

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Because we honor everyone, this work is for everyone.

## Sex, Gender, Sexual Orientation

MACC is a place where all belong.  
Diversity fuels the MACC spirit empowering people in our inclusive community.  
We celebrate uniqueness of each individual, and multiple points of view.  
**Be who you are.**  
**We like it that way.**

Unfortunately, discrimination exists in our communities based on gender and sexuality. How can we make a difference and begin creating a more inclusive environment?

An important way to begin is to gain an understanding of the terminology associated with sex, gender, and sexual orientation. These terms are often misunderstood. Here, we will try to clarify the differences in these terms, as well as provide sources to help us become better allies.

**Sex:** “A biological construct defined on an anatomical, hormonal, or genetic basis. In the U.S., individuals are assigned a sex at birth based on external genitalia” (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). There are three main categories of sex (HRC Foundation, n.d, PsychCentral, 2022):

**Male:** XY chromosomes and male genitalia

**Female:** XX chromosomes and female genitalia

**Intersex:** reproductive or sexual anatomy (e.g., genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, hormone production, hormone response, and/or secondary sex traits) that do not fit typical definitions of male or female.

**Gender Identity:** “One’s innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves.” (HRC Foundation, n.d). One’s gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth (GLAAD, n.d., HRC Foundation, n.d.).

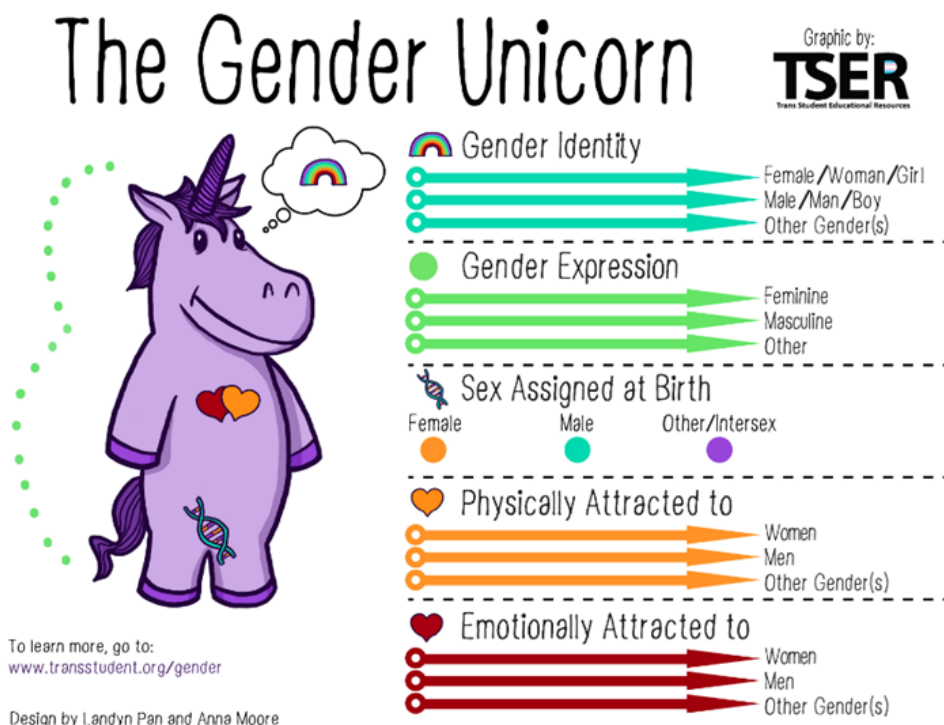
**Cisgender:** gender identity and expression align with those typically associated with the sex assigned at birth.

**Transgender:** gender identity and/or expression that is different from the sex they were thought to be at birth.

**Gender-fluid:** fluid or unfixed gender identity.

**Gender non-conforming:** gender identity does not conform to the traditional expectations of gender, or does not fit neatly into a category.

While the graphic below does not highlight all of the complexities of the LGBTQIA+ spectrum, it is a place for people to start their journey to understanding.



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**Sexual Orientation:** “An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people” ([HRC Foundation, n.d.](#)). LGBTQIA+ is an acronym that most people have heard. The acronym continues to evolve as we understand more about sexual orientation. Here are the current most common sexual orientation descriptions (AAUW, n.d., HRC Foundation, n.d.):

**Heterosexual or straight:** attraction only or almost only to the “other” gender.

**Gay:** a person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.

**Lesbian:** a woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women.

**Queer:** a term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur, but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ+ movement.

**Bisexual:** a person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily equally or at the same time.

**Pansexual and omnisexual:** describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.

**Asexual:** refers to a complete or partial lack of sexual attraction or lack of interest in sexual activity with others. Asexuality exists on a spectrum, and asexual people may experience no, little or conditional sexual attraction. This is different from deciding not to have sex with anyone (abstinence or celibacy).

**Ally:** “Someone who is actively supportive of LGBTQ+ people. It encompasses straight and cis-gender allies, as well as those within the LGBTQ+ community who support each other” (HRC Foundation, n.d.).

**Video (more appropriate for staff/faculty):** [How to be a good LGBTQ+ Ally](#)

**Video (more appropriate for students):** [How to be a better Ally](#)

## Ambassador Corner

I recently had the opportunity to attend a DEI training called “Learning to Unlearn”. This training focused on examining the relationships between identity, culture, and power that make up our society. It challenged us to examine our biases and reflect on things we have been exposed to that have shaped our perceptions, while also trying to identify areas for growth. It explored ways to unlearn some of this old information and gave tips for replacing it with new information that aligns with the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. During this training, a quote was mentioned that I thought was very insightful. “It takes curiosity to learn. It takes courage to unlearn. Learning requires the humility to admit what you don’t know today. Unlearning requires the integrity to admit that you were wrong yesterday. Learning is how you evolve. Unlearning is how you keep up as the world evolves” - Alan Grant. Although some would say we have made a lot of progress towards DEI in society, there is more work to be done. I think having the opportunity to attend these trainings to learn more about DEI is very beneficial and helpful in becoming the best versions of ourselves. There are many free online DEI trainings and workshops and I encourage others to look into these great options for additional learning as well. The value of being culturally competent and promoting a DEI centered system with fair treatment for all means a more positive and just society for everyone and I am honored to be a part of the MACC mission to ensure we are continuously striving for this at our college.

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## References

- AAUW. (n.d.). *Dimensions of Diversity & Identity, DEI Toolkit: Sexual Orientation*. <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/dei-toolkit/dimensions-of-diversity/sexual-orientation/>
- American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Definitions of Gender, Sex, and Sexual Orientation and Pronoun Usage*. <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/diversity/education/transgender-and-gender-nonconforming-patients/definitions-and-pronoun-usage>
- GLAAD. (n.d.) *GLAAD Media Reference Guide, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition*. <https://www.glaad.org/reference/trans-terms>
- Human Rights Campaign Foundation. (n.d.). *Glossary of Terms*. <https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>
- PsychCentral. (2022). *Sex and Gender: What's the Difference?* <https://psychcentral.com/health/sex-vs-gender>

## Additional Resources

Fall 2020 PD Day presentation from The Center Project, *Creating a Gender Inclusive Campus*: <https://macc.instructuremedia.com/embed/427cc9b6-63e9-4d62-bebc-b63db2479c4f>

2021 MCCA Presentation, *A Look Back and a Look Forward on LGBTQ Rights in Education*: <https://macc.instructuremedia.com/embed/5063b2f1-6ac2-4886-b87b-33271ce03990>

National Geographic Gender Revolution documentary (2017): <https://www.natgeotv.com/ca/gender-revolution>. *This documentary can be found on Disney+ or in the LARC.*

Spring 2021 Gender Revolution documentary MACC discussion panel: <https://macc.instructuremedia.com/embed/a7c97dc9-689b-4b78-ad97-c24621671d45>

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

<https://transequality.org/issues/resources/frequently-asked-questions-about-transgender-people>

<https://interactadvocates.org/>

<https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2019/12/asexual-heres-asexual-spectrum-asexual-quiz-everything-else-youre-curious/>

<https://promoonline.org/>

