TRANSitioning to College

Cailin Asip
Assistant Director for Campus Outreach and Relations
East Carolina University, NC

Suzi Nam
Executive Director
Lenfest Scholars Foundation, PA
Learning Objectives

1. To have a better understanding of who makes up the transgender student population.
2. To gain insight on the specific needs of transgender students during the college search, admission, and enrollment processes.
3. To be knowledgeable on best practices for serving the transgender student population during college admission and beyond.
4. To be equipped to advise and handle concerns of transgender students as they prepare for their college transition.
Ground Rules
1. Assume good will/intentions
2. “Oops” and “Ouch”
3. Speak for yourself—use “I” messages
4. Take space, make space
5. Listen to listen
6. One mic, one diva
7. No judgement zone
8. What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas! (except for the knowledge)
What’s in a pronoun?
Vocabulary

Inclusive Language “promotes diversity, shows respect to all audience members, and supports a positive tone.”
Important Terminology

- Cisgender
- Gender-neutral
- Genderqueer/Gender-fluid
- Gender Expression
- Gender Identity
- Gender non-conforming
- LGBTQ+

- Intersex
- Omnigender
- Queer
- Trans*
- Transgender
- Transsexual
- Two-Spirit
Gender vs. Sex

The Genderbread Person v3.3

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don’t. Like Inception. Gender isn’t binary. It’s not either/or. In many cases it’s both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It’s okay if you’re hungry for more. In fact, that’s the idea.

- **Gender Identity**
  - Woman-ness
  - Man-ness
  - How you, in your head, define your gender; based on how much you align (or don’t align) with what you understand to be the options for gender.

- **Gender Expression**
  - Feminine
  - Masculine
  - The ways you present gender; through your actions, dress, and demeanor; and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms.

- **Biological Sex**
  - Female-ness
  - Male-ness
  - The physical sex characteristics you’re born with and develop, including genitals, body shape, voice pitch, body hair, hormones, chromosomes, etc.

- **Sexually Attracted to**
  - (Women/Females/Femininity)
  - (Men/Males/Masculinity)
  - (Nobody)

- **Romantically Attracted to**
  - (Women/Females/Femininity)
  - (Men/Males/Masculinity)
  - (Nobody)

For a bigger bite, read more at http://bit.ly/genderbread

by Samuel Killermann at www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com
Aren’t we ALL a little bit trans?
Breaking it Down
The Science

The Brain, The Genes, The Body
“I’m on the right track baby, I was born this way”...

XX and XY aren’t all that make up the biological sex determination.

Lady Gaga (2010). “Born this Way”.
Is it all in my head?...well, partially
Let’s get some things straight...

- “...various elements of what we consider “male” and “female” don’t always line up neatly, with all the XXs—complete with ovaries, vagina, estrogen, female gender identity, and feminine behavior—on one side and all the XYs—testes, penis, testosterone, male gender identity, and masculine behavior—on the other. It’s possible to be XX and mostly male in terms of anatomy, physiology, and psychology, just as it’s possible to be XY and mostly female.”
The Development Process

Lev’s Transgender Emergence Model
• **Awareness** – In this first stage of awareness, gender-variant people are often in great distress.

• **Seeking Information/Reaching Out** – In the second stage, gender-variant people seek to gain education and support about transgenderism.

• **Disclosure to Significant Others** – The third stage involves the disclosure of transgenderism to significant others (spouses, partners, family members, and friends).

• **Exploration (Identity & Self-Labeling)** – The fourth stage involves the exploration of various (transgender) identities.

• **Exploration (Transition Issues & Possible Body Modification)** – The fifth stage involves exploring options for transition regarding identity, presentation, and body modification.

• **Integration (Acceptance & Post-Transition Issues)** – In the sixth stage the gender-variant person is able to integrate and synthesis (transgender) identity.
1971 Transsex added to the dictionary
1974 Transgender term in print
1977 Renee Richards 1st trans woman to play in the Women’s US Open
1990s Hate Crimes and Suicides— influences “Boys Don’t Cry” movie
1995 Frye and Wilchins held first transgender lobbying day in Washington, D.C.
1997 First Transgender Day of Remembrance
1998 E.U. disallows birth certificate changes
1999 First Transgender internet community, “The Gazebo”
2000 Canada allows birth certificate changes
2000 Trans pride flag debut
2008 1st Openly Trans Mayor, OR
2009 1st Openly Trans* Presidential Appointees
2010 First Transgender NCAA Athlete
2011 First Transgender Lobbying Day in Washington, D.C.
2012 EEOC Declares Transgender Employees Protected under Title VII
2013 APA changes “gender identity disorder” to “gender dysphoria”
2014 Transgender participation allowed in Miss Universe and Girl Scouts of Colorado
Current Events

• 2016
  – Pentagon ends military transgender ban.
  – Rio Olympics changes transgender guidelines for more inclusive participation.
  – The Common Application for college admission changes the gender field.

• 2017
  – Boy Scouts of America open membership up to transgender boys.
  – Canadian baby unassigned gender on birth certificate.
  – President Trump rescinds Obama’s policy to allow transgender students to use the bathroom that aligns with their gender identities.
  – Virginia House of Delegate candidate, Danica Roem.
  – On September 12th, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit will hear oral arguments for Gavin Grimm vs. Gloucester County School Board.
Improvements don’t mean that issues don’t exist.
Why Trans People Need More Visibility

With more visibility comes more understanding. These statistics can and will get better as trans people become more visible in our society.

80% of trans students feel unsafe at school because of their gender expression.

50% of trans people have been raped or assaulted by a romantic partner.

$\frac{58.7}{49\%}$ of gender non-conforming students have experienced verbal harassment in the past year, because of their gender expression, compared to 29% of their peers.

$\frac{1}{5}$ transgender people have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.

$\frac{1}{8}$ have been evicted due to being transgender.

Why Support for Trans Youth Matters

Based on a 2012 study of 433 individuals:

- Reported Life Satisfaction
  - Trans Youth: 72%
  - Trans Youth with Unsupportive Parents: 33%

- Self-Esteem
  - Trans Youth: 64%
  - Trans Youth with Unsupportive Parents: 13%

- Mental Health
  - Described as "Very Good" or "Excellent"
  - Trans Youth: 70%
  - Trans Youth with Unsupportive Parents: 15%

- Housing Problems
  - Trans Youth: 0%
  - Trans Youth with Unsupportive Parents: 55%

- Depression
  - Attempted Suicide
    - Trans Youth: 23%
    - Trans Youth with Unsupportive Parents: 57%

For more information, go to transstudent.org/graphics

Infographic Design by Landyn Pan
Illustrations by Ethan Lopez
Why is this so Important?

Trans* students just want to be students.
What can WE do?
On the High School side

• College search
  – How does the college show their inclusion of transgender students?
  – Campus Pride Index**

• College selection
  – What resources are available?
  – What are the policies and practices across campus?
On the College Side

• Search
  – What information is readily available?
  – Attending LGBTQ+ Friendly College Fairs

• Application
  – Inclusive language

• Admission and Enrollment
  – Preferred name, pronouns, and gender

• Retention
  – Campus resources
    • LGBTQ+ Center, Clubs & Organizations, Inclusive Events
  – Safety and security

• Campus Policies
  – Antidiscrimination policy or clause
Creating an Inclusive System

The intricacy of campus information systems makes modifying software complicated, because even a seemingly small change to the main database requires adjustments to virtually all other systems. While providing chosen name and pronoun options throughout a college’s information systems is very achievable, doing so requires an investment of time upfront, followed by periodic checking and testing, and the periodic retraining of administrative staff.
Additional Resources

1. Campus Pride
2. TSER
3. National Center for Transgender Equality
4. Center for Gender Sanity
5. Transgender Law and Policy Institute
6. GLSEN
7. Human Rights Campaign
8. Pride orgs
9. PFLAG
10. Gay Alliance
Trans* students are in school to be students, not trans* students. Lose the label, accept the student as a student, and do all you can to provide an inclusive and supportive academic environment where they can be just another student.
Q&A
References


Thank you for coming!