

# Gender-Inclusive Learning Environments

Alberta Routes

Tip Sheet 18

## Definitions

<p><b>Diversity</b></p>	<p>Diversity is the presence of different people and perspectives.</p> <p>Diversity encompasses the protected grounds found in human rights legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (race, gender, religion, etc.)</li> <li>- personal characteristics (personal habits, work experience, etc.), and</li> <li>- organizational characteristics (work location, seniority, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equity</b></p>	<p>Equity is fair access, opportunity, and support.</p> <p>Equity is about fairness, not sameness.</p> <p>It recognizes that there are different paths to achievement and each path requires unique inputs to achieve success.</p>
<p><b>Gender expression</b></p>	<p>The ways in which people present and communicate the gender with which they identify.</p>
<p><b>Gender identity</b></p>	<p>A person's internal and deeply felt sense of being a man, a woman, both, neither, or somewhere along the gender spectrum.</p>
<p><b>Inclusion</b></p>	<p>Inclusion is the intentional act of recognizing and valuing diversity. A sense of belonging, voice, and decision-making authority.</p>

	It is the degree to which one perceives that they are a valued member of their group through experiencing treatment that satisfies their needs for a sense of belonging and uniqueness.
<b>Intersectionality</b>	A lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.
<b>Nonbinary</b>	Referring to a person whose gender does not align with the binary gender model of man or woman.

## Best Practices for Gender-Inclusivity in Learning Environments

<b>Inclusivity Statement</b>	<b>Best Practice</b>
There is always gender diversity in the room	Try not to make assumptions about people's gender
	Use gender-inclusive language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use "folks," "friends," "everybody," etc.</li> <li>- Hedge blanket statements. Ex. "<u>Some</u> women have breast and uterus."</li> <li>- Avoid using gendered nicknames. Ex. Sweetheart</li> </ul>
	Minimize gender-segregated activities
You are the authority of who you are	When in doubt about what pronoun someone uses, use their name or a gender-neutral pronoun – "They/them"
	If you are not sure what pronoun someone uses, ask. Do so privately whenever possible.
	Don't take the standard "roll call"; instead, ask for an introduction and have learners

	make their own name tags/cards. This introduction can include pronouns.
	Send out a get-to-know-you survey before class starts, which includes a section for pronouns and preferred name
	Apologize when you make a mistake and politely make corrections. Sorry, Rephrase, Move on
	Offer your name and pronouns when introducing yourself
	Include pronouns in your email signature, syllabus, name tags, social media profiles, video calls, business cards, etc.
	Own your gender-unfriendly content
All learners need to be able to see themselves in the curriculum	Provide opportunities to use gender-neutral pronouns in writing tasks
	Integrate supplemental materials, such as videos or additional resources, that feature voices from LGBTQ+ communities.
	When selecting readings and other materials, be intentional about including perspectives from LGBTQ+ scholars and thinkers throughout the syllabus when possible.

## Related information and resources

### NorQuest College

- NorQuest College. Office of Equity. <https://www.norquest.ca/about-us/office-of-equity.aspx>
- Alberta Routes Workshops <https://albertaroutes.norquest.ca/services/workshops.aspx>

### External

- “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” by Heather Blicher and Valencia Scott for [Open Oregon Educational Resources \[Website\]](https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/dothework/chapter/1-2-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/) is licensed [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/dothework/chapter/1-2-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>
- EdCan Network. The Gender-Friendly Classroom. <https://www.edcan.ca/articles/gender-friendly-classroom/>
- Gigi. Resources. <https://www.gegi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Gegis-Tips-for-Welcoming-Gender-Diversity-in-Your-Classroom.pdf>
- Government of Canada. (2023) Gender and Sexual Diversity Glossary. <https://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/publications/diversite-diversity-eng.html#b>
- National Center for Transgender Equality. (2024) Understanding Nonbinary people: How to be respectful and supportive. <https://transequality.org/issues/resources/understanding-nonbinary-people-how-to-be-respectful-and-supportive>
- Notion4Teachers. Gender Inclusivity. <https://www.notion4teachers.com/blog/fostering-gender-inclusivity-educator-strategies>
- NYU. Trans Inclusive Practices in the Classroom. <https://www.nyu.edu/life/global-inclusion-and-diversity/learning-and-development/toolkits/trans-inclusive-classrooms.html>
- University of Alberta Institute for Intersectionality Studies. What is Intersectionality? [What is intersectionality](https://www.ia.ualberta.ca/what-is-intersectionality/)

## Next review date

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