

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY LGBT RESOURCE CENTER

TIPS FOR CREATING LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

Classrooms that are welcoming create productive learning environments for students of all gender identities and sexual orientations which is consistent with GVSU's institutional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. As faculty, you have an opportunity to set a classroom tone at the beginning of the semester that makes all of your students feel welcome, validated, and included.

General tips and reminders

- Use open language and avoid making assumptions. Identity is complex, and you cannot tell a person's gender identity just by looking at them. Avoid grouping students by sex, gender, or other identities.
- When you make a mistake: acknowledge it, apologize, and move on. Don't make excuses or explain your mistake (focuses on you instead of the person harmed). Avoid using "preferred" when referring to names or pronouns. This implies that they are optional.
- Familiarize yourself with the myName system: gvsu.edu/myname. MyName allows students, faculty, and staff to use a name other than their legal name in many areas of campus.

On the first day of class

- Create opportunities for students to tell you what name and pronouns they use.
- Model name and pronoun use through your own introduction to each class.
- Take steps to protect student privacy. For example, avoid reading first and last names off of your roster. (Banner 9 and Blackboard class rosters will display myName if one is indicated, but not all students may know about or feel comfortable using myName.)
- Add information to your syllabus about GVSU's myName process.
- Emphasize that your classroom is a place where all identities are respected.

After the first day

- Use the name and pronouns students ask you to use and correct mistakes.
- Work to minimize hurtful or derogatory speech in your classroom.
- Don't ask students to speak on behalf of entire groups or identities.
- Avoid referring to students with gendered terms such as "Mr," "Miss," "ladies," "gentlemen," "Sir," "Ma'am," etc.

Outside of class

- Attend LGBT Resource Center trainings and programs.
- Sign up for our email list by going to the gvsu.edu/lgbtrc homepage.
- Take responsibility for educating yourself on terminology and concepts around gender identity and sexual orientation.
- Familiarize yourself with campus, state, and national issues impacting the LGBTQ+ community.
- Report campus climate concerns and incidents of discrimination or harassment.

- Reach out to us with questions or to request a consultation!

For LGBTQ+ faculty/staff:

- Get involved with the LGBT Faculty/Staff Association: gvsu.edu/lgbtfacstaff
- Sign up to be a mentor with the LGBT Resource Center's Queer Connections Program: gvsu.edu/lgbtrc/queer-connections-200.htm
- Add yourself to the "Out List" for LGBTQ+ out faculty and staff: gvsu.edu/outlist

Join us for LGBTQ+ Foundations: A Training for Allies. Check out gvsu.edu/sprout or gvsu.edu/lgbtrc to learn more.

Contact us at lgbtcenter@gvsu.edu,
(616) 331 -2530,
or visit us Monday - Friday from 9am - 6pm
1161 Kirkhof Center.