



February 2016

# OEONews

*"Committed to promoting a working and learning environment free of discrimination..."*  
Kim D. Kirkland, Ed.D., Director

## LGBTQI Terminology 101

IUPUI's strategic plan includes contributing to the well-being of all members of our community and persons identifying as LGBTQ and their families reside in every community in the United States. "The LGBT population is as diverse as the nation and includes members of every race, ethnicity, religion, mental capacity, disability, age and socioeconomic group."<sup>1</sup> And in the midst of an ever-increasing social awakening around gender and sexual orientation, fluidity and identity, promoting an inclusive campus climate increasingly includes the LGBTQ population.

OEONews takes this opportunity to offer a few definitions and communication tips for people who may find themselves struggling in unfamiliar conversations.

First and foremost, remember that any conversation should be respectful. If a topic or question is offensive to any person's sensibility, it should be delicately handled.



Office of Equal Opportunity  
Phone: (317) 274-2306  
[affaindy@iupui.edu](mailto:affaindy@iupui.edu)

Second, recognize that mistakes and missteps are bound to happen and when they do, promptly apologize, make corrections and move on.

Remember that everyone has a gender identity and it is proper to ask which pronouns are preferable. Conversations and comments about who is a "real" man or woman are inappropriate.

OEONews offers the following terminology as a guide. Please note that each person using an identity label does so in a unique way. If you do not understand the context in which a person is using an identity label, it is appropriate to ask.

Androgyne – Presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.

Bigendered – Gender identity is a combination of male and female.

Bisexual - Emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to males and females. This does not have to be equally split between genders.

Cisgender – feels comfortable with gender identity and gender expression expectations assigned to them based upon physical sex.

Femme – Feminine identified person of any gender/sex.

FTM/F2M – abbreviation for female-to-male transgender or transsexual person.

True commitment to diversity requires more than simply thinking about an issue. It requires acting to make policies and procedures inclusive of diverse individuals.

Take the time to ask these questions of your organization:

- How have you and your employees become culturally competent regarding the LGBTQI community?
- When did you most recently train your staff on how to recognize and serve the needs of transgender people especially during the transition?
- What is your policy with respect to LGBTQI employees and applicants?
- Many members of the LGBTQI community are victims of brutal crime. What safety measures and reporting structure exist in your school and on your campus?
- What training has your emergency medical and safety responders received to help serve the LGBTQI population?
- Do you have a plan in place to help transgender students and employees transition if ze requests your assistance?

Gay – 1. Term used in some cultures to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Not all men who engage in same sex behavior identify as gay and this label should be used with caution. 2. Term used to refer to the LGBTQI community as a whole.

Gender Binary – the idea that there are only two genders, male and female, and that a person must be either/or.

Gender Identity – sense of being masculine, feminine or other gendered.

Gender Oppression – societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege cisgender and subordinate and disparage gender variant people.

Gender Variant – either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society.

Genderqueer – gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. Often includes a political agenda to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

Heteronormativity – the assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and bisexuality.

Identity Sphere – the idea that gender identity and expression does not fit on a linear scale, but rather on a sphere that allows room for all expression without weighting any one expression as better than another.

Intergender – gender identity is between genders or a combination of genders.

Intersexed Person – someone whose sex a doctor has a difficult time categorizing as either male or female.

LGBTQI – common abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersexed community.

Male Lesbian – a male-bodied person who identifies as a lesbian. This differs from heterosexual male in that a male lesbian is primarily attracted to other lesbian, bisexual or queer identified people.

MTF/M2F – abbreviation for male-to-female transgender or transsexual person.

Pangendered – gender identity is comprised of all or many gender expressions.

Pansexual – a person sexually attracted to all or many gender expressions.

Polyamory – honest, usually non-possessive, relationships with multiple partners and can include open relationships, poly fidelity (involves multiple romantic relationships with sexual contact restricted to those), and sub-relationships (which denote distinguishing between a ‘primary’ relationship or relationships and various “secondary” relationships).

Queer - 1. Umbrella term including lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, intersex persons, and other sexually transgressive communities. 2. Sometimes used as a sexual orientation label or gender identity label used to denote a non-heterosexual or cisgender identity without defining specifics. 3. Formerly used solely as a slur, the term has been reclaimed by some in the LGBTQ community. Nevertheless, a sizable percentage of people to whom this term might apply still hold ‘queer’ to be a hateful insult, and its use by heterosexual people is often considered offensive.

Sexual Orientation – The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender, another gender, or multiple genders.

Sexual Reassignment Surgery (SRS) – used by some medical professionals to refer to a group of surgical options that

alter a person’s ‘sex.’ Also known as Gender Confirming Surgery.

Transgender – *adj.* A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex. Sexual orientation varies and is not dependent on gender identity.

Transsexual – a person who identifies psychologically as a gender/sex other than the one to which they were assigned at birth.

Ze/Hir – Alternate pronouns that are gender neutral and preferred by some gender variant persons.

Pronounced /zee/ and /here/, the terms replace “he,” “she” and “his,” “hers”.<sup>2</sup>

#### Potential Resources:

- The [\*\*Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation \(GLAAD\)\*\*](#) is dedicated to promoting and ensuring fair, accurate and inclusive representation of people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.
- The [\*\*Transgender Law and Policy Institute \(TLPI\)\*\*](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to engaging in effective advocacy for transgender people. The TLPI brings experts and advocates together to work on law and policy initiatives designed to advance transgender equality.
- The [\*\*Transgender Law Center \(TLC\)\*\*](#) is a civil rights organization advocating for transgender communities. TLC utilizes direct legal services, public policy advocacy and educational opportunities to advance the rights and safety of diverse transgender communities.

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/lgbtfi\\_eldguide.pdf](http://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/lgbtfi_eldguide.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/documents/LGBTTerminology.pdf>

Send comments to: [ekempski@iupui.edu](mailto:ekempski@iupui.edu)