

These are the terms used for the vocabulary exercise in Allies & Safe Zones 101. Please note that these terms have a regional, generational, time-bound context and may have different names or definitions in other locations or organizations. These definitions are those that are used now and will evolve over time. If you print this list for reference, please be sure to check at least once per year for an updated list. List current as of December 2016.

All Gender Restrooms

Public restrooms that are designated by specific signage and able to be used by someone of any gender; at Florida State University, these are usually single-stall, locking restrooms.

Ally

A member of a **dominant** social group * who takes a stand against social injustice directed at a **marginalized or underrepresented** group or community. This is an agent of social change rather than an agent of oppression.

*A member of a marginalized or underrepresented group or community can also be this for other members of the same group or community whose identity differs from their own (i.e. a cisgender gay man can be this for trans individuals).

Asexual (or Ace)

An identity label sometimes claimed by people who do not experience sexual attraction. This differs from celibacy or abstinence, which are behaviors. There is considerable diversity within this label; each person experiences things like relationships, attraction, and arousal somewhat differently. It is often used as an umbrella term that encompasses identities such as demi-sexual and Grey-A. Romantic relationships may still be sought out by these individuals.

Biological Sex/Assigned Sex

The physiological and anatomical characteristics of maleness and femaleness with which a person is born or that develop with physical maturity. These markers include internal and external reproductive organs, chromosomes, hormones, and body shape. Infants are usually assigned to a sex category (male or female) at birth on the basis of such characteristics (primarily the appearance of the external genitals). We therefore use assigned sex to refer to the sex designation that appears on birth certificates and other legal documents.

Biphobia

An aversion toward bisexuality and bisexual (or other non-monosexual) people, as a social group or as individuals. People of any sexual orientation can experience such feelings of aversion discrimination against bisexuals (or other non-monosexual), and may be based on negative bisexual stereotypes or irrational fear. Bi, Pan, Fluid, and other non-monosexual people can experience this from heterosexuals and/or from within the queer community.

Bisexual (or Bi)

A person who has significant sexual and/or romantic attractions to both, or sometimes multiple, genders or sexes.

Cisgender

Non-trans. From a Latin-derived prefix meaning “on the same side,” as opposed to trans- which means “across” or “on the opposite side of.” This can be used in place of “non-trans people” or “gender-normative people.”

Cissexism

The cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices assuming that cisgender identities are the only natural, normal, or acceptable gender identities. The belief that the gender of transgender identifying individuals is inferior to, or less authentic than, that of cisgender individuals.

Cross Dresser

While anyone may wear clothes associated with a different sex, this term is typically used to refer to heterosexual men who occasionally wear clothes, makeup, and accessories culturally associated with women. This activity is a form of gender expression, and not done for entertainment purposes. These individuals do not wish to permanently change their sex or live full-time as women.

Deadnaming

Using a person’s name incorrectly, typically using the name assigned to a person at birth, rather than the name that a person has chosen for themselves. This is a form of discrimination, when done consciously.

Discrimination

When prejudiced feelings or beliefs move into the realm of behavior and people are denied equality of treatment. Can be conscious and deliberate or it can be unconscious and unintentional.

Drag

Originally used in Shakespeare’s Globe Theater to mean “dressed as a girl,” referring to male actors playing female roles. In a historical U.S. context, this culture has been connected to communities of color, particularly ball culture in NYC. Additionally, this activity has provided an opportunity for many trans people of color to earn revenue, due to widespread employment discrimination. People who are cisgender also take part in this culture, though this can be problematic and sometimes transphobic, due to the humor used by these individuals. **Simplistically, this term can be used to describe the performance of gender, often exaggerated for the purpose of entertainment during a stage show. This can be a gender other than one’s own (for cisgender individuals) or an exploration/confirmation of gender (for trans and gender non-conforming individuals).**

Gay

Usually this is a man who self-identifies as having significant sexual and/or romantic attractions to some other men, or who identifies as a member of this community. At times, this term is used to refer to all people, regardless of biological sex or gender identity, who have their primary sexual and/or romantic attractions to people of the same sex. Lesbians, bisexual people, and other identities may feel excluded by this word.

Gender

A social identity usually conflated with biological sex in a binary system that presumes one has either male and masculine characteristics and behavior, or female and feminine characteristics and behavior. In addition to being a major social status experienced by individuals, this is also “a social institution” that helps humans organize their lives.

Gender Expression

People's behaviors that convey something about their gender identity, or that others interpret as meaning something about their gender identity, including clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, communication patterns, social roles, etc.

Gender Identity

A person's own understanding of themselves in terms of gendered categories like man and woman, boy and girl, transgender, genderqueer, and many others. **How they feel inside or how they describe themselves, in terms of gender.**

Genderqueer

An identity label sometimes claimed by people whose gender identity does not fit into either of the two culturally accepted gender categories. May be characterized by the desire to challenge norms of gender role/presentation, to explore gender, and/or to express a fluid gender identity.

Heterosexism

The cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that assume that heterosexuality is the only natural, normal, acceptable sexual orientation.

Heterosexual

This term describes those whose primary sexual and/or romantic attraction is to people of the "opposite" sex or gender, in the gender binary. The term was first used in medical texts of the 1890's, defined as an identity based on sexual attraction to the "opposite" sex. The term only came into existence in opposition to the term homosexual, which was a newly defined sexual disorder. This term is still used; however, homosexual is now broadly considered to be a slur due to its medicalized usage.

Homophobia

A range of negative attitudes and feelings toward people who are identified or perceived as being gay (or any part of the LGBTQ+ community). Definitions refer variably to antipathy, contempt, prejudice, aversion, irrational fear, and hatred. This is present at several levels of society, both institutionalized, through religion and the state, and internalized, even experienced by people who have opposite-sex attractions, regardless of how they identify.

Intersex or DSD (Disorders of Sexual Development)

A group of medical diagnoses describing a person whose anatomy or physiology differs from cultural ideals of male and female in terms of external genitalia, internal genitalia, chromosomes and/or hormone production levels. These individuals are typically assigned as "male" or "female" at birth. Sometimes medical providers and family members decide for newborns to undergo surgery on their genitals to force a more culturally acceptable gendered appearance. This community has challenged the ethics of infant genital surgeries that are not medically necessary, pointing out that many of these individuals who undergo such surgery in infancy later report feeling a sense of loss of an essential aspect of themselves. About 2–4% of all births are designated as this, though this is sometimes not evident until puberty.

Lesbian

Usually this a woman who self-identifies as having significant sexual and/or romantic attractions to some other women, or who identifies as a member of this community. Bisexual women may not feel included by this term.

LGBTQ+

This acronym stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer. The plus sign (+) indicates that there are far more identities recognized as part of the community than are indicated in the first five letters. This version of the acronym has been adopted by the major LGBTQ+ organizations/programs at Florida State University. However, LGBTQIA+ (including Intersex and Asexual) is on the rise in student activist groups.

Misgendering

Using the incorrect name, pronouns, or gender for someone that is transgender. This is a form of discrimination, when done consciously.

Monosexism

A belief that monosexuality (either exclusive heterosexuality and/or homosexuality) is superior to a bisexual or other non-monosexual orientation. Some people, regardless of their own orientation, largely dismiss bisexual/non-monosexual people as merely promiscuous.

MTF/ M2F/ MtF and FTM/F2M/FtM

Terms sometimes used to indicate the direction of a trans person's transition and/or identification.

This becomes problematic as it does not correctly describe all people's gender identity or their process of transition (regardless of biological sex).

Non-Binary

Someone who identifies outside of the binary of man/woman or not exclusively within it. This term can refer to a specific gender identity or it can function as an umbrella term which can include (though not always) people who identify as genderqueer, agender, bigender, genderfluid, and others.

Oppression

"We use [this term] rather than discrimination, bias, prejudice, or bigotry to emphasize the pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. The term encapsulates the fusion of institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that shade most aspects of life in our society... Woven together through time and reinforced in the present, these patterns provide an example of the pervasiveness of [this term]" (bell hooks, 2010, RDSJ2).

Pansexual

From the Greek "all" or "every." An identity label sometimes claimed by those who experience sexual attraction, sexual desire (and sometimes romantic love or emotional attraction) toward persons of all gender identities and biological sexes including those inside and outside the gender binary.

Prejudice

To hold an adverse opinion or belief without just ground before acquiring specific knowledge; often

against people or groups of people who are perceived as being “different” or having “different values”.

Privilege

A “system of advantage” that gives people from more powerful social groups access to resources and opportunities that are denied to others (and usually gained at their expense) simply because of the groups they belong to (Goodman, 2001; Johnson, 2001; Wildman & Davis, 1996, 2000).

Queer

An umbrella identity term taken by people who do not conform to heteronormative and/or gender binary norms; a reclaimed derogatory slur taken as a political term to unite people who are marginalized because of their non-conformity to dominant gender identities and/or heterosexuality.

Sexism

The cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege men, subordinate women, and denigrate values and practices associated with women or that society deems as feminine.

Sexual Orientation

Determines the focus of our sexual/erotic drives, desires, and fantasies, and the inclination or capacity to develop sexual relationships with other people. [this term] is usually quantified in terms of gender — both an individual’s own gender and the gender(s) of the people to whom that person is sexually attracted and/or with whom they engage in sexual relationships.

They/Them/Theirs

Singular personal pronouns, used like he, she, him, her, his and hers; by people who feel that those pronouns do not fit their gender identity. Some people object to the use of plural pronouns as singular on the grounds that it’s ungrammatical. In fact, the use of plural pronouns to refer back to a singular subject isn’t new: it represents a revival of a practice dating from the 16th century. It’s increasingly common in current English and is now widely accepted both in speech and in writing. **These pronouns are popularly used by LGBTQ+ students at FSU.**

Transgender (or Trans)

A self-identity and an umbrella term for a community that may include identities such as transman, transwoman, non-binary, and other identity terms that describe transgressing the socially constructs confines of the gender binary. **Conceptually, this identity may used by individuals whose understanding of their own gender identity and/or gender expression has “moved” on the gender identity “scale” from the gender they were assigned/expected at birth.**

Transition

The process of changing sex or gender, which might include social changes (e.g. changing one’s pronouns, name, clothing, etc.) and/or medical changes (e.g. hormones and/or surgery). Not all trans people feel it necessary to undergo hormone therapy and/or surgery to be in harmony with their gender identity.

Transphobia

A range of negative attitudes and feelings towards transgender identifying individuals, based on the perceived or actual expression of their internal gender identity.

Two-Spirit

Describes any of the many mixed gender roles found traditionally among many Native American and

Canadian First Nations indigenous groups. The term usually implies a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit living in the same body and was coined by contemporary gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Native Americans to describe themselves and the traditional roles they are reclaiming.