



Kenyon PRIDE Safe Space Training



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Adapted from Green, Eli. (2003). "LGBT Terminology". LGBT Resource Center at UC Riverside. Retrieved from <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/documents/LGBTterminology.pdf>.

A Note about LGBTQ+ Terms & Definitions:

Each of these terms and definitions have been researched, analyzed, and consulted upon based on perspectives, cultural sensitivity, common usage, and appropriateness. Terminology, definitions, and meaning for people change overtime, and thus, this list should be used as a merely a guide towards understanding and not the sole basis of acquiring the knowledge that encompasses a LGBTQ+ diverse community. Each person or community that uses the terminology and definitions may have their own meanings behind it as well as different terminology. We encourage you to ask first and do not let definitions to generalize an individual or population.

Ag / Aggressive - See 'Stud.'

Agendered – Person is internally ungendered.

Ally – Someone who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexual and genderstraight privilege in themselves and others; a concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people; and a belief that heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are social justice issues.

AFAB–Assigned Female at Birth. More inclusive terminology used for trans persons that were **assigned female at birth**. See FTM.

AMAB–Assigned Male at Birth. More inclusive terminology used for trans persons that were **assigned male at birth**. See MTF.

Androgyne – Person appearing and/or identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.

Asexual – Person who is not sexually attracted to anyone or does not have a sexual orientation.

Bear: The most common definition of a 'bear' is a man who has facial/body hair, and a cuddly body. However, the word 'bear' means many things to different people, even within the bear movement. Many men who do not have one or all of these characteristics define themselves as bears, making the term a very loose one. 'Bear' is often defined as more of an attitude and a sense of comfort with natural masculinity and bodies.

Berdache - A generic term used to refer to a third gender person (woman-livingman).The term 'berdache' is generally rejected as inappropriate and offensive by Native Peoples because it is a term that was assigned by European settlers to differently gendered Native Peoples. Appropriate terms vary by tribe and include: 'one-spirit', 'two-spirit', and 'wintke.'

Bicurious – A curiosity about having sexual relations with a same gender/sex person.

Bigendered - A person whose gender identity is a combination of male/man and female/woman.

Binding – The process of flattening one's breasts to have a more masculine or flat appearing chest.

Biphobia - The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexuals, which is often times related to the current binary standard. Biphobia can be seen within the LGBTQI community, as well as in general society.

Bottom Surgery – Surgery on the genitals designed to create a body in harmony with a person's preferred gender expression.

Butch – A person who identifies themselves as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally or emotionally. 'Butch' is sometimes used as a derogatory term for lesbians, but it can also be claimed as an affirmative identity label.

Cisgender – describes someone who feels comfortable with the gender identity and gender expression expectations assigned to them based on their physical sex.

Disclosure–a trans person already living as their gender tells about their trans status.

Coming Out – May refer to the process by which one accepts one’s own sexuality, gender identity, or status as an intersexed person (to “come out” to oneself). May also refer to the process by which one shares one’s sexuality, gender identity, or intersexed status with others (to “come out” to friends, etc.). This can be a continual, life-long process for homosexual, bisexual, transgender, and intersexed individuals.

Cross-dresser – Someone who wears clothes of another gender/sex.

D&D – An abbreviation for drug and disease free.

Discrimination – Prejudice + power. It occurs when members of a more powerful social group behave unjustly or cruelly to members of a less powerful social group. Discrimination can take many forms, including both individual acts of hatred or injustice and institutional denials of privileges normally accorded to other groups. Ongoing discrimination creates a climate of oppression for the affected group.

Down Low - See ‘In the Closet.’ Also referred to as ‘D/L.’

Drag - The performance of one or multiple genders theatrically.

Drag King – A person who performs masculinity theatrically.

Drag Queen – A person who performs femininity theatrically.

Dyke – Derogatory term referring to a masculine lesbian. Sometimes adopted affirmatively by lesbians (not necessarily masculine ones) to refer to themselves.

Fag – Derogatory term referring to someone perceived as non-heteronormative.

Fag Hag – A term primarily used to describe women who prefer the social company of gay men. While this term is claimed in an affirmative manner by some, it is largely regarded as derogatory.

Femme – Feminine identified person of any gender/sex.

FTM / F2M - Abbreviation for female-to-male transgender or transsexual person. See AFAB.

Gay – 1. Term used in some cultural settings to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Not all men who engage in “homosexual behavior” identify as gay, and as such this label should be used with caution. 2. Term used to refer to the LGBTQI community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.

Gender Binary – The idea that there are only two genders – male/female or man/woman and that a person must be strictly gendered as either/or. (See also ‘Identity Sphere.’)

Gender Confirming Surgery – Medical surgeries used to modify one’s body to be more congruent with one’s gender identity. See “Sex Reassignment Surgery.”

Gender Cues – What human beings use to attempt to tell the gender/sex of another person. Examples include hairstyle, gait, vocal inflection, body shape, facial hair, etc. Cues vary by culture.

Gender Identity – A person’s sense of being masculine, feminine, or other gendered.

Gender Normative – A person who by nature or by choice conforms to gender based expectations of society. (Also referred to as ‘Genderstraight’.)

Gender Oppression - The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege cisgender (gender-typical people) and subordinate and disparage transgender or gender variant people. Also known as “genderism.”

Gender Variant – A person who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society (e.g. transgender, transsexual, intersex, genderqueer, cross-dresser, etc.).

Genderism – see “Gender Oppression.”

Genderqueer – A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. Often includes a political agenda to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

Genderstraight—See ‘Gender Normative.’

Hermaphrodite—an out-of-date and offensive term for an intersexed person. (See ‘Intersexed Person’.)

Heteronormativity—the assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and bisexuality.

Heterosexism – Prejudice against individuals and groups who display nonheterosexual behaviors or identities, combined with the majority power to impose such prejudice. Usually used to the advantage of the group in power. Any attitude, action, or practice – backed by institutional power – that subordinates people because of their sexual orientation.

Heterosexual Privilege –Those benefits derived automatically by being heterosexual that are denied to homosexuals and bisexuals. Also, the benefits homosexuals and bisexuals receive as a result of claiming heterosexual identity or denying homosexual or bisexual identity.

HIV-phobia – The irrational fear or hatred of persons living with HIV/AIDS.

Homophobia – The irrational fear or hatred of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior or belief that does not conform to rigid sex role stereotypes. It is this fear that enforces sexism as well as heterosexism.

Homosexual – A person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex.

Identity Sphere – The idea that gender identities and expressions do not fit on a linear scale, but rather on a sphere that allows room for all expression without weighting any one expression as better than another.

In the Closet – Refers to a homosexual, bisexual, trans person or intersex person who will not or cannot disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society. An intersex person may be closeted due to ignorance about their status since standard medical practice is to “correct,” whenever possible, intersex conditions early in childhood and to hide the medical history from the patient. There are varying degrees of being “in the closet”; for example, a person can be out in their social life, but in the closet at work, or with their family. Also known as ‘Downlow’ or ‘D/L.’

Intergender – A person whose gender identity is between genders or a combination of genders.

Institutional Oppression – Arrangements of a society used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media, education, religion, economics, etc.

Internalized Oppression – The process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept and live out the inaccurate stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.

Intersexed Person—someone whose sex a doctor has a difficult time categorizing as either male or female. A person whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, gonads, and/or genitals differs from one of the two expected patterns.

Lesbian – Term used to describe female-identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female-identified people. The term lesbian is derived from the name of the Greek island of Lesbos and as such is sometimes considered a Eurocentric category that does not necessarily represent the identities of African-Americans and other non-European ethnic groups. This being said, individual female-identified people from diverse ethnic groups, including African-Americans, embrace the term 'lesbian' as an identity label.

LGBTQ+ – A common abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersexed community as well as other orientations and identities not mentioned.

Male Lesbian—A male-bodied person who identifies as a lesbian. This differs from a heterosexual male in that a male lesbian is primarily attracted to other lesbian, bisexual or queer identified people. May sometimes identify as gender variant, or as a female/woman. (See 'Lesbian.')

Masculine of Center (MoC): term primarily used within the Black community for lesbian, queer women who express a more masculine gender expression.

Metrosexual - First used in 1994 by British journalist Mark Simpson, who coined the term to refer to an urban, heterosexual male with a strong aesthetic sense who spends a great deal of time and money on his appearance and lifestyle.

This term can be perceived as derogatory because it reinforces stereotypes that all gay men are fashion-conscious and materialistic.

MTF / M2F – Abbreviation for male-to-female transgender or transsexual person. See AMAB.

Oppression – The systematic subjugation of a group of people by another group with access to social power, the result of which benefits one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs and practices.

Outing – Involuntary disclosure of one's sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status.

Pangendered – A person whose gender identity is comprised of all or many gender expressions.

Pansexual – A person who is sexually attracted to all or many gender expressions.

Polyamory – Refers to having honest, usually non-possessive, relationships with multiple partners and can include: open relationships, polyfidelity (which involves multiple romantic relationships with sexual contact restricted to those), and subrelationships (which denote distinguishing between a 'primary' relationship or relationships and various "secondary" relationships).

Prejudice – A conscious or unconscious negative belief about a whole group of people and its individual members.

Queer – 1. An umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the not-exclusively- heterosexual-and-monogamous majority. Queer includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, Trans people, and intersex persons. This term is sometimes used as a sexual orientation label instead of 'bisexual' as a way of acknowledging that there are more than two genders to be attracted to, or as a way of stating a non-heterosexual orientation without having to state who they are attracted to.
3. A reclaimed word that was formerly used solely as a slur but that has been semantically overturned by members of the maligned group, who use it as a term of defiant pride. 'Queer' is an example of a word undergoing this process. For decades 'queer' was used solely as a derogatory adjective for gays and lesbians, but in the 1980s the term began to be used by gay and lesbian activists as a term of self-identification. Eventually, it came to be used as an umbrella term that included gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people. Nevertheless, a sizable percentage of people to whom this term might apply still hold 'queer' to be a hateful insult, and its use by heterosexuals is often considered offensive. Similarly, other reclaimed words are usually offensive to the in-group when used by outsiders, so extreme caution must be taken concerning their use when one is not a member of the group.

Same Gender Loving – A term sometimes used by members of the African-American/ Black community to express an alternative sexual orientation without relying on terms and symbols of European descent. The term emerged in the early 1990's with the intention of offering Black women who love women and Black men who love men a voice, a way of identifying and being that resonated with the uniqueness of Black culture in life. (Sometimes abbreviated as 'SGL'.)

Sex - A medical term designating a certain combination of gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics and hormonal balances.

Sexual Identity – How a person identifies physically: female, male, in between, beyond, or neither.

Sexual Orientation – The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes.

Sexual Reassignment Surgery (SRS) – A term used by some medical professionals to refer to a group of surgical options that alter a person's "sex". In most states, one or multiple surgeries are required to achieve legal recognition of gender variance. Also known as "Gender Confirming Surgery."

Sexuality – A person's exploration of sexual acts, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, and desire.

Stem – A person whose gender expression falls somewhere between a stud and a femme. (See also 'Femme' and 'Stud'.)

Stereotype – A preconceived or oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for their individual differences. Though often negative, can also be complimentary. Even positive stereotypes can have a negative impact, however, simply because they involve broad generalizations that ignore individual realities.

Straight – Another term for heterosexual.

Stud – An African-American and/or Latina masculine lesbian. Also known as 'butch' or 'aggressive'.

Third gender— distinct gender that is neither male nor female, typically used within the Native population.

Top Surgery - This term usually refers to surgery for the construction of a male-type chest, but may also refer to breast augmentation.

Trans - An abbreviation that is sometimes used to refer to a gender variant person. This use allows a person to state a gender variant identity without having to disclose hormonal or surgical status/intentions. This term is sometimes used to refer to the gender variant community as a whole.

Transactivism- The political and social movement to create equality for gender variant persons.

Transgender – A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex. Sexual orientation varies and is not dependent on gender identity.

Transgendered (Trans) Community – A loose category of people who transcend gender norms in a wide variety of ways. The central ethic of this community is unconditional acceptance of individual exercise of freedoms including gender and sexual identity and orientation.

Trans hate – The irrational hatred of those who are gender variant, usually expressed through violent and often deadly means.

Transition – This term is primarily used to refer to the process a gender variant person undergoes when changing their bodily appearance either to be more congruent with the gender/sex they feel themselves to be and/or to be in harmony with their preferred gender expression.

Trans man—an identity label sometimes adopted by female-to-male transsexuals to signify that they are men while still affirming their history as females. Also referred to as ‘trans guy(s).’

Transphobia – The irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity.

Transsexual – A person who identifies psychologically as a gender/sex other than the one to which they were assigned at birth. Transsexuals often wish to transform their bodies hormonally and surgically to match their inner sense of gender/sex (can be derogatory depending on community or person).

Transvestite – Someone who dresses in clothing generally identified with the opposite gender/sex. While the terms ‘homosexual’ and ‘transvestite’ have been used synonymously, they are in fact signify two different groups. The majority of transvestites are heterosexual males who derive pleasure from dressing in “women’s clothing”. (The preferred term is ‘cross-dresser,’ and it is considered derogatory in many communities. The term ‘transvestite’ is still used in a positive sense in England.)

Transwoman-- An identity label sometimes adopted by male-to-female transsexuals to signify that they are women while still affirming their history as males.

Two-Spirited – Native persons who have attributes of both genders, have distinct gender and social roles in their tribes, and are often involved with mystical rituals (shamans). Their dress is usually mixture of male and female articles and they are seen as a separate or third gender. The term ‘two-spirit’ is usually considered to be specific to the Zuni tribe. Similar identity labels vary by tribe and include ‘one-spirit’ and ‘wintke’.

Ze / Hir – Alternate pronouns that are gender neutral and preferred by some gender variant persons. Pronounced /zee/ and /here,/ they replace “he”/”she” and “his”/”hers” respectively.

Gender Neutral Pronoun Usage Table					
	Subject	Object	Possessive Adjective	Possessive Pronoun	Reflexive
Female	She	Her	Her	Hers	Herself
Male	He	Him	His	His	Himself
Gender Neutral	They	Them	Their	Theirs	Themselves
Gender Neutral	Ze	Hir	Hir	Hirs	Hirself
Splvak	E	Em	Eir	Eirs	Emself

Gender Neutral Pronoun Pronunciation							
Ze	Hir	Hirself	E	Em	Eir	Eirs	Emself
/Zee/	/here/	/hereself/	/ee/	/em/	/air/	/airs/	/emself/

Examples of how to use these pronouns:

She went to her bedroom.

He went to his bedroom.

Ze went to hir bedroom.

E went to eir bedroom.

I am her sister.

I am his sister.

I am hir sister.

I am eir sister.

She shaves herself.

He shaves himself.

Ze shaves himself.

E shaves emself