

## LGBTQ Terminology

**ALLY:** A person who may not share the sexual orientation or gender identity of LGBTQ individuals, but who supports and honors sexual and gender diversity and challenges homophobic, transphobic and heterosexist remarks and behaviors.

**ASEXUAL:** Person who is not sexually attracted to anyone or does not have a sexual orientation.

**BSEXUAL:** A person who has significant sexual, romantic and/or spiritual attractions to both men and women or someone who identifies as a member of this community.

**COMING OUT:** The process of disclosing one's sexual orientation or gender identity to other people.

**CYBERBULLYING:** Harassment or intimidation conducted through electronic communications methods such as the internet and text messages.

**EQUAL PROTECTION:** 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. A Constitutional guarantee that the government will treat one person or group of people the same way that it would treat any other person or group of people under the same circumstances.

**GAY:** A term that can be used to describe either a man whose primary sexual and romantic attraction is to other men or to reference anyone whose primary sexual and romantic attraction is to a person who is the same sex as themselves.

**GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE:** A student club for LGBTQ students and their straight allies, designed to provide a safe and supportive environment for social interactions, education, and advocacy.

**CISGENDER:** Someone whose gender identity accurately reflects their sex assigned at birth, their bodies, and their gender expression.

**GENDER:** A set of social, physical, psychological and emotional traits, often influenced by societal expectations, that classify an individual as feminine, masculine, androgynous or other.

**GENDER EXPRESSION:** The outward manifestation of internal gender identity, through clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms and other characteristics.

**GENDER IDENTITY:** A person's sense of being masculine, feminine, or other gender.

**GENDER-NONCONFORMING:** Behaving in a way that does not match social stereotypes about female or male gender, usually through dress or physical appearance.

**GENDER ROLE:** The social expectations of how an individual should look or behave often based upon the sex assigned at birth.

**TRANSGENDER or TRANS:** A broad umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender expression is non-conforming and/or whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically. People must self-identify as transgender in order for the term to be appropriately used to describe them.

**GENDER TRANSITION:** The social, psychological or medical process of transitioning from one gender to another.

**GENDER AFFIRMATION SURGERY:** A term used to describe surgical procedures which alter the physical appearance and function of an individual's existing sexual characteristics to resemble a different sex.

"Sex change" is now considered inaccurate, derogatory, and no longer used.

Other terms: Sex Reassignment Surgery, Gender Realignment Surgery, Gender Reassignment Surgery, Genital Reconstruction Surgery, Gender Confirmation Surgery, and Sex Realignment Surgery.

**GENDER NON-CONFORMING (GNC):** An umbrella term for people whose gender characteristics and/or behaviors fall outside, or in between, traditional masculine or feminine binaries. Gender non-conforming people may or may not identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer.

**QUEER:** An umbrella term to refer to all LGBTQ people as well as an identity which advocates breaking binary thinking and seeing both sexual orientation and gender identity as potentially fluid. While it has been reclaimed as a unifying, celebratory, and neutral term among many LGBTQ people today, historically it has been derogatory and can still be viewed negatively by some.