



Trans Friendly Tips

Grinnell College

Basic Trans Etiquette

- Use a person's correct name and pronouns
- If you don't know what pronouns or gender labels are correct, ask politely (What is your name? Is there another name you'd prefer me to use? And what pronouns should I use in my report?)
- Do not ask a person's birth or legal name, unless it's a legal requirement. If you know it, don't use it
- Do not "out" a trans person
- Always affirm (never challenge) a trans person's gender identity and expression (Don't ask if someone is sure they are trans)
- Don't make assumptions about a person's gender identity
- Don't make assumptions about a person's transition process
- Don't say transgendered
- Don't tell a trans person how hard or uncomfortable this is for you
- Don't offer advice for being "read as" a particular gender (ie: "If you just wore a little lipstick...")
- Don't ask private, personal, or invasive questions (ask yourself: is it relevant or my business?)
- If you have general questions, start here: <http://www.transequality.org/>
- Be careful of your phrasing (never say "when you were a girl" or "Jack was born a woman" because Jack has always been a man, it's just that everyone else made assumptions about Jack based on the appearance of his body)
- Be aware of your setting; don't ask a vulnerable person to represent any category of people
- Try to use gender inclusive language/avoid using gendered language
- Refrain from using salutations (Sir, Ma'am, Mrs., Mr.) until you know how a person identifies
- Stop discrimination, bias, or harassment whenever you encounter it

Steps to follow if you make a mistake

1. Apologize
2. Correct yourself.
3. Move on.
4. Do better next time.

Example: "Mark and I were going to get coffee and she—I'm sorry¹, he²—got a latte³."

Proactive Tips

- Share your own pronouns, everywhere you go
- Create an LGBTQIA+ inclusive classroom, office, department, College/university
- Understand your student, faculty, and staff's rights
- Invite the experts to teach and consult
- Be careful, thoughtful, and intentional when taking attendance
- Don't panic about the restrooms, but know where people can utilize a safer facility
- Think about your recordkeeping and consider whether you have accounted for all people