

LGBTQIA+ Terminology, Updated 2021

*This is not a complete list of all LGBTQIA+ terms. Additionally, people may have different views on what the definition is for certain terms. Finally, terminology changes over time. Words that were used in the past may now be outdated or have changed meaning. If you have questions or concerns on a term in this list, please see the end of this document for contact information.

AFAB/AMAB: “Assigned female at birth” or “assigned male at birth.” Other variations of this abbreviation may substitute the A for a D (designated).

Agender: A person who does not identify themselves as having a particular gender; they may be genderless or neutral.

Ally: A person who does not identify as a particular marginalized identity but who actively works to support those who hold that identity and works against the oppression of that identity group.

Androgynous: A person appearing and/or identifying as neither masculine or feminine, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.

Aromantic: A person who does not experience romantic attraction or who experiences a varying degree of sexual attraction. “Aro” is another term used to describe an aromantic person.

Asexuality: Umbrella term for those who tend not to have a sexual attraction toward others. “Ace” is another term used to describe an asexual person.

Bigender: A person who has two or more distinct gender identities, not necessarily within the gender binary but can be.

Biphobia: Fear, anger, discomfort, intolerance, or lack of acceptance toward Bi-, Pan- or other middle sexualities, or experiencing these feelings about one's self.

Biromantic: A person who experiences romantic attraction to persons of varying genders.

Bisexual: A person who has the potential for emotional, physical, and sexual attraction to members of more than one sex and/or gender. Often used as an umbrella term for those in the middle sexualities (pansexual, omnisexual).

Butch: A person whose gender expression is masculine.

Cisgender: People whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

Cisgenderism: The presumption that those whose gender expression and/or identity are congruent with their assigned sex at birth are superior to those whose gender expression and/or identity are not congruent with their assigned sex at birth (see Transphobia).

Cissexism: The system of oppression that perpetuates the discrimination and exclusion of people on the basis of incongruence with one's assigned sex at birth.



Coming Out (of the closet): The life-long process of discovering, defining, and declaring one's sexual and/or gender identity to oneself and others.

Dead Name: A person's birth or original name that the person has since changed. Do not use a person's dead name (deadnaming) as it can be invalidating, offensive, and out them.

Discrimination: Unjust or prejudicial treatment of people on the basis of groups, identities, or categories they belong to.

Drag King/Queen: Drag is the performance of one or multiple genders theatrically. Drag queens perform femininity, and drag kings perform masculinity.

Femme: A person whose gender expression is feminine.

Fluid: Umbrella term for those whose gender expression, gender roles, gender identity, sexual behavior, sexual desires, and/or sexual identity changes over time.

FTM: Female to male. A person who was assigned female at birth and now identifies as male.

Gay: Usually, but not always, refers to men who have significant sexual or romantic attractions primarily to members of the same gender or sex. Also used as an umbrella term for the LGBT community.

Gender Binary: The classification of sex and gender into two distinct, opposite and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine.

Gender Dysphoria: Distress or discomfort that a person feels when their gender identity does not match their sex assigned at birth. Not all trans or gender expansive people experience dysphoria.

Gender Expression: Signals we give to the world that communicate our gender (i.e., clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, language).

Genderfluid: A person whose gender identity and/or expression is not fixed, and changes over time.

Gender Identity: Internal sense of who you are in terms of gender.

Gender Neutral Pronouns: Pronouns which do not signal femaleness or maleness (ex. they/them/their, ze, and hir).

Gender Non-Conforming: A person whose behavior or appearance does not conform to cultural and social expectations about what is appropriate to their 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 in terms of expression and/or identity.

Gender Roles: Social expectations based on our assumed or assigned sex.

Grey-Ace: Gray asexuality is considered the gray area between asexuality and sexuality, in which a person may only experience sexual attraction on occasion.



Heteronormativity: The belief that people fall into distinct and complementary genders (male and female) with natural roles in life. Its assumption that heterosexuality is the norm or default sexual orientation reinforces the marginalization of LGBTQIA+ people.

Heterosexism: The belief that all people are heterosexual, the assumption and/or belief that heterosexual relationships and behavior are superior, and the discrimination and bias that arise from this assumption.

Heterosexual: Umbrella term for those who have an attraction towards “opposite” gender; that is, men who are attracted to women, or vice versa.

Heterosexual Privilege: The benefits and access to resources one receives from society by virtue of being heterosexual.

Homophobia: Fear, anger, discomfort, intolerance, or lack of acceptance toward LGBTQIA+ people, or experiencing these feelings about one's own sexual orientation (internalized).

Homosexual: Umbrella term for those who have an attraction towards their own gender. Now considered an outdated term and not always accepted in the community.

HRT: Hormone replacement therapy. Hormones and medications are administered for the purpose of more closely aligning someone's physical body characteristics with their gender identity.

Intersex: Individuals whose biological sex cannot easily be categorized as male or female because of ambiguous genitalia. Being intersex is fairly common, with many individuals being born with a blending of male and female sex organs that the medical establishment has deemed unacceptable and often “treated” with sex reassignment surgery. Medical professionals are beginning to understand that surgical intervention is unnecessary and cruel, and should be replaced with support and counseling for the children and families affected--thus providing children bodily autonomy as they mature.

Invisibility: The constant assumption of heterosexuality and cisgender identity that renders LGBTQIA+ people, invisible and seemingly nonexistent. LGBTQIA+ people are usually not recognized or portrayed in society.

Lesbian: A woman who has sexual or romantic attractions to members of the same gender, or who identifies as a member of the lesbian community.

Middle Sexuality: Umbrella term for people who are sexually and/or romantically attracted to both men, women, and/or non-binary genders. Common middle sexualities include bisexual, pansexual, and omnisexual.

Misgendering: Referring to a person using a word (usually a pronoun) that does not correctly reflect the gender they identify with. This can be invalidating, offensive, and harmful so it is best to ask a person what pronouns they use.

Misogyny: The hatred of or prejudice against women.

MTF: Male to female. A person who was assigned male at birth and now identifies as female.



Non-binary: An umbrella term referring to genders that are not exclusively male or female. A person may identify with multiple genders, partially with a binary gender, no gender, or another gender entirely.

Outing: To declare a person's identity publicly; people can out themselves, or someone can out them either with or without their permission.

Panromantic: Those who have a romantic attraction regardless of gender.

Pansexual: An umbrella term for those who have a sexual attraction regardless of gender.

Polyamory: Engaging in multiple sexual relationships with the consent of all people involved. Trust and consent are important elements of being in a polyamorous relationship.

Polyromantic: Being romantically attracted to many genders, but not all.

Polysexual: Being sexually attracted to many genders, but not all.

Pride: Feeling unashamed and/or showing pride to others by coming out visibly and being honest about one's identity with self and others.

QTPOC: Queer and trans people of color. Racism and exclusion of people of color is common in the queer community and must continue to be addressed and dismantled.

Questioning: The process of exploring one's own sexual or gender identity.

Queer: Reclaimed derogatory slang for the gender and sexual minority communities. Cisgender heterosexual people should be cautious in using this term outside of educational spaces as it is still seen as offensive by some. LGBTQIA+ people may use this term in an effort to reclaim the word and identity.

Sex: Category assigned to each of us at birth based on a variety of physical and biological characteristics, usually determined by genitalia. Also referred to as sex assigned at birth. The medical establishment typically assigns sex as male or female, but many people's anatomy does not fit into either of these categories (see Intersex).

Sexism: Prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination on the basis of sex or gender, typically against women.

Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientation refers to one's sexual and romantic attraction. The term "sexual preference" is misleading, as it implies that this attraction is a choice rather than an intrinsic personal characteristic.

Stonewall: On June 28, 1969, NYC police attempted a routine raid on the Stonewall Inn, a working class LGBT bar in Greenwich Village. The patrons, led by transwomen, resisted, and the incident escalated into a riot that continued for several days. Most people look to this event as the beginning of the American Gay Liberation movement and all subsequent LGBTQIA+ movements.

Trans/Transgender: An umbrella term (adj.) for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.



Transition: The complex process of altering one's gender, which may include some, all or none of the following: changing name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and chest, facial and/or genital alteration. Trans people may or may not choose to (or be able to) alter their bodies.

Trans man: A person assigned female sex at birth who identifies as a man. Other possible identities include transmasculine.

Transphobia: The fear and hatred or the discomfort with people who identify or may be perceived to be gender non-conforming/trans. (see Cisgenderism)

Trans woman: A person assigned male sex at birth who identifies as a woman. Other possible identities include transfeminine.

Two Spirit: Indigenous individuals who have attributes of both genders and have distinct gender and social roles in their tribes. One should not identify as such if you are not Native. For non-native individuals use bigender or non-binary.

*The Qube is located in Price Commons 121. Please contact Nicole Eastman at eastmanni@uwstout.edu with questions or for more info.

