

LGBTQ Terminology and Definitions

Sex Assigned at Birth: Refers to the designation of a newborn child's sex based on inspection of their external genitalia.

Gender Identity: One's inner concept of self as male or female or both or neither.

Gender Expression: Refers to the ways in which a person communicates their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, name, personal pronouns and other forms of self-presentation.

Transgender: An adjective describing a person whose gender identity does not match their sex assigned at birth.

Transitioning: The process by which a transgender person strives to live consistently with their gender identity (Male to female or female to male, for example). Transitioning may include changing behavior, names, pronouns, clothing, hairstyles and other appearance related characteristics. Transitioning may also, but not necessarily, include surgically changing one's body or taking or suppressing hormones.

Cisgender: An adjective describing a person whose gender identity is consistent with their sex assigned at birth.

Non-Binary: Describes a person whose gender identity is not either male or female. A non-binary person may feel some mix of both male and female, somewhere in between, or something completely different. Other terms that are similar to 'non-binary' are genderqueer, gender expansive, and gender nonconforming.

Gender Fluid: Describes a person whose gender identity and expression are not fixed and can vary at any time.

Sexual Orientation: Describes a person's sexual attraction to other people. "Heterosexual" (or "straight") describes a person attracted to people of a different sex. "Lesbian" describes a woman attracted to women. "Gay" describes a man attracted to men ("Gay" is also used as an umbrella term referring to both lesbians and gay men). "Bisexual" or "pansexual" describe someone attracted to people of any sex.

Queer: Historically a slur used to demean lesbian and gay people, queer is now a self-description preferred by many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (especially younger people) as a challenge to traditional sex and gender expectations or labels and to reclaim the word in a positive way from its historically negative use.

LGBTQ: A short-hand way to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer people. The "Q" can also refer to people who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Heterosexual or Cisgender Ally: A description for heterosexual and cisgender people who take actions to support LGBTQ people and address prejudice and discrimination against LGBTQ people.

View [*Champions of Respect — Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs*](#) resource here.

