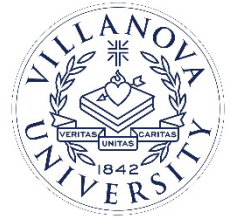**Gender Inclusive Practices Guide**

Beginning in Spring, 2022, Villanova made it possible for all faculty, staff, and students to enter chosen first name and personal pronouns into Banner.  Chosen first name and personal pronoun will now appear on class lists and other university communications. Please see here for details.

This guide introduces Villanova faculty and staff to best practices for being gender inclusive in our work spaces, laboratories, and classrooms—especially for those who identify within transgender, nonbinary, gender nonconforming, and/or gender questioning communities. How can we cultivate gender-inclusive teaching and work environments? How can we invite full participation from people of all genders and respond to the harmful effects of gender stereotyping or misgendering?

The suggestions below aren't comprehensive. But they offer a good place to begin.

**Remind yourself and others that gender inclusivity is fundamental to Villanova's mission.**
Gender inclusivity is crucial within our diversity mission to "commit ourselves to cultivating an academic environment marked by genuine curiosity about different perspectives, ardent receptivity to knowledge generated through intercultural connections and a genuine sensitivity to the variety of human experiences marked by domestic and global differences."

**Normalize an inclusive approach to gender by modeling one yourself.**
Be intentional about how you introduce yourself and address others. This includes using gender inclusive language like "everyone," "people," or "folks" rather than gender binary language like "ladies and gentlemen." It's also helpful to model using people's pronouns and to state your own pronouns when you introduce yourself, including in your syllabus and email signature.

**Add a Gender Inclusion statement to your syllabus or new employee orientation materials.**
Consider a syllabus statement that provides students with a definition of gender inclusivity and guidance on the use of pronouns and non-sexist language in the classroom. If possible, take the time to explain your reasons for incorporating gender-inclusive strategies into your teaching.

Here's one example:

> Names and Pronouns: Pronouns can be a way to affirm someone's identity. They are a public way to refer to people in place of their name (e.g. "he" or "she" or "they"). In this classroom, you are invited to share what pronouns you go by, and we seek to refer to people using the pronouns and names that we share. As a reminder, you can update your pronouns and the name you go by through mynova.villanova.edu.

**Incorporate discussions of gender into work or classroom culture.**
Consider making gender inclusivity an explicit component of your department's and your classes' DEI work and mission. In the classroom, this might include assigning readings about gender or readings written from a gender studies perspective. If gender is relevant to what you're teaching, then be explicit about these connections and, if possible, teach the research and scholarship of transgender, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming people.

**Carefully review your course rosters and employee records for name and pronoun designations.**
Do your best to honor name and pronoun requests in all settings, including when speaking of people outside of their presence. Remind students and colleagues they can update names and pronouns at any time through MyNOVA.

**Practice pronoun usage.**
If your students or colleagues use pronouns that are new or unfamiliar to you, it's useful to practice these ways of speaking to become fluent. It's also helpful to share the pronouns of authors you'll be reading or outside experts you'll be consulting when introducing them.

**Address misgendering.**
Misgendering occurs when someone is described using pronouns, terms, or names that do not match that person's gender identity. It's often unconscious, and mistakes do happen. Here are some strategies for addressing misgendering in the classroom or the workplace:

- Be up front if you don't know someone's pronouns ("Could you remind me of your pronouns again?)
- Acknowledge mistakes and correct yourself swiftly.
- Avoid a long or drawn-out apology.
- Politely intervene when misgendering occurs, whether that person is present or not. ("That's a great point. X-person actually uses they/them pronouns...") A quick and simple intervention will almost always suffice. If a student continually misgenders others in the classroom, consult with VITAL for additional strategies.

Developed by ODEI, Gender & Women's Studies and other programs.
Villanova University, August 2022