



Building a Culture of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion through...

PRONOUN USAGE**DID YOU KNOW?**

One in four Americans know someone who uses gender-neutral pronouns.

<https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/articles-reports/2022/08/02/how-americans-gender-neutral-pronouns-2022-poll>

CONTEXT:

Gender pronouns (e.g., he, her, or them) are an important part of how people communicate and take the place of nouns such as names, allowing people to easily share information about themselves. Some individuals who have never had their gender questioned or have never been asked to share their pronouns may experience discomfort the first few times using their pronouns in introductions. This can provide them with an opportunity for reflection on the experiences of transgender and nonbinary individuals when their pronouns are wrongfully assumed, and as a result are misgendered and have their personhood invalidated.

Considerations to incorporate gender pronouns in everyday use:

- Edit your introduction on online platforms such as email signatures, Teams, and Zoom to include your pronouns.
- Include pronouns in verbal introductions. As names and pronouns can change over time, it is preferable to regularly incorporate these questions into meetings and introductions. Asking about a person's pronouns may initially feel awkward or uncomfortable, but it is preferable to making hurtful assumptions and using the wrong pronoun. Here are some ways you can do this:
 - My name is Joshua, and my pronouns are he, him, and his.
 - Do you have any preferred pronouns?
 - How would you like to be addressed?
- Ways to show your respect for people's gender identity include consistently using their preferred pronouns as well as respecting if they choose not to share their pronouns.
- "They" is now recognized as a grammatically correct singular pronoun. Do not get stuck on the grammar.

CONVERSATION ENGAGEMENTS:

1. What is the best way to handle a mistake by misgendering someone or using the wrong pronoun?
Apologize, learn from your experience, and move forward.
2. How might you incorporate gender-neutral language in speech or writing? *E.g., sibling vs. brother/sister, you all vs. you guys, humankind vs. mankind, neighboring campus vs. sister campus, etc.*
3. What action do you feel motivated to take based on what you learned?
4. Practice introducing yourself and your pronouns.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- <https://lgbtrc.uci.edu/resources/Pronoun%20Usage.php>
- <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/4402698027533-Adding-and-sharing-your-pronouns>
- https://lgbt.ucsf.edu/sites/g/files/tkssra411/f/Pronouns_Matter_Tip_Sheet.pdf
- https://uwm.edu/lgbtrc/support/gender-pronouns/?_ga=2.91676632.391647847.1644602972-1072194466.1644602972#a2