Advising Transgender & Non-binary Students Applying to College

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WACAC IDEA Institute  ●  Tuesday, June 13, 2017
Elijah Docter Thornburg
"Realize that almost all trans and nonbinary students are pretty seriously concerned about their basic safety, and this will play a significant role in how they choose which schools to look at."

Photo: http://www.greatvaluecolleges.net/50-great-lgbtq-friendly-colleges/
The Numbers

- An estimated 0.6% of US adults (ages 18+), or about 1.4 million, identify as transgender.
  - UCLA Williams Institute, 2016

- An estimated 0.7% of US youth (ages 13-17), or about 150,000, identify as transgender.
  - UCLA Williams Institute, 2017

- 30% of transgender youth report a history of at least one suicide attempt, and nearly 42% report a history of self-injury, such as cutting
  - Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, 2016
Simple Things Individuals Can Do

- Use gender-neutral language whenever possible, especially when addressing large groups.
- Listen with an open mind.
- Ask questions.
- Educate yourself.

An open heart is an open mind.
~ Dalai Lama
Mistakes Are Inevitable

Quickly apologize, correct yourself, and move on.
Things High School Counselors and Teachers Can Do

If you use a student questionnaire:

▶ Include a question that asks for preferred name and pronouns.

*2. Full Legal Name (First Middle Last) -- NOTE: If this is not the name listed on your Castileja records, please let your College Counselor know immediately.

3. Preferred Name/Nickname

4. Personal Pronouns

▶ Include a catch-all question. For example: “Is there anything in your personal background that might factor into your college choice? (Examples: citizenship, ethnicity, financial aid, health, learning differences, LGBTQ+, religion, etc.). If so, please explain.”
Things High School Counselors and Teachers Can Do (cont’)

- When applicable and feasible, use your student’s preferred name, pronouns, and/or gender identity (in addition to legal name):
  - In person
  - Naviance* or other platforms
  - Recommendation letters
  - Transcript and other school documents

- Gently remind students they will likely need to use their legal name and/or sex throughout the college application and financial aid processes. For some students, using their legal name/sex can be an uncomfortable experience, so it’s helpful for them to have a heads-up.
"When a student asks for a different name and/or pronouns than is legally listed, respond positively, but briefly. Do not focus on it too heavily, but invite the student to direct a conversation that is more gender-specific. It can be overwhelming to have someone expect that gender is all you want to talk about, but equally as overwhelming to feel like talking about it is impossible."
Forms and Applications
Profile

Personal Information

Name: Chang, Jonathan
Preferred Name: Rebecca Chang
Sex, Birthdate: Male, 01/01/2000
Gender Identity: Female

Personal Information

First/given name *

Middle name

Last/family/surname *

Suffix

Preferred name (nickname)

Have you ever used any other names? *
- Yes
- No

Sex assigned at birth *
- Male
- Female

If you would like the opportunity, we invite you to share more about your gender identity below
The name entered here may appear on all of your ACT documents, including score reports. The first and last names provided here must match the required photo identification presented on test day.
Create Your Student Account

This one account is for everything, including SAT, AP, PSAT/NMSQT, CLEP, and BigFuture activities; so provide complete and accurate information.

* = Required

General Student Information

First (given) name: *

Middle initial:

Last name (surname): *

Sex: *
  - Female
  - Male
“Make sure that you view each trans or nonbinary student as a complete and complex individual, not just a trans or nonbinary individual. We are as diverse and distinctive as our cisgender classmates.”
Things Admission Office(r)s Can Do

▶ Mail merge is both a friend and enemy -- make sure the merge pulls the preferred information when sending communications or creating nametags.
  ▶ Ask for and use preferred names.
  ▶ Ask for and use preferred pronouns.
  ▶ Ask for both legal sex and gender; use the preferred gender when referring to students.

▶ Be prepared to answer questions about campus safety, roommate, housing, bathroom, athletic opportunities, and more as they relate to transgender and gender non-conforming students.
Additional Considerations

- Legal Name Change
- Legal Sex/Gender Change
- Selective Service
- Parent Support
- School Support
- Housing
Trans 101/102: Beyond the Basics of Transgender Issues in College Admission

**Wednesday, June 14**
*Session F.5*
*2:45 PM - 3:45 PM*

**Audience:** Secondary and Post-Secondary

**Presenters:** Brad Ward, College Counselor, Menlo School
Ava Agree, Assistant Director of Admission, University of San Francisco

**Room:** Kings Canyon
Additional Resources + Q&A

- Campus Pride - rates college campuses
- Campus Pride - gender-inclusive housing list
- Gender Spectrum - educational resource
- GLAAD - educational resource
- GLSEN - K-12 LGBTQ advocacy
- Lambda Legal - legal advice
- National Center for Transgender Equality - advocacy
- National LGBTQ Task Force - advocacy
- Point Foundation - scholarship, youth-focused
- Trans Lifeline - phone hotline
- Trans Student Educational Resources - youth-focused
- Trans Youth Equality Foundation - youth-focused
- Transgender Law Center - legal advice
- UCLA Williams Institute - research
Contact Us

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