

Guidance Regarding the Employment of and Ongoing Support for Trans* Individuals at Goucher College

Note: Trans* is an umbrella term that refers to all of the identities within the gender identity spectrum, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, transvestite, genderqueer, genderfluid, non-binary, genderless, agender, non-gendered, third gender, two-spirit, bigender, and trans man and trans woman. Cisgender designates a person whose sense of identity corresponds to the sex and/or gender assigned to the individual at birth. These terms are further defined in the definition section at the end of this document.

I. Policy and Purposes

It is the policy of Goucher College to provide a workplace that is free from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, marital status, sex, age (except when sex or age is a bona fide qualification), disability (when the person is otherwise qualified) or genetic information.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and information to trans* and cisgender employees at Goucher regarding concerns they may have with respect to their employment at the college. Trans* and cisgender employees and their colleagues and supervisors should feel free to consult with the Office of Human Resources to seek advice in individual circumstances. Additional information on terminology used in the guidance can be found in the definition section.

Because terminology is evolving and resources for trans* employees are becoming more available, this guidance will be regularly reviewed and updated. Input from the community is encouraged.

II. Background Information

Gender identity is an individual's internal sense of being man, woman or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. The way an individual expresses gender identity is frequently called "gender expression," and may or may not conform to social stereotypes associated with a particular gender.

Transgender individuals are people with a gender identity that is different from the sex assigned to them at birth.

Some individuals will find it necessary to transition to living and working as the gender with which they identify rather than the sex they were assigned at birth. This often includes changing one's first name and dressing and grooming differently. Some individuals seek medical treatment such as counseling, hormone therapy, electrolysis, and gender affirming surgery. Others, however, will not pursue some (or any) forms of medical treatment.

Supervisors and colleagues should be aware that not all transgender individuals will follow the same transition pattern, but all transgender individuals are entitled to the same consideration as they undertake the transition steps deemed appropriate for them, and, as is the case for all Goucher community members, should all be treated with dignity and respect under Goucher's Community Principles.

III. Transitioning While Employed

Cisgender individuals are encouraged to seek information and support in the following areas:

Confidentiality and Privacy: An employee's transition should be treated with as much sensitivity and confidentiality as any other employee's significant life experiences. Moreover, Goucher treats all medical information about employees with strict confidentiality. Supervisors should be sensitive to confidentiality concerns and should provide information to other employees only with the agreement of the employee in transition.

Dress and Appearance: Once an employee has decided to transition, the employee may begin wearing the clothes associated with the gender that reflects the employee's gender identity. All employees should respect the gender expression of their colleagues and their choice of clothing.

Names and Pronouns: Once trans* employees disclose their wishes for identification, supervisors and co-workers should use the name and pronouns reflective of the trans* employee's wishes. Further, supervisors and co-workers should take care to use the correct name and pronouns in employee records and in communications with others regarding the employee. Continued intentional misuse of the employee's former name and pronouns, and reference to the employee's former gender by supervisors or co-workers is contrary to the goal of treating employees with dignity and respect. Such misuse may also breach the employee's privacy, and may create a risk of harm to the employee.

Note on pronouns:

If a co-worker is in transition and you are not certain which pronouns to use, it is appropriate to respectfully ask the employee's name and which pronouns you should use. The appropriate pronoun should be used when referencing the employee in all cases moving forward.

Restrooms and locker rooms: The [Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(DOL/OSHA\) guidelines](#) require employers to give all employees access to adequate sanitary facilities. For all employees, this means that Goucher will allow access to restrooms and locker room facilities consistent with the employee's gender identity. Employees should not be required to have undergone or to provide proof of any particular medical procedure (including gender affirming surgery) in order to have access to facilities designated for use by a particular gender. Because every workplace is configured differently, supervisors with questions regarding employee access to any facilities should contact Human Resources for further guidance. Employees who have questions about restroom or locker room use are encouraged to reach out to Human Resources.

IV. Recordkeeping:

A trans* employee should notify the Office of Human Resources of a legal name and gender marker change. Upon notification and provision of legal documentation the employee's name will be changed in all personnel and administrative records. The employee's gender marker can be changed without provision of legal documentation; the employee will be asked to complete a new employee demographic card to document the gender marker change. The employee may request a new OneCard and has the option to change the name that appears on Goucher email.

Specific Questions: For further guidance and support, please contact the Office of Human Resources.

Definitions

Adapted from the website of the [National Center for Transgender Equality](#).

Androgyne: Person identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.

Bi-gender: One who has a significant gender identity that encompasses both genders, male and female. Some may feel that one side or the other is stronger, but both sides are present.

Cisgender: Designates a person whose sense of identity corresponds to the sex and/or gender assigned to the individual at birth.

Cissexism: Interpersonal or institutional actions which enforce cisgender identities as the norm through erasure or invalidation of trans* identities.

Cross-dresser: A term for people who dress in clothing traditionally or stereotypically worn by the other sex, but who generally have no intent to live full-time as the other gender. The older term "transvestite" is considered derogatory by many in the United States.

FTM: A person who transitions from "female-to-male," meaning a person who was assigned female at birth, but identifies and lives as a male. Also known as a "transgender man."

Gender: The socially constructed concepts of masculinity and femininity; the 'appropriate' qualities accompanying biological sex.

Gender Expression: How a person represents or expresses one's gender identity to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, voice or body characteristics.

Gender Identity: An individual's internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

Gender Marker: The designation of female, male, f, m, other, and similar indications on official forms.

Gender Non-conforming: A term for individuals whose gender expression is different from societal expectations related to gender.

Genderqueer: A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders.

Intersex: A term used for people who are born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or chromosome pattern that does not seem to fit typical definitions of male or female. Intersex conditions are also known as differences of sex development (DSD).

MTF: A person who transitions from "male-to-female," meaning a person who was assigned male at birth, but identifies and lives as a female. Also known as a "transgender woman."

Queer: A term used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual and, often also transgender people. Some use queer as an alternative to "gay" in an effort to be more inclusive. Depending on the user, the term has either a derogatory or an affirming connotation, as many have sought to reclaim the term that was once widely used in a negative way.

Sex: biological classification of male or female (based on genetic or physiological features); as opposed to gender.

Sexual Orientation: A term describing a person's attraction to members of the same sex and/or a different sex, usually defined as lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, or asexual.

Sex Reassignment Surgery: [This is an outdated term considered derogatory by some, but one that is still in use. More appropriate terminology includes "gender affirming surgery," "genital reconstruction surgery," or "genital reassignment surgery."] Surgical procedures that change one's body to better reflect a person's gender identity. This may include different procedures, including those sometimes also referred to as "top surgery" (breast augmentation or removal) or "bottom surgery" (altering genitals). Contrary to popular belief, there is not one surgery; in fact there are many different surgeries. These surgeries are medically necessary for some people, however not all people want, need, or can have surgery as part of their transition. "Sex change surgery" is considered a derogatory term by many.

Transgender: A term for people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Transgender is a broad term and is good for non-transgender people to use. "Trans" is shorthand for "transgender." (Note: Transgender is correctly used as an adjective, not a noun, thus "transgender people" is appropriate but "transgendered" is often viewed as disrespectful.)

Transgender Man: A term for a transgender individual who currently identifies as a man (see also "FTM").

Transgender Woman: A term for a transgender individual who currently identifies as a woman (see also "MTF").

Transition: The time when a person begins to living as the gender with which they identify rather than the sex they were assigned at birth, which often includes changing one's first name and dressing and grooming differently. Transitioning may or may not also include medical and legal aspects, including taking hormones, having surgery, or changing identity documents (e.g. driver's license, Social Security record) to reflect one's gender identity. Medical and legal steps are often difficult for people to afford. The [World Professional Association of Transgender Health \(WPATH\)](#), an international organization devoted to the study and treatment of gender-identity-related issues, has published the [WPATH Standards of Care](#), which explains gender transition as a process that may include therapy, hormones, and possibly surgical procedures, or any combination of them.

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

Transsexual: An older term for people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex at birth. Many do not prefer this term because it is thought to sound overly clinical.

Transvestite: Someone who dresses in clothing generally identified with the opposite gender/sex. The majority of transvestites are heterosexual males who derive pleasure from dressing in "women's clothing".

Two-Spirit: A contemporary term that refers to the historical and current First Nations people whose individuals spirits were a blend of male and female spirits. This term has been reclaimed by some in Native American LGBT communities in order to honor their heritage and provide an alternative to the Western labels of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.