only briefly, in isolation, or without sufficient depth. Trans scholars and scholarship can be found in the fields of fine arts, law, new media, sociology, political science, psychology, women's and gender studies, critical race studies, health sciences, biological sciences, social work, and sports studies/kinesiology.

The analytic insights provided by such scholarship are applicable to a range of topics across many more disciplines. If we focus on disrupting cisnormative ways of reading, thinking, and writing throughout our courses, the 'special guest' model of inclusion becomes irrelevant.

Related to this, is to create space in course content for the diversity of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer experiences and trans scholarship. This can work to counter the institutionalization of whiteness in much of our scholarship and disciplines.

> **"As a person of colour, I find that representations of trans individuals in the classroom are lacking…To be able to show how diverse the community actually is, is important. I don't want to enter a classroom assuming a trans student behaves in a certain way, struggles in a certain way, succeeds in a different way, and acts and does things in a certain way because that's what**

has been taught in the classroom. I don't think that is a very accurate representation of a lot of trans folks out there." ~ Eric

This connects to the earlier discussion **about going beyond inclusion**. Be sure that what you are including in class does not limit representation to only white trans, non-binary, and genderqueer people with wealth. Do the work to ground your curriculum in the voices, knowledges, and scholarship of trans, non-binary, and gender queer people of colour, with disabilities, and so forth. If you cannot find the representation you are looking for, ask a trusted colleague or librarian.

One way to begin rethinking your course content is to incorporate the E.H.R.R method developed by Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, PhD student in Sociology & Decolonial Hub founder at Concordia University (Kouri-Towe & Martel-Perry, 2021):

- **Empathize** with the affected population, group, or individual(s) by thinking about the potential impact that content could have on people who have experienced harm before even entering the classroom.
- **Historicize** the content and learn more about how/why some content can be harmful and/or violent; make a distinction between violent content and unpleasant content.
- **Remove** content that is harmful and that does not serve learning from the classroom and course materials—if the semester has already started, discuss with students why the content is being removed.
- **Replace** the content with something generative and informative, do not simply avoid learning about violence.

If you do invite trans, non-binary, and/or genderqueer speakers to your class, make sure that they are compensated fairly for their time and intellectual contributions.

2.3 Pedagogical Approaches

Teaching beyond the gender binary includes shifting curriculum and course content, but also how we engage with students in the classroom through our pedagogical practices. Our pedagogical approaches are central to creating welcoming, hospitable, and affirming learning spaces.

With this section, we want to encourage you to think carefully about y/our pedagogical choices and how these might impact trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students.

The sources we primarily draw from and highly recommend are:

- **Better Practices in the Sexuality Classroom: Teaching Resources and Guides for Sustainable and Equitable Learning** by Natalie Kouri-Towe and Myloe Martel-Perry, Concordia University;
- **Guide for Inclusive Teaching at Columbia** produced by the Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning.

What You Can Do

Evaluate Classroom Practices That Rely on Binary Gender Groupings

Identify when assignments, classroom exercises (or other academic work) require people to be divided by binary gender or assigned sex. Identify alternative methods of grouping students that don't enforce the gender/sex binary. Include everyone in a wide range of classroom activities and offer equitable opportunity for participation" (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d., p. 24). As **Ty** shared with us, **"creating gender/sex-based groups for classroom activities means feeling isolated and alienated as a non-binary person."**

Eva suggested **that in smaller class sizes, a professor could gently correct when one student is misgendering another student because it takes a lot for students to do that themselves.**

Model Your Own Journey of Learning and Engagement

Students recounted to us both their disappointments and stress about classroom experiences where instructors dismissed or ignored or belittled their realities. They also told us of appreciating the efforts that instructors make.

As educators, the value of the example we set for students cannot be understated. By making respectful name use a priority and addressing when missteps occur, we can deconstruct the purported optional nature of this task. Affirming gender identities beyond the binary cannot be an optional practice that hinges on convenience or personal opinion, but rather a pedagogy of harm reduction. We are bound to make mistakes - that is part of learning. Important here is to take responsibility, make a commitment to engage in reflection and "follow up on how you'll take accountability and what changes you'll make" (Kouri-Towe & Martel-Perry, 2021, p. 41).

Foster Respect and Support

While the language of 'safe space' is often employed to describe an ideal classroom environment, safety cannot be completely guaranteed. Our students arrive to our classes bringing with them a multitude of histories, experiences, and beliefs. It is more realistic and tangible to work towards creating an atmosphere of respect, where we learn with kindness and generosity.

"When professors put in effort, it is visible, and it makes me feel welcomed. These efforts are noticed by my cisgender classmates. Efforts to include more perspectives make courses more interesting and engaging for everyone. It means a lot to me when professors take the time to set expectations and demonstrate those expectations themselves." ~ Ty

Tracy Lindberg (As'in'i'wa'chi Ni'yaw Nation Rocky Mountain Cree) (2015) offers a principle of allowing for "kind mistakes." This means:

> You have the right to make kind mistakes. You will make mistakes and it is your responsibility to be as informed as possible when you get to class in order that your mistake is kind.
>
> It actually does hurt us, as humans, to hear stereotypes, generalizations and racialized understandings about Indigenous peoples. While we can all make kind mistakes, let us also be fully informed and gentle as we are talking about people in the room. You have the right to ask any question. If you are shy or uncomfortable, please write it down and we will answer it during / as part of a lecture.
>
> Our goal in this course is to acknowledge that we have relationships with each other as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. These relationships must be respectful and reciprocal in order for us to share space and ideas (inside of this classroom and out).

Avoiding difficult topics to negate the need for difficult discussions can have a negative impact on student learning and can diminish feelings of belonging, especially for students who are represented within the topic. In the words of Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee) (2018):

> "We can have sharp, even contentious arguments, but still return to the conversation and to our relationships when we're done; in other words, we can hold each other to account as we hold each other up – they needn't be mutually exclusive practices. We are sorely in need of more accountable kindness in our critical work as well as in our relationships… But kindness shouldn't be mistaken for docility. It's not a kind act to allow problematic or even destructive ideas to pass unchallenged, but we can do so with generosity and empathy" (p. xxi).

Kouri-Towe and Martel-Perry (2021, p. 39) offer some strategies to navigate difficult discussions include:

- Pause the discussion and encourage students to take a moment to reflect,
- Identify if time and space are needed for emotional equilibrium and self-regulation (i.e., do we need to calm down, do a collective or individual breathing exercise?);
- Pause the discussion with the intention of returning to the subject later, to allow students (and educators to) to "cool off" and possibly do further research to be prepared to engage in the discussion. Make a clear statement that the discussion is being put on pause with the intention of revisiting at a later class.
- Acknowledge that impact of positionality and personal experience on interpretations of the subject and that these factors can make it difficult to "find common ground for discussion";
- Acknowledge the inherent complexity of the topic and considering that we as a society have not solved these issues, it is unlikely such a solution will be reached in the classroom;
- Acknowledge that the classroom can be a space that reinforces systemic violence and affirm your commitment to helping class work through an understanding of this, or offer strategies for how to transform these dynamics;
- Encourage curiosity and openness towards viewpoints and perspectives that are different by learning about what informs these perspectives and experiences.

2.4 Discipline Specific Resources

What follows are resources for you to build course syllabi that are inclusive of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer perspectives, topics, and issues in your discipline. This list is by no means exhaustive. In general terms, the **Trans Studies Syllabus for Bullshit Times** offers materials to help students historicize current anti-trans legislation, contextualize it within broader legacies of repression and resistance that stretch beyond the law, and think across multiple strands of political struggle (Beauchamp et al, May 2023). We encourage you to explore further and do the intellectual labour of researching your own field. May these resources be a jumping off point for you!

Academic Writing

Baron, D. (2018, September 4). **A brief history of singular "They,"** *Oxford English Dictionary blog*.

Government of Canada. (2023). ***Gender-Inclusive writing: Guidelines for writing to or about nonbinary individuals.***

Lee, C. (2019, October 31). **Welcome, Singular 'They'**. *APA Style blog.*

Trans Journalists Association. (n.d.). ***Style Guide***.

Anthropology

The Association for Queer Anthropology. (n.d.). ***Syllabi Resources***.

Walks, M. (2014). "We're here and we're queer?": An introduction to studies in queer anthropology. *Anthropologica, 56(*1), 13-16.

Weiss, M. (2022). Queer theory from elsewhere and the im/proper objects of queer anthropology. *Feminist Anthropology, 3*(2), 315-335.

Wilson, A. (2019). **Queer Anthropology.** *The Open Encyclopedia of Anthropology*.

Biological Sciences

American Society for Microbiology. (2021). **Creating more LGBTQIA-inclusive biology learning environments.**

Cooper, K. M., et al. (2020). **Fourteen recommendations to create a more inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ individuals in academic biology**. *CBE—Life Sciences Education, 19*(3).

Mercer-Mapstone, L. et al. (2021). Breaking the binary: Conceptions of sex and gender in undergraduate science. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, *9*(2).

Zemenick A. T. et al. (2022). Six principles for embracing gender and sexual diversity in postsecondary biology classrooms. *BioScience, 72*(5), 481-492.

Business & Economics

California Polytechnic State University. (n.d.). **Diversity & Inclusion in Business and Economics**.

Thoroughgood, C. N., Sawyer, K. & Webster, J. R. (2020). **Creating a trans-inclusive workplace.** *Harvard Business Review.*

Computer Science & Mathematics

Oleson, A. et al. (2022). **A Decade of Demographics in Computing Education Research: A Critical Review of Trends in Collection, Reporting, and Use**. *Proceedings of the 2022 ACM Conference on International Computing Education Research.*

Paré, D. (2021). ***A critical review and new directions for queering computing and computing education***. In G. Noblit (Ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. Oxford University Press.

Richard, T.S., Wiese, E.S. & Rakamarić, Z. (2022). **An LGBTQ-inclusive problem set in discrete mathematics**. *Proceedings of the 53rd ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education.*

Whipple, K. (n.d.). ***How do we make math class more inclusive of trans and non-binary identities.*** GLSEN.
NB: this is directed towards K-12 education but there are nonetheless some excellent ideas.

Education

American Psychological Association. (2020). ***A resource for incorporating trans and gender diverse issues into counseling psychology curricula***. APA Division 17

Special Task Group: *Making Room at the Table: Trans/Nonbinary Pipeline to Counseling Psychology*.

Batchelor, K., Ramos, M., & Neiswander, S. (2018). Opening doors: Teaching LGBTQ-themed young adult literature for an inclusive curriculum. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas, 91*(1), 29-36.

Kean, E. (2020). Locating transgender within the language of queer in teacher education. *Multicultural Perspectives, 22*(2), 57-67.

Murray, O. J. (2014). *Queer inclusion in teacher education: Bridging theory, research, and practices.* Routledge.

English

Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English [ACCUTE]. (2021, June 01). ***Equity Statement***.

Eastwood, A. (2014). How, then, might the transsexual read?: Notes toward a trans literary history. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly, 1*(4), 590-604.

Fine Arts

Getsy, D. J., & Gossett, C. (2021). A syllabus on transgender and nonbinary methods for art and art history. *Art Journal, 80*(4), 100-115.

Gossett, R., Stanley, E. A., Burton, J. (Eds). (2017). *Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility*. MIT Press.

Metzger, C., & Ringelberg, K. (2020). Prismatic views: A look at the growing field of transgender art and visual Cultural Studies. *Journal of Visual Culture, 19*(2), 159-70.

Miller, J. R. (2016). Creating choirs that welcome transgender singers. *The Choral Journal, 57*(4), 61-63.

Palkki, J. (2017). Inclusivity in action: Transgender students in the choral classroom. *The Choral Journal*, *57*(11), 20-35.

Geography & Environment

DasGupta, D., Rosenberg, R., Catungal, J. P., & Gieseking, J. J. (2021). Pedagogies of queer and trans repair: Letters from queer geographic classrooms. *Acme: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, *20*(5), 491-508.

Kinkaid, E. (2023). Whose geography, whose future? Queering geography's disciplinary reproduction. *Dialogues in Human Geography*.

Royal Geographical Society. (n.d.) **Pride in the field**. *Geography Directions.*

Vakoch, D. (Ed.). (2021). *Transecology: Transgender perspectives on environment and nature*. Routledge.

Health Sciences

Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health

NB: CPATH is an interdisciplinary professional organization which works to support the health, wellbeing, and dignity of trans and gender diverse people.

Crawford, J. et al. (2023). **Gender-affirming care in undergraduate Nursing education: A scoping review protocol**. *BMJ Open*, *13*.

deVries, E., Kathard, H. & Müller, A. (2020). Debate: Why should gender-affirming health care be included in health science curricula? *BMC Medical Education*, *20*.

Dubin, S. N. et al. (2022). Transgender health care: Improving medical students' and residents' training and awareness. *Advances in Medical Education and Practice*, *9*, 377-391.

Kinney, M. K., & Cosgrove, D. (2022). 'Truly listen to us': Recommendations for health professionals to bolster well-being of nonbinary individuals. *International Journal of Environmental Research in Public Health, 19*(15), 9032.

Lowik, A. (2018). ***Trans-inclusive abortion services: A manual for operationalizing trans-inclusive policies and practices in an abortion setting, Canada.*** FQPN and National Abortion Federation.

Trans Care BC (n.d.). ***Gender Inclusive Language: Clinical Settings with New Clients.***

History

Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender History. (n.d.) **Syllabi**.

Feinberg L. (1996). *Transgender warriors: Making history from Joan of Arc to RuPaul*. Beacon Press.

Gill-Peterson, J. (2018). *Histories of the transgender child.* University of Minnesota Press.

Lewis, A. J. (2023, June 06). **"Free Our Siblings, Free Ourselves": Historicizing Trans Activism in the U.S., 1952-1992**. *Process: A Blog for American History*.

Rise-Up Feminist! A Digital Archive of Feminist Activism. (n.d.) **Commemorate Canada: Sharing the History and Voices of 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians.**

Snorton, C. R. (2017). *Black on both sides: A racial history of trans identity.* University of Minnesota Press.

Stryker, S. (2008). *Transgender history: The roots of today's revolution* (2nd edition). Seal Press.

Indigenous Studies

Belcourt, B. (2021). *A history of my brief body*. Random House.

Crosschild, R. (2019). ***Smudging the cystem: Rejecting the politics of traditionalism and settler homonationalism***. University of Calgary PRISM Repository.

Hunt, S. (2018). Embodying self-determination: Beyond the gender binary. In M. Greenwood, S. de Leeuw & N. M. Lindsay (Eds.), *Determinants of Indigenous peoples' health: Beyond the social* (Second Edition). Canadian Scholars Press.

Starblanket, G. (2020). Transforming the gender divide? Deconstructing femininity and masculinity in Indigenous politics. In F. MacDonald & A. Dobrowolsky (Eds.), *Turbulent times, Transformational possibilities?: Gender and politics today and tomorrow*. University of Toronto Press.

Wilson, A., Murray, J., Loutitt, S., & North Star Scott, R. (2021). Queering Indigenous land-based education. In J. Russell (Ed.), *Queer ecopedagogies: Explorations in nature, sexuality, and education*. Springer International.

Kinesiology

Griffin, P., & Carroll. H. J. (2010). ***On the team: Equal opportunity for transgender student athletes.*** National Center for Lesbian Rights.

Joseph, J. & Kriger, D. (2021). Towards a decolonizing Kinesiology ethics model. *Quest, 73*(2), 192-208.

Travers, A., and Reed, K.J. (2021). ***Transgender, non-binary and Two-Spirit youth & physical and health education: Environmental scan.*** Simon Fraser University.

Library Sciences

Billey, A. & Drabinski, E. (2019). Questioning authority: Changing library cataloging standards to be more inclusive to a gender identity spectrum. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly, 6*(1), 117-123.

Drabinski, E. (2013). Queering the catalog: Queer theory and the politics of correction. *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy 83*(2), 94-111

Hawkins, B. W. et. al. (2017). Advancing the conversation: Next steps for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer (LGBTQ) Health Sciences librarianship. *Journal of Medical Library Association, 105*(4), 316-327.

Todorinova, L., & Ortiz-Myers, M. (2019). The role of the academic library in supporting LGBTQ students: A survey of librarians and library administrators at LGBTQ-friendly colleges and universities. *College and Undergraduate Libraries, 26*(1), 66-87.

Villagran, M. A. L., & Hofman, D. (2023) "It's hard to know what we should be doing": LGBTQ+ students' library privacy in the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Sexualities,* 0(0), 1-22.

Philosophy

American Philosophical Association. (2023). **Diversity and Inclusiveness Syllabus Collection.**

Bettcher, T. M. (2019). What is Trans Philosophy? *Hypatia 34*(4), 644-667.

Psychology

Case, K. A., Stewart, B., & Tittsworth, J. (2009). Transgender across the curriculum: A psychology for inclusion, *Teaching of Psychology, 36*(2), 117-121.

Hyde et al. (2019). The future of sex and gender in Psychology: Five challenges to the gender binary. *American Psychologist, 74*(2), 171-193.

Political Science

Ayoub, P. M. (2022). Not that niche: Making room for the study of LGBTQ people in political science. *European Conference on Politics and Gender, 5*(2), 154-172.

Brettschneider, M., Burgess, S., & Keating, C. (2017). *LGBTQ politics: A critical reader.* NYU Press.
NB: See in particular Part II: LGBTQ Politics in the Discipline of Political Science.)

Thiel, M. (2018). ***Introducing Queer Theory in International Relations***.

Physics & Astronomy

American Astronomical Society (n.d.). ***LGBT+ inclusivity in Physics and Astronomy: A best practices guide*** (Second Edition). Joint publication between LGBT+ Physicists and the AAS Committee for Sexual and Gender Minorities in Astronomy.

NB: This is a fantastic resource with material pertinent to all disciplines, including hiring and promotion, departmental culture, travel, and hosting, etc.

American Physical Society. ***Resource guide for LGBT and related Issues in Physics***

American Physical Society. ***Would A transgender student feel supported in your department? LGBT climate in Physics: Building an inclusive community***.

Zvoulan, S. (2022, February 11**). Queer Theory and Physics education: Dr. Pablo Schyfter speaks with Prof. Ramón Barthelemy**. genderED.

Religious Studies

Nadar, S., & van Klinken, A**.** (2018)**.** Special Section: 'Queering the curriculum': Pedagogical explorations of gender and sexuality in Religion and Theological Studies. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 34*(1), 101-109.

Pritchard, E., & Ott, K. M. (2018). Transing and queer feminist studies and practices of religion. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 34*(1).

Social Work

Argüello, T. M. (ed). (2019). *Queer Social Work: Cases for LGBTQ+ Affirmative Practice*. Columbia University Press.

Canadian Association of Social Workers. (2017). ***Joint statement on the affirmation of gender diverse children and youth***. CASW website.

Canadian Association of Social Workers. (N.D.) ***Practice Resources***. CASW website.

Hillock, S., & Mulé, N. J. (2017). *Queering Social Work Education*. UBC Press.

O'Neill, B. J., Swan, T. A. & Mulé, N. J. (2015). *LGBTQ People and Social Work: Intersectional Perspectives*. Canadian Scholars' Press.

Shelton, J., Kroehle, K., & Andia, M. M. (2019). The trans person is not the problem: Brave spaces and structural competence as educative tools for trans justice in Social Work. *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 46(4), 97-123.

Wagaman, M. A., Shelton, J., & Carter, R. (20180. Queering the Social Work classroom: Strategies for increasing the inclusion of LGBTQ persons and experiences. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work,* 38(2), 166-182.

Sociology

Compton, D. R., Meadow, T., & Schilt, K. (Eds.). (2018). *Other, please specify: Queer methods in Sociology*. University of California Press.

Duke University Press. (2019). ***Trans Rights Syllabus.***

Grzanka, P. R. (2019). Queer survey research and the ontological dimensions of heterosexism. In A. Ghaziani and M. Brim (Eds.) *Imagining queer methods.* New York University Press.

Wentling, T., Windsor, E., & Lucal, B. (2008). Teaching transgender. *Teaching Sociology 36*(1), 49-57.

Women's and Gender Studies

Awkward-Rich, C. (2017). **Trans* Inclusion in the Classroom: Building Inclusive Syllabi**. Duke University - Learning Innovations.

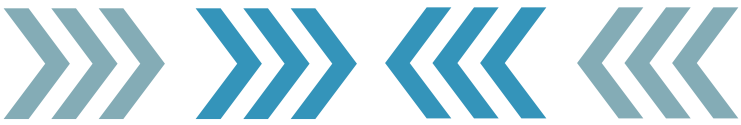
Beauchamp, T., & D'Harlingue, B. (2012). Beyond additions and exceptions: The category of transgender and new pedagogical approaches for women's studies. *Feminist Formations, 24*(2), 25-51.

Drabinksi, K. (2011). Identity matters: Teaching transgender in the women's studies classroom. *The Radical Teacher*, 92, 10-20.

Duke University Press. (2019). ***Trans Rights Syllabus.***

Malatino, H. (2015). Pedagogies of becoming: Trans inclusivity and the crafting of being. *TSQ: Trans Studies Quarterly, 2*(3), 395-410.

Tudor, A. (2021). Decolonizing trans/gender studies?: Teaching gender, race, and sexuality in times of the rise of the global right. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 8(2), 238-256.



3. Supporting Students

"Being able to just exist as myself and be able to interact with people who respect my identity, even if I don't disclose it to them. Like I'm very visibly trans, it's not something that I can hide on a day-to-day basis, but for people to just be able to interact with me as if I am as everyone else, is something that I find that really helps." ~ Eric

"When a professor shares their pronouns and models this for the class, this normalizes trans people's existence. It creates a sub-text where those who might be antagonistic to trans folks feel less safe acting out." ~Eva

3.1 Introduction

This section provides information, and resources to support trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students outside the context of the classroom. While faculty may feel limited to the classroom and academic spaces, the overall atmosphere of the campus directly and indirectly impacts the students we teach and how those students engage with their classes and course content. We can use our positions as faculty and instructors to advocate for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students so that they are able to thrive.

A key factor in feelings of belonging noted by the students we spoke with is the need for community to counter the impacts of isolation. Student services, spaces, and organizations can contribute a great deal to finding connections, accessing resources, and empowering action. By helping students to connect with LGBTQ+ affirming spaces, services, and groups, you can help support your students in seeking community and coping with potential feelings of isolation in the classroom. This can include inviting student groups and service centres to speak to your class or provide resources to include in your course materials. This can include amplifying the voices of student advocates seeking to address key issues for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students.

3.2 Knowing What Resources Exist

Take the time to become familiar with what services, resources, and supports exist on campus and in the community for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students. This can be a positive step towards fostering strong relationships with students and supporting students who may be struggling in the face of cisnormative racist, classist, ableist, and overall transantagonistic systems in which they live, work, and learn. Often, these resources are not widely known or utilized. Helping to increase visibility and awareness of campus & community resources is a good first step in supporting students. Consider making a one-time or ongoing donation to community-based organizations.

What You Can Do

Locate Resources on Campus

- **Relevant Institutional Policies** & pathways for reporting harassment, discrimination, and gender-based violence.
    - University of Lethbridge Harassment & Discrimination Policy
    - University of Lethbridge Sexual and Gender-based Violence Policy
    - uLethbridge Sexual Violence Support & Education - Information and support in reporting harassment, discrimination, and violence.
    - uLethbridge Campus Safety – Safety Reporting - Information on how to report harassment, discrimination, and bullying.
- **Digital Resources**, such as resource databases for queer and trans students. An example would be the University of Lethbridge's 2SLGBTQ+ Resource page. It contains student resources, campus policies, information on how to inform the ULeth Registrar about a legal name change or request the addition of a "preferred" name to their student records, email, and ID card; educational information, and other helpful information for 2SLGBTQ+ folks and allies.

- **Student Groups** such as:
    - Q-Space Student-run club & safe space for 2SLGBTQ+ students.
        - Facebook: facebook.com/q.spaceuleth
        - Instagram: @q.spaceuleth
        - Email: qspace@uleth.ca
    - Campus Collective Centre: Student-run support centre and resource hub focused on social justice and student advocacy.
        - Facebook: facebook.com/UlethCollective
        - Instagram: @ulethcollective
        - Email: collective.centre@uleth.ca
    - All My Relations Indigenous Student Association: ULSU Student Club
    - Black Students' Association: ULSU Student Club
    - Muslim Students of Lethbridge: ULSU Student Club
- Options for mental healthcare: such as on-campus counselling and peer support through the ULeth Counselling Services office.
- Relevant Emergency Financial Aid resources as trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students can find themselves without support if rejected by their family, facing job loss due to transphobia, racism, ableism, etc.
    - ULSU Food Bank
    - U of L Emergency Bursary
    - ULSU Emergency Student Assistance

Locate Resources in the Community

Locate what resources, supports, community organizations, and events are occurring within the community. These can include:

- **Community Organizations** such as Lethbridge Pride Fest or OUTreach Southern Alberta Society that offer a variety of services and events for 2SLGBTQ+ folks and the greater community.
- **Resources and Supports** for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students who wish to transition, such as guidance on legal name and gender marker changes and accessing gender-affirming healthcare.

These can include:

- AlbertaTrans.org: good source of information for and about trans people in the Province of Alberta

- **Edmonton 2 Spirit Society**: Mission is to re-establish and enhance our traditional roles and responsibilities as Two Spirit people in Indigenous communities while creating supportive environments within all societies for contemporary Two Spirit peoples.

- Information on federal and provincial and territorial legislation and legal protection: **Government of Canada – Rights of LGBTI persons**

- **Lethbridge Pride Fest**: Non-profit organization responsible for organizing and hosting pride events in Lethbridge.

- **Momentum**: Through programming and advocacy, Momentum works to advance transformative change for 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

- **Native Youth Sexual Health Network:** NYSHN is an organization by and for Indigenous youth that works across issues of sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice throughout the United States and Canada.
    - **Facebook**: **facebook.com**
    - **Contact**: **www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com/contact**

- **OUTreach Southern Alberta Society**: Support groups, education programs, queer-friendly & gender-affirming health care referrals, community events. Our website hosts a Queer & Trans Health Resource Database and lists of affirming service providers. Their website includes a **Trans Health Database** as well as a **List of Local 2SLGBTQ+ affirming service providers**.
    - **Facebook:** facebook.com/OUTreachSAB
    - **Instagram:** @outreach.sab
    - **Email:** **info@outreachsa.org**

- **Queer & Trans Health Collective**: Based in Edmonton, the QTHC is a grassroots health organization run by and for queer and trans community members. Excellent resources.

- **Skipping Stone Foundation**: a Calgary-based support network for trans folks that provides support on mental health, aid in accessing affirming healthcare, education, digital resources, and an **ID Amendment Guide** that contains step-by-step instructions to legally changing names and gender marker on ID documents.

- **Trans Equality Society of Alberta** (TESA): serving as a "voice for matters concerning trans Albertans," working to engage in "advocacy and education in three primary areas: government, outreach, and community development."

- **You Are Made of Medicine: A Mental Health Peer Support Manual for Indigiqueer, Two-Spirit, LGBTQ+, and Gender Non-Conforming Indigenous Youth** - A mental health peer support manual for Indigiqueer, Two-Spirit, LGBTQ+, and gender non-conforming Indigenous youth.

3.3 Supporting Students When They Come Out to You

> **"I think coming out as non-binary was harder for me, because nobody in my family and nobody that I socialize with has ever had a non-binary person around them, and they don't know what to do. They don't know, like I've had so many friends tell me, "You're the first non-binary person that I've met, and I have no idea what to do with that information." So, it was harder for people to accept, and therefore it was almost harder for me to accept, because I knew what the reactions were going to be." ~ Ryder**

Some students may choose to come out to you in confidence. You might be one of the first people to whom a student comes out. Coming out can be an incredibly vulnerable moment for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students. How we react and engage can have a profound impact.

What You Can Do

Get Educated

- It is common for your students to be trans, non-binary, and/or genderqueer. You should feel prepared and confident to support them. Make sure you have a strong grasp on the basics. This includes:
    - Learn basic terminology – what is/isn't appropriate, what terms are out of date and perhaps have become slurs, etc.
    - Become intentionally informed about the experiences of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students, including in academia (see bibliography at the end of this manual as well as **Further Resources** sections at the end of each chapter).
    - Speak with a trusted colleague.

Engage in Critical Reflection

- Consider your own positionality, what assumptions and stereotypes you associate with trans, non-binary, and genderqueer individuals.

- Reflect on how you might begin to dismantle harmful assumptions in your work with trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students and subjects.
- Think about how gender norms (i.e., what men and women should look, be, and act like) might be being enforced in your classroom or in other parts of your life.
    - What does it mean to stand up against the rules of gender, both at work and in other areas of our lives?
    - How might you be enforcing gender norms on yourself and/or your loved ones?
    - To what extent are you willing to confront your own long-held feelings about gender? (Crawford 2023).

Exploring questions such as these and engaging in self-reflection can deepen our commitment to gender self-determination for all people and to eliminating coercive systems. (Spade 2011, p. 59).

When a Student Comes Out to You

- As the discussions of transantagonism and cisnormativity throughout this manual have indicated, students who are just beginning to come out may feel shame, fear, uncertainty, and anxiety. At the same, it's important not to assume what a student might be feeling at that moment. Do not name the student's feelings on their behalf. Instead, respond by acknowledging the trust the student has placed in their relationship with you by thanking them for sharing with you.
- Let the student take the lead on this interaction.
- It is okay to ask questions but avoid interrogating and never ask personal questions of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students/people that you would not ask of others. Never ask about a trans person's body or medical care, their deadname, why or how they know they are trans, non-binary or genderqueer, their family's reaction to their gender identity, or any other questions that are irrelevant to your relationship with them unless they invite you to do so or voluntarily share the information (Spade 2011, p. 58).
- Clarify and respect the limits of confidentiality: Are they only coming out to you? Should this be kept confidential? Are they seeking support in coming out in the classroom or coming out in confidence? These questions help ensure we do not accidentally out a student to others.
- Be mindful of the language you use. Avoid language that implies their identity as a "phase" and acknowledge that gender identity and how one self-identifies their gender can be fluid. Shifts in pronouns, names, and identity terminologies do not invalidate their gender experience.

- Ask how you can best support the student. We can have great ideas and suggestions; ultimately, we need to rely on the individual coming out to us to state their needs before we attempt to meet them.
- If the student wants this, suggest resources and services that could help support the student in coming out and exploring their gender identity.

3.4 Understanding the Greater Context: Campus Facilities

> **"There are a lot of gender-neutral bathrooms but they are all in the same building, so they are not as accessible as I would like them to be. I did try to use the men's bathroom in my first semester, but I was constantly getting weird looks for things like washing my hands. I did have one experience where I was in the bathroom and someone saw that my feet were on the floor facing that way (pointing forward), and they made a comment about it. So, that was really uncomfortable. I'm comfortable using the men's bathroom now, but I still try only try to look for ones where there is nobody in them, or I take the 15-minute walk to the gender-neutral bathroom." ~ Elio**

While this manual is intended as a resource for educators working within the classroom, broadly defined, it is equally important to consider how the architectures of our institution - physical, digital, and cultural - impact student learning experiences.

As of May 2023, first-year dormitories and suites are segregated by "legal sex," which is collected as part of the on-campus housing application. Accommodations for trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students for whom their "legal sex" does not match their gender are available, but only by request and often must be sought out after housing assignments have been made. Other than this, buildings in on-campus housing are "all-gender." The **Housing FAQ** states that, "In the case of hallway double rooms and hallway single rooms where bathrooms are shared between eight or nine people on the same floor, each floor has a mix of all-gender and gender-specific bathrooms. All common spaces are all-gender."

In addition, something as banal as the location and lack of all-gender washrooms can lead to students avoiding the use of campus facilities, which directly impacts how and when they access campus, a consideration that their cisgender peers do not necessarily have to navigate.

Ty told us that **"the lack of gender-neutral washrooms on campus and the unequal distribution of those washrooms is a barrier to trans folks, folks with disabilities, and especially trans folks with disabilities."**

While educators are not directly responsible for the location of their classroom in relation to the nearest all-gender washroom, we can begin to learn about the ways in which our institution is built on what Leon Laidlaw (2020) calls a "gendered architecture of exclusion" in which the very buildings in which we teach and work are structured around a

gender binary (p. 270; see also Nicolazzo & Marine, 2015; Garvey et al., 2018; Ingrey, 2018).

Overall, there is a scarcity of all-gender washrooms on the U of L campus**.** The institutional default to 'being allowed' to use binary gendered washrooms does very little to alleviate the potential fear, discomfort, and self-policing that such architecture requires.

"I do think it could be better. The gender-neutral bathrooms, there are some, but they're kind of hidden almost, and inconvenient places." ~ Aidan

What You Can Do

Locate All Gender Facilities

- Locate the closest single-use washrooms to your classrooms. Include this information in your syllabus, course Moodle page, and other relevant locations.
- Provide a map or list of gender-neutral washrooms, locker rooms, and changing rooms on campus. A list of these facilities can be found on the ULethbridge 2SLGTBQ+ Resource page.
- If courses, programs, or events involve traveling to off-campus locations and/or overnight accommodations:
    - Locate what all-gender will be available at the location.
    - If none exist, connect with the location's managers to gain information on how access to gendered facilities at their site is managed and work with trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students to ensure they can comfortably and safely access necessary facilities.
    - Locate any policies around potential gender/sex segregation for overnight accommodations for off-campus events & programs and ensure students are able to access accommodations that ensure their comfort and safety.

Be an Advocate

- Support and amplify the voices of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students on the issues surrounding campus facility accessibility, student housing policies, and gender-neutral housing options.
- Meet with University leadership to advocate for the addition of additional non-binary and/or single-stall washrooms and other facilities.

- Research what other institutions are doing to expand their all-gender facilities, and advocate for your institution to follow their example.

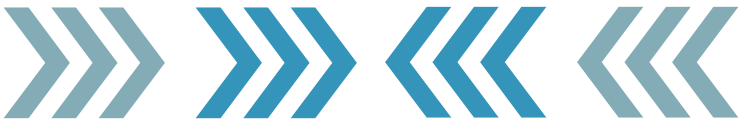
3.5 Further Resources

- "Intersectionality Readings" - Intersections of Gender, University of Alberta
    - An excellent resource for understanding the fundamentals of intersectionality and why it is so important to apply it to research across all disciplines.
- "We All Need a Safe Place to Pee" - TEDxVancouver Talk by Ivan Coyote
    - Acclaimed writer and performer Ivan Coyote highlights the need for gender neutral washrooms in all public places.
- Trans PULSE Canada - transpulsecanada.ca
    - Trans PULSE Canada is a national community-based survey of the health and well-being of trans and non-binary people in Canada.
- Transgender Support Resources - BIPOC Women's Health Network
    - National, provincial, and territorial resources.
- JusticeTrans - justicetrans.org
    - JusticeTrans aims to provide accessible legal education to Two Spirit, trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people by challenging transphobic police and advocating for community-based transformative social justice.
- "Supporting the Transgender People in Your Life" - transequality.org
    - A guide to being a good ally.
- "100 Easy Ways to Make the World Better for Trans People" - *Vice*
    - Do it.

We hope that this teaching resource manual is helpful for you. It is made possible by "the histories and momentum of struggles for trans justice" (Feinberg, 1988, p.11).

Post-secondary institutions sit at a critical intersection with respect to the material reality and possible futures of trans, nonbinary, and genderqueer folks. Not only do the actions and ethos of educators impact individual trans, non-binary, and genderqueer students as they move through the campus environment, but their cisgender peers as well. The classroom is the location where cisgender students who are future professionals in a plethora of fields, services, and career paths, are encountering gender education, perhaps for the first time. How they encounter these topics, what they learn, and the examples set for them will not only impact them as people within their communities, but also the knowledge they bring to their professional lives. The future of access to services, care, and spaces for trans, nonbinary, and genderqueer folks - a future placed in ever-growing peril - relies on educated, empathetic, and committed cisgender conspirators across all walks of life who are willing to do the work of upending the microaggressions, antagonisms, and violences of cisnormativity in all its forms.

The moment to take action is now.



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