

SUPPORTING GENDER-VARIANT STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

As Berklee continues to work to create a more inclusive learning environment, there are some effective ways Faculty can help to create an atmosphere that supports trans-identified and gender-nonconforming students.

Our comfort zone as academics, regardless of discipline, is often built on basic academic assumptions and research that adhere to a male-female binary, which silences and invalidates transgender, gender nonconforming, non-binary, and intersex individuals. Berklee's own policy, state and federal regulations, and our own professional ethics require us to think and act beyond our comfort zones so we can include all students in the learning community.

Gender Diversity

As educators it is our responsibility to reflect on and challenge our gender assumptions so we can create more gender-inclusive spaces where all students are free to be who they are.

Set The Tone

- Include a sample statement and link to Berklee's Equity Policy on your syllabi, so students know they can report concerns and that you value this in our community.
- Create guidelines, and communicate them on the first day of class, requesting that students practice civility and inclusion of all perspectives, which includes students' names and correct pronouns. All students should be referred to by the names and pronouns they use.
- Request that students contact you if they have names that differ from the roster: *"If you have a name that differs from the one that appears on the roster, please inform me before the second class period so that I can use your correct name and pronouns."*

Model Desired Behavior and Adopt More Inclusive Language

Try to incorporate new, more inclusive phrases to your vocabulary:

- Replace gendered language (e.g. "ladies and gentlemen") with gender-inclusive language (e.g. "people" or "students")
- Avoid titles such as "Mr.", "Mrs.", and "Ms."
- Instead of calling the class "guys" or "dudes" use "folks," "everyone," "you all," or "you."

Modify or Qualify Any Statements On Gender

For example, instead of saying "Men/Boys always..." or "Women/Girls always..." say something like: "Routinely male-identified people..." or "Historically female-presenting people..." and "Gender non-conforming people can change this dynamic by..."

FURTHER READING & INFORMATION

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: CREATING A COMMUNITY OF EQUITY

EQUI<https://www.berklee.edu/sites/default/files/Know%20Your%20Rights%20-%20Creating%20a%20Community%20of%20Equity.pdf>

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