

Gender-sensitive language in everyday university life

As an AntiBias organization, we provide an environment designed to grant equal opportunities, where the diversity of our students and staff is valued as a key principle of our co-operation.

A variety of experiences, abilities and potentials is recognized and promoted. Therefore, gender equality also includes persons who do not see/define themselves as male or female.

→ VIDEO

The following wordings are suggestions and examples for a gender-sensitive language use. This is certainly unfamiliar at first. For this reason, there are suggestions for people just starting to deal with the topic and additionally some ideas developed in expert discussions in Gender Studies.



Trans means that my gender does not align with the gender I was assigned to at birth. Trans does not necessarily mean that I "feel trapped in the wrong body".

Intersex means that my body does not correlate with society's understanding of female or male. Intersex does not mean that my body is sick and needs to be modified.

Non-binary means that my gender is neither only/always female nor only/always male. Non-binary does not mean that I am unsure.

In e-mails, on the phone and in face-to-face communication



Addressing

Good morning/day/evening TITLE FIRSTNAME SURNAME
EXAMPLE "Good morning Dr. Maximiliane Musterperson"

Ask the person you are talking to how they would like to be addressed.

EXAMPLE "How may I address you?"

In this context you can also ask for desired pronouns.

EXAMPLE "Which pronouns do you use?"

In order to have a conversation at equal basis, introduce yourself with your name and personal pronouns.

EXAMPLE "Hello, I'm Laura and I use she/her pronouns."

If you make a mistake and address a person incorrectly: Correct yourself, apologize briefly and continue the conversation.

Moderating

Make use of wording that includes everyone.

EXAMPLE *“Dear audience” or “Esteemed guests”*

In class

Check the attendance with a surname only list:

<i>Firstname (to be filled in by students)</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Signature</i>
	<i>Müller</i>	
	<i>Schmidt</i>	

Whenever you are unsure: Use a person’s name instead of a pronoun.

Start a presentation round/ask for name tags with voluntary disclosure of personal pronouns.

Some further suggestions from expert discussions in Gender Studies:

Addressing

Dear Mx TITLE (FIRSTNAME) SURNAME (Mx = gender neutral honorific)

EXAMPLE

“Dear Mx Prof. Dr. Doe” (Pronunciation: Dear Mix (or Em-Ex) Professor Doctor Doe)

With your electronic signature

Clarify your own pronouns, possibly ask about the recipient’s pronouns.

EXAMPLE *“My pronouns are they/them, may I ask about yours?”*

**You can ask your
questions here:**

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