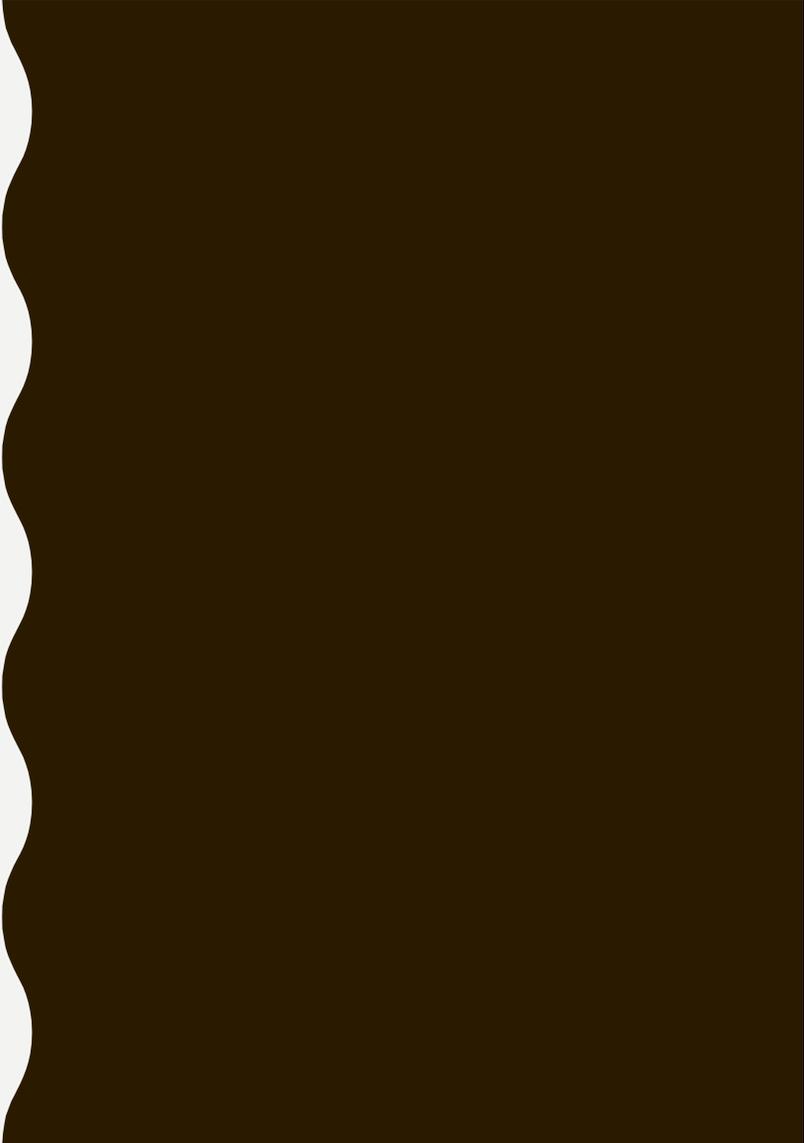# GENDER PRONOUNS

ENHANCING STUDENT INCLUSION

DISCLAIMER

- Pronouns are a first step to inclusion, but are hardly the last.

- Sharing pronouns and not supporting students in other ways can be a violent act.

- Trans* and gender non-conforming (GNC) students are already under violent attack from the administration related to Title IX and in other ways.

"When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing." - Adrienne Rich

WHAT ARE GENDER PRONOUNS?

STUDENT VOICES

IF WE CAN INTEGRATE NEW WORDS INTO OUR DAILY SPEECH

WE CAN INTEGRATE NEW PRONOUNS INTO OUR LANGUAGE AS WELL

WORDS CHANGE

NEW WORDS/PHRASES

- Carjacking
- Detox
- Hoodie
- Miniskirt
- Social distancing

WORDS WITH CHANGED MEANING

- Block
- Catfish
- Handle
- Viral
- Boosted
- Zoomed

Pronoun Examples

This is by no means a complete list of pronouns. However, this can provide some basic knowledge. Many of these pronouns also have several different forms, a few of which are detailed below.

	NOMINATIVE (SUBJECT)	OBJECTIVE (OBJECT)	POSSESSIVE DETERMINER	POSSESSIVE PRONOUN	REFLEXIVE
SHE	*She* knows	I ask *her*	*Her* lantern glows	That is *hers*	She likes *herself*
HE	*He* knows	I ask *him*	*His* lantern glows	That is *his*	He likes *himself*
THEY (OR EY)**	*They* know	I ask *them*	*Their* lantern glows	That is *theirs*	They like *themself*
IT	*It* knows	I ask *it*	*Its* lantern glows	That is *its*	It likes *itself*
ZE (OR ZIE)*	*Ze* knows	I ask *zir*	*Zir* lantern glows	That is *zirs*	Ze likes *zirself*
SIE	*Sie* knows	I ask *sym*	*Syr* lantern glows	That is s*yrs*	Ne likes *syrself*
CO	*Co* knows	I ask *cos*	*Cos* lantern glows	That is *cos*	Co likes *coself*
XE (OR XIE)*	*Xe* knows	I ask *xym*	*Xyr* lantern glows	That is *xyrs*	Xe likes *xyrself*
VE	*Ve* knows	I ask *ver*	*Vis* lantern glows	That is *vers*	Ve likes *verself*
KIT	*Kit* knows	I ask *kit*	*Kits* lantern glows	That is *kits*	Kit likes *kitself*

*These pronouns have several forms. For example, *ze* may be formatted in a variety of ways, such as *ze/zir, ze/zyr, or ze/hir*. Ze has alternative spellings such as *zie* or *zhe*. Similarly, *xe* may be formatted *xe/xyr, xe/xim, xe/xir, xe/xem*, and *xe* has alternative spellings such as *xy* or *xie*.

**They has existed in reference to a singular noun since the 16th Century.

SEMESTER INTRODUCTIONS: PRONOUN GO-AROUNDS

- There is often confusion about the purpose of pronoun go-arounds; transphobia and gender privilege are reproduced if not done properly.

  – Sometimes people doing the go-round aren't sure what pronouns are

  – Sometimes people hear pronouns from others that they are not familiar with

  – Sometimes people laugh at the go-around in a way that indicates that they don't understand why it is important and may reinforce the erasure of the experiences of trans and gender non-conforming people (transantagonism)

  – Sometimes people who are not trans or gender non-conforming dismissively say they "don't care" (reifies privilege)

  – Sometimes people who are not used to the exercise and who are uncomfortable try to turn it into a joke,

IF WE'RE IN THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION, THEN LET'S EDUCATE THE NEXT GENERATION

- **Therefore, an explanation must be given**

- *"At gatherings of many kinds, people do go-rounds to share their names with one another.* ***Knowing what people like to be called is a key part of talking and relating with them.*** *When we talk in groups, we not only refer to people by names, but also by pronouns. For example, a participant might say "I'd like to hear from Fatima. I think she has the information we are looking for." Or "I agree with Sam and I think we should talk in more detail about his proposal."*

- *We want to make sure that people* ***refer to each other by the name and pronoun that the person goes by.*** *Frequently people assume they know what pronoun a person goes by based on looking at them. When we guess at people's pronouns we might get them wrong.*

EXPLANATION CONTINUED

- *When people's pronouns are mistaken they may feel uncomfortable and be less likely to participate in the group. We want everyone to participate here, and we want everyone to know how to refer to each other respectfully.*

- *So when we go around, each person is invited to share their name and information about what pronoun they go by.* **Some people may use "he/him/his," "she/her/hers," some may prefer to be referred to just by their names and not have a pronoun used, some people use "they/them/theirs" as a gender neutral-pronoun,** *and some people use gender neutral pronouns that may be new to some people in this room, such as "ze/hir/hirs" or others, and some people are open to being called by more than one set of pronouns.*

- **Please listen closely to each other and remember that if you forget what someone said later, you can ask them to remind you before you refer to them.** *It's better to ask than to refer to someone by something they don't like to go by. This exercise is important to helping everyone in this room participate and avoiding unintentionally disrespecting each other, so please take it seriously and listen carefully.*

SYLLABUS TEXT

- *Chosen name and pronouns statement*

Class rosters and university data systems are provided to instructors with only students' legal names presented. Knowing that not all students use their legal names or identify with a gender that aligns with their sex assigned at birth, faculty members/I will use the name and/or personal pronouns you use. If you choose, you may email the faculty member/me directly to share your information. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let the faculty member/me know and we can develop a way to share this information with others in a way that is comfortable and safe for you, if desired. **For more information on how to change your name in LOCUS, please visit the Preferred Name Policy [here](#).**

WHAT CAN WE DO TODAY?

- Log into your zoom account (luc.zoom.edu) and add your pronouns to the end of your name. Changing it here will keep them permanently on your zoom account and you won't have to think about it again.

- Add your pronouns to the end of your email signature. Feel free to link your pronouns to mypronouns.org for people who may have questions about why you put them in your email.

- Consider ways that you want to offer opportunities for people to share their pronouns in the spaces you have control over (e.g., classroom, meetings, family, clinical site)

- Practice saying your pronouns after each time you introduce yourself.

PRONOUNS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING

HOW ELSE CAN WE BE GENDER INCLUSIVE IN OUR CLASSROOMS?