LGBTQI Key Terms/Definitions

Ambisexual: (see Bisexual) Androgynous: A person appearing and/or identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.

Asexuality: Umbrella term for those who tend not to have a sexual affinity towards others.

Bigendered: A person whose gender identity is a combination of male/man and female/woman.

Biphobia: The fear and hatred or the discomfort with people who identify or may be perceived to be bisexual. (see Monosexism)

Bisexuality/Multisexuality: The potential to be attracted, romantically and physically, to people of more than one sex and/or gender, not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way, and not necessarily to the same degree.

Butch: Masculine or macho dress and behavior, regardless of sex or gender identity. Also, a sub-identity of lesbian, gay male, or bisexual, based on masculine or macho dress and behavior.

Cisgenderism: The presumption that those whose gender expression and gender identity are congruent with their assigned sex at birth are superior to those whose gender expression and/or gender identity are not congruent with their assigned sex at birth. The oppression, discrimination, and bias against people who are transgender. (see Transphobia)

Come out (of the closet): 1. To disclose one’s own gender or sexual identity to another person. 2. (Come out to oneself) To discover that one’s own gender or sexual identity are different than one previously assumed.

Cross-Dresser: A person who wears clothes traditionally associated with people of another sex. Cross-dressers are usually comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth and do not wish to change it. (“Cross-dresser” should not be used to describe someone who has transitioned to live full-time as the other sex, or who intends to do so in the future.) While cross-dressing is a form of gender expression, it is not necessarily tied to sexual orientation or erotic activity. Most cross-dressers are heterosexual.

Drag: 1. Clothes, often unusual or dramatic, especially those considered appropriate to another gender. 2. (In drag) Wearing clothes considered appropriate to another gender.

Drag King/Drag Queen: Drag is the performance of one or multiple genders theatrically. Drag queens perform femininity, and drag kings perform masculinity theatrically. (Usually one understands drag performers to be theatrical crossdressers. This is not necessarily the case.)

FTM (Female-to-Male): Literally “female-to-male,” a person assigned female sex and feminine gender at birth who is either transitioning into a male identity and/or body, or who identifies as FTM transperson, transman, or transsexual.

Female: One who has (only) female primary sex characteristics.

Femme: 1. Feminine or effeminate dress and behavior, regardless of sex or gender identity. 2. A sub-identity of lesbians, gay male, or bisexual, based on feminine or effeminate dress and behavior.

Fluid: Umbrella term for those whose gender expression, gender roles, gender identity, sexual behavior, sexual desires, and/or sexual identity change over time.
Gay: One who has significant sexual or romantic attractions primarily to members of the same gender or sex, or who identifies as a member of the gay community. Typically associated with male-identified persons.

Gender: A system of meanings and symbols and the rules, privileges and punishments for their use. All the ways in which people express their bodies and communicate with the world can be gendered and encoded in meaning.

Gender Conforming: Umbrella term for those whose gender expression and gender identity is congruent with the sex-assigned at birth and whose gender is validated by the dominant culture.

Gender Conforming Privilege: The benefits and access to resources one receives from society by virtue of being gender conforming and/or by virtue of having our gender validated by the dominant culture.

Gender Expression: Signals we give to the world that communicate our gender. Gender Identity Internal sense of who you are in terms of gender.

Gender Identity Disorder: A controversial DSM-IV diagnosis given to transgender and other gender-variant people. Because it labels people as “disordered,” Gender Identity Disorder is often considered offensive. The diagnosis is frequently given to children who don’t obey expected norms in terms of dress, play, or behavior. Such children are often subjected to intense psychotherapy, behavior modification, and/or institutionalization. This replaces the outdated term “gender dysphoria.”

Gender Neutral Language: Language, which does not use one gender to represent all people.

Gender Neutral Pronouns: Pronouns, which do not signal femaleness or maleness, are preferred by some transgender people. For example, ze and hir, pronounced zee and here, would replace she/he and her/him or hers/his, respectively.

Gender Non-Conforming (also GNC) (See Transgender)

Gender Non-Normative (See Transgender)

Gender Normative (See Gender Conforming)

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.

Gender Variant: A person who does not conform to gender-based expectations of society.

Heterosexism: The presumption that heterosexuality is superior to all sexual orientations. The oppression, discrimination, and bias against people who are bisexual, gay, and lesbian. (See Biphobia, Homophobia)

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

Homophobia: The fear and hatred or the discomfort with people who identify or may be perceived to be gay or lesbian. (See Heterosexism)
**Homosexuality**: Umbrella term for those who have an affinity towards their own gender/sex.

**Intersex**: A general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not fit the typical definitions of female or male.

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

**Male**: One who has (only) male primary sex characteristics.

**Man**: One who identifies with a masculine gender expression, identity and/or role, regardless of present sex or sexual identity.

**Monosexuality**: Umbrella term for those who have an affinity towards one gender/sex.

**Monosexism**: The presumption that being attracted to one gender/sex is superior to all other sexual orientations, such as being attracted to multiple gender/sexes or attracted to no gender/sexes. The oppression, discrimination, and bias against people who are asexual and gays/lesbians.

**Monosexual Privilege**: The benefits and access to resources one receives from society by virtue of being heterosexual, gay or lesbian and/or by virtue of being perceived to be heterosexual, gay, or lesbian. These benefits and resources can differ between heterosexuals and gays/lesbians.

**MTF (Male-to-Female)**: Literally “male-to-female,” a person assigned male sex and masculine gender at birth who is either transitioning into a female identity and/or body, or who identifies as an MTF transperson, transwoman, or transsexual.

**Multigendered** A person whose gender identity is a combination of many genders.

**Oppression**: Systematic, supported by society, mistreatment of and misinformation about people who are or perceived to be members of a particular group. Mistreatment includes economic and social marginalization.

**Pansexuality**: An umbrella term for those who have an affinity to many genders.

**Pass**: To be perceived by others as a member of the group one chooses, instead of as a member of another group, especially of the gender one was assigned.

**Queer**: Reclaimed derogatory slang for the gender and sexual minority communities. Not accepted by all who identify as a gender or sexual minority.

**Same-Gender Loving**: A person who is attracted to those who have similar gender expression and/or gender identity as their own, regardless of sex.

**Sex**: Category assigned to each of us at birth based on a variety of physical and biological characteristics, usually determined by genitals.

**Sexism**: The presumption that men/males are superior to all other genders/sexes. The oppression, discrimination, and bias against people who are women or gender non-conforming/transgender.

**Sexual Behavior**: The actions, behaviors, and relationships that express our sexuality.

**Sexual Desire**: The attraction we feel towards other people.
**Sexual Identity:** The way in which we understand ourselves in regard to our sexuality.

**Sexual Orientation:** It can be understood as the relationship between your sex/gender and others’ sexes/genders.

Traditionally Gendered  (See Gender Conforming)

**Transsexual/Transsexual:** A person whose intent it is to live as a gender other than that assigned at birth. Most transsexuals engage in some process of altering either primarily or secondarily sexual characteristics through hormone treatment or surgery or both. Some transsexuals live full time in their chosen gender without any alteration to physiology.

**Transgender:** Umbrella term for those whose gender expression or gender identity is not congruent with the sex assigned at birth and/or whose gender is not validated by the dominant culture.

**Transition:** Refers to 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. Transgender people may or may not choose to (or may or may not be able to) alter their bodies.

**Transphobia:** The fear and hatred or the discomfort with people whose identity or perceived identity may be gender non-conforming/transgender.

**Two Spirit:** American Indian persons who have attributes of both genders, have distinct gender and social roles in their tribes.

**Unisex:** Clothing, behaviors, thoughts, feelings, relationships, etc. which are considered appropriate for members of both genders/sexes.

**Woman:** One who identifies with a feminine gender expression, identity, and/or roles, regardless of present sex or sexual identity. (Also Womin, Womyn)

Quoted from Palomar College’s Committee on Combating Hate