A Resolution to Add the Option to Indicate Gender Pronouns on Class Rosters

Emma Meersman (for herself, Farhan Quadri, Kate Greer, Erin Donnelly, Savannah Sockwell, Kinza Sami, Michaela Murphy, Imani Davis, Alexis McKenzie, Shivani Patel, Maria Humayun, Paige Bennett, Rebecca Slavik, Tommy Bowles, Nate Smith, Anthony Long, Halima Mohamed, Safiyo Mohamud, Jordan Malpass, Celeste Morris, and Julia Dennen) introduced the following legislation to the Steering Committee, where it passed.

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Whereas the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) represents all undergraduate students at The Ohio State University, and

Whereas The Ohio State University values diversity in people and ideas and strives to create an inclusive, supportive environment where individuals may comfortably join in or confidently stand out,¹ and

Whereas the university’s non-discrimination notice states that students or faculty may not face discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression,² and

Whereas misgender is defined as “the act of failing to acknowledge (or use) an individual’s requested gender pronouns or using gendered language when referring to them (i.e. ma’am, sir, guy, girl, etc.),”³ and

Whereas the absence of gender pronouns on class rosters enables misgendering and impedes the creation of an inclusive and supportive environment, and

Whereas research has demonstrated that improper pronoun usage can have significant psychological implications for recipients of this misclassification, including but not limited to: undermining belonging and coherence needs, invalidating social identity and self-concept, and stigmatization,⁴ and

¹https://www.osu.edu/initiatives/diversity.html
⁴https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265012891_Experience_with_Misgendering_Identity_Misclassification_of_Transgender_Spectrum_Individuals
Whereas the University of Michigan,\(^5\) University of Vermont,\(^6\) and Ohio University\(^7\) allow students to indicate gender pronouns on class rosters, and

Whereas the Ohio State University allows students to indicate chosen name, which is visible on class rosters, advising reports, and Carmen,\(^8\) and

Whereas the Ohio State University offers free replacement of BuckIDs containing an individual’s legal name with that containing the name an individual uses,\(^9\) and

Whereas the Ohio State University provides gender-neutral and/or single stall restrooms in various academic\(^10\) and student life buildings,\(^11\) and

Whereas the Ohio State University offers gender-inclusive housing options,\(^12\) and

Whereas these measures demonstrate the university’s commitment to diversity, but are not sufficient to ensure inclusivity of students of all genders, and

Whereas the Undergraduate Student Government has set a precedent for gender inclusivity with the addition of personal pronouns to General Assembly members’ name tags,\(^13\) and

Therefore, Let it Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government supports the addition of an option to indicate gender pronouns on class rosters, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that this measure serves as a gender affirming practice and allows faculty and staff to engage respectfully with transgender or gender non-conforming (TNGC) students, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that correct gendering by faculty and staff may function as pronoun cueing to other students, therefore lessening the risk of misgendering.

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\(^5\) https://record.umich.edu/articles/students-now-may-designate-personal-pronouns-class-rosters
\(^6\) http://fourtwonine.com/2015/10/23/6210-10-universities-that-allow-students-to -choose-their-preferred-gender-pronouns/
\(^7\) https://www.ohio.edu/policy/12-021.html

\(^8\) https://registrar.osu.edu/preferrednam/index.html
\(^9\) https://buckid.osu.edu/faqs/details/83
\(^12\) http://mcc.osu.edu/posts/documents/faq-gender-inclusive-housing-3-16.pdf
demonstrating the need to include cisgender students in the conversations, and promoting an atmosphere conducive to learning for all students, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government believes the addition of gender pronouns acknowledges and validates an important aspect of students’ identity, has potential to minimize the negative psychological effects often associated with misgendering, and aligns with the university’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Floor Vote: Passed with unanimous consent

Andrew Jackson
President

Sophie Chang
Vice President

Date Adopted: March 7, 2018
Date Terminated: ________________
Appendix A: Glossary of Related Terms

Information retrieved from footnote 3 (https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-beyond-the-gender-binary-in-the-university-classroom/)

**Cisgender** – a person whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth align (e.g. a man whose sex was assigned male at birth).

**Cisnormativity/Cissexism** – a prevailing assumption among individuals, and within institutions, that everyone is cisgender. This assumption may make it more difficult to address the needs of those with non-cisgender identities.

**Gender Binary** – a term that refers to the idea that there are only two genders (e.g. man/woman) and individuals should be gendered as either man or woman.

**Gender Expression** – a term that refers to individuals’ external display of their gender either through clothing, demeanor, social behavior and other factors. Also referred to as gender presentation.

**Gender Fluid** – a term that is used to refer to individuals who identify in a way that flows between genders, or whose gender identity fluctuates or shifts. This shift may flow between all genders or any subset of genders.

**Gender Identity** – an individual’s internal sense of themselves as either male, female, both, or neither.

**Gender Non-Conforming** – a person whose gender presentation does not align with socially-constructed gender expectations.

**Gender Normative/Gender Straight** – a person whose gender expression aligns with socially-constructed gender expectations.

**Genderqueer** – a gender identity label that is often used by people who do not identify with the man/woman gender binary. It is also sometimes used as an umbrella term for the spectrum of non-binary gender identities.

**Microaggression** – term used to refer to everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based on their marginalized group membership.
Misgender – a term used to describe the act of failing to acknowledge (or use) an individual’s requested gender pronouns or using gendered language when referring to them (i.e. ma’am, sir, guy, girl, etc.). The possibility of being misgendered is often anxiety provoking for gender non-conforming individuals. Moreover, being misgendered is disrespectful and violent, putting the misgendered individual at risk for discrimination.

Non-binary – a term used to describe individuals who do not identify with the man/woman gender binary. In some cases, individuals may use this term to describe their gender identity.

Sex Assigned at Birth – a medical term used to refer to the physiological (chromosomal, hormonal, etc.) characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female, male, or intersex at birth. Biological sex is more commonly referred to as “sex,” “physical sex,” or “sex assigned at birth.”

They/Them – gender neutral pronouns that are preferred by some individuals who identify as gender non-conforming.

Trans – an umbrella term often used to refer to anyone who identifies as a gender other than their gender designated at birth. However, some people choose not to identify as trans.

Two-spirit – a term traditionally used by Native American people to describe individuals who exhibit qualities that are associated with traditional expectations of male and female gender expression.

Ze/Hir – gender neutral pronouns that are preferred by some individuals who identify as gender non-conforming.