

Office of the President

TO MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:

DISCUSSION ITEM

For Meeting of May 15, 2019

STUDENT EXPERIENCE: TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY STUDENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This presentation will focus on the experiences of transgender and nonbinary students at UC, a topic that is particularly timely given California's recent legal recognition of a nonbinary gender category via the Gender Recognition Act. UC San Diego's LGBT Resource Center director will provide information on the campus' work to implement the Gender Recognition Act and services for transgender and nonbinary students. Students will discuss their experience on UC campuses, including areas of progress and support, ongoing issues, and recommendations for campus and systemwide best practices.

BACKGROUND

When President Napolitano formed her Advisory Council (PAC) on LGBT Students, Faculty, and Staff in 2014, she was looking to build on the work that the UC LGBT Task Force had conducted over the previous two years. Acknowledging that UC campuses are routinely ranked among the most LGBT-friendly in the country, the president insisted that "we must continue to look at where we can improve so everyone at UC feels respected and supported." Among those improvements were the conversion of almost 2,000 single-stall restrooms, showers, and changing rooms into gender-inclusive facilities; gold standard language of inclusion for LGBT communities; the ability for students to designate a preferred/lived name in student record systems; and the option to self-identify gender identity and sexual orientation on the UC admission application. Now, with full implementation of the California Gender Recognition Act, students have access to a nonbinary gender category on California birth certificates, drivers' licenses, identity cards, and gender-change court orders, promoting even greater community inclusivity and legal recognition.

Transgender and Nonbinary Students

Commonly Used Terms

The vocabulary of gender identity continues to evolve over time and across shifts in understanding and common usage. Generally, however, *transgender* is an umbrella term describing people whose gender identity or gender expression do not match the gender they were assigned at birth. *Nonbinary* is also an umbrella term, referring to people whose gender identity and expression do not conform to the binary terms (male and female, men and women, masculine and feminine) society has adopted as gender norms. (See Attachment 1 for a glossary of additional relevant terms.)

National Trends

A 2018 report from UCLA's Williams Institute, *Transgender Students in Higher Education*, cites research indicating that trans-inclusive policies and campus supports correlate positively with a sense of belonging for transgender and nonbinary students. The most influential of these are gender-inclusive restrooms, non-discrimination policies that incorporate nonbinary gender identity, and a preferred/lived name option. First-year transgender and nonbinary students also arrive on campus having engaged more readily in civic activity (e.g. volunteering).

UC Campus Support for Transgender and Nonbinary Students

Given the culturally systemic nature of binary gender norms and "sex" as a term of identity, support for transgender and nonbinary students includes policies, practices, and resources that help the UC community as a whole challenge and rethink notions of inclusivity and social identity around gender identity (inherent self-concept) and sexual orientation (identification of those to whom one is sexually attracted). For example, beginning in 2016, the applyUC undergraduate admissions application provided students with the opportunity to volunteer both sexual orientation and gender identity, with an explicit assurance that the information is collected for statistical use only, and that the campuses are welcoming to all students.

UC Undergraduate Application

How do you describe yourself?	Fall 2019 new undergraduates
Female	35,186
Male	29,968
Trans Female/Trans Woman	52
Trans Male/Trans Man	80
Genderqueer/Gender Non-Conforming	375
Different Identity	77
No Response	2,005

What sex were you assigned at birth, such as on an original birth certificate? (fall 2016-18)	
Female	36,740
Male	30,675
No Response	328



change in
fall 2019

What is the sex on your birth certificate?
<input type="checkbox"/> Female
<input type="checkbox"/> Male
<input type="checkbox"/> Nonbinary
<input type="checkbox"/> No Response

Not only does this information provide UC with data that is helpful to understanding patterns of persistence and academic success, but understanding how students self-identify also fosters a better understanding of appropriate services and resources on each campus. For example, all campuses currently have LGBT resource centers, but specific student organizations, events, and programs can vary.

Transgender and nonbinary students face unique challenges that can challenge institutional systems, which may not have been designed to maximize inclusivity. In addition to the changes to applyUC and the preferred/lived name practice, all UC policies, procedures, and healthcare programs are under review to ensure that benefits language provides for inclusivity and equitable access for students, faculty, and staff. Five campuses have thus far included the new applyUC questions into their graduate applications, the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) has incorporated them, and UC Human Resources has developed business specifications for their implementation in UCPath. Not only does wider use of these questions yield valuable information, but it also helps align data, policy, and program coordination across the system. Campuses are currently working to align their requisite systems to the requirements of State Senate Bill (SB) 179, the Gender Recognition Act, which applies to many different areas of the University, including human resources and payroll, sports and recreational facilities, and housing, among others. UCPath, which centralizes human resources, benefits, and academic personnel processes, is broadly impacted while it is still being deployed across the system. In turn, UCPath broadly impacts all UC employees, including undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff, a significant challenge and deeply important step forward.

The fact that higher education systems do not yet fully recognize transgender and nonbinary individuals is a reflection of our own learning curve in regard to issues around gender

identification and an opportunity to authentically demonstrate UC's commitment to fully inclusive diversity, which remains central to our educational mission and civic stewardship.

Attachment: Common Definitions

Common Definitions (adapted from UC San Diego)

Beginning Fall of 2015, the entire University of California system began collecting data on UC freshmen and transfer applicants to the nine undergraduate campuses regarding sexual orientation and gender identity through voluntary self-identification. With this process, the campus has accumulated more expansive data on concepts relating to sexuality and gender. For these purposes, specific definitions were adopted, and are listed below:

Sexual Orientations

Asexual – A person who does not experience sexual attraction or desire.

Bisexual – A person whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same and other genders, or toward people regardless of their gender.

Gay – A sexual and affectional orientation toward people of the same gender.

Heterosexual/Straight – A sexual orientation in which a person feels physically and emotionally attracted to people of a gender other than their own.

Lesbian – A woman whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same gender.

Gender and Gender Identity

Gender Identity – A social construct used to classify a person as a man, woman, Trans Male/Trans Man, Trans Female/Trans Woman, Genderqueer or other identity.

Transgender – Used most often as an umbrella term; some commonly held definitions: 1) someone whose gender identity or expression does not fit within dominant group social constructs of assigned sex and gender; 2) a gender outside of the man/woman binary; 3) having no gender or multiple genders.

Gender Fluid – A person whose gender identification and presentation shifts, whether within or outside of societal, gender-based expectations. Being fluid in motion between two or more genders.

Gender Non-Conforming – People who do not subscribe to gender expressions or roles expected of them by society.

Gender Queer – A person's whose gender identity and/or gender expression falls outside of the dominant social norm for their assigned sex, is beyond genders, or is some combination of them.

Trans Man/Trans Male – A female-to-male (FTM) transgender person who was assigned female at birth, but whose gender identity is that of a man.

Trans Woman/Trans Female – A male-to-female (MTF) transgender person who was assigned male at birth, but whose gender identity is that of a woman.

Male – A person's own understanding of themselves as a man based on their gender and gender expression.

Female – A person's own understanding of themselves as a woman based on their gender and gender expression.

Different Identity – A person who does not use one of the gender identity options provided.

Providing specific wording is not required.

Cisgender – A gender identity, or performance in a gender role, that society deems to match the person's assigned sex at birth. The prefix cis- means "on this side of" or "not across." A term used to call attention to the privilege of people who are not transgender.