



Pronouns Guide

Objective

Pronouns are an important aspect of respecting an individual's gender identity and individual expression. It is essential to use the correct pronouns for each person, as misgendering can be hurtful and invalidating. Our guide will provide examples of the use of various pronouns, what pronouns are, and how they play a significant role in being a culturally proficient member of the ATSU community.

What are pronouns?

Pronouns are a linguistic tool that we use to reference individuals. They serve as substitutes for names and include options like they/them/theirs, she/her/hers, or he/him/his. Pronouns are a common component within day-to-day language, replacing people's names and helping us communicate effectively.

Why are pronouns used?

Like names, ***pronouns play a significant role in how individuals define themselves***. Using correct pronouns for someone is a fundamental way to acknowledge and respect their identity.

ATSU's community is wonderfully diverse, with members from various parts of the world and names originating from many languages. Identifying someone's pronouns solely based on their appearance, name, and gender expression can be challenging. Therefore, it is crucial to not make assumptions about someone's pronouns based on these factors. Making assumptions about someone's gender identity can be hurtful, particularly to those within our community who identify as transgender, genderqueer, gender diverse, non-conforming, and non-binary.

Using multiple sets of pronouns:

Some individuals choose to use a combination of pronouns, such as he/they, she/they, or them/they. When a person lists more than one set of pronouns, it means that they are comfortable being addressed using any of the pronouns within the combination they have introduced themselves in.

Pronoun Examples:

He/Him/His

Use these pronouns when referring to an individual who identifies as male, but not always.

- *He is going to class.*
- *John said he saw him in the hall.*
- *His presentation was excellent.*

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| She/Her/Hers | <p>Use these pronouns when referring to someone who identifies as a woman, but not always.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>She is such a great influence.</i> • <i>Jade met her in the sim lab.</i> • <i>Jade said the missing phone is hers.</i> |
| They/Them/Theirs | <p>Use these pronouns when referring to someone who identifies as non-binary, genderqueer, or when you are unsure of their gender identity. This is considered a non-gendered or all-gender pronoun.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They are such a great person.</i> • <i>I am not sure what they want.</i> • <i>Those ideas are theirs.</i> |
| She/They | <p>Some individuals may use both she/her and they/them pronouns. Respect their choice and use either pronoun as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>She is such a great person.</i> • <i>They are such a great person.</i> |
| He/They | <p>Some individuals may use both he/him and they/them pronouns. Respect their choice and use either pronoun as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He is such a good friend.</i> • <i>They are such a good friend.</i> |
| Ze/Zir | <p>A non-gendered pronoun, which is used for a variety of reasons, it is important to not make assumptions regarding reasons why non-gendered or all-gendered pronouns are used by any individual. Pronounced as “zee” and “zer”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I enjoyed meeting Jason. Ze is so nice!</i> • <i>I met Zir at the Diversity Festival.</i> |
| Xe/Xem/Xyr | <p>A non-gendered pronoun, which is used for a variety of reasons, it is important to not make assumptions regarding reasons why non-gendered or all-gendered pronouns are used by any individual. Pronounced as “zee”, “zem”, and “zer”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Xe is so smart.</i> • <i>I met xem in the library to study.</i> • <i>Those ideas are xyrs.</i> |

Tips for using pronouns respectfully

1. Ask and Listen: if you are unsure of someone’s pronouns, it’s okay to ask. Respect their response and use the pronouns they provide.

2. Practice: It may take some time to become comfortable with less common pronouns. Practice using them correctly to avoid mistakes.

3. **Correct Yourself:** If you make a mistake, apologize and correct yourself. It's essential to show that you are committed to using the correct pronouns.

4. **Respect Privacy:** Do not disclose someone's pronouns without their permission. Respect their privacy and choices.

5. **Normalize Pronoun Sharing:** Encourage pronoun sharing within your workplace or community to create an inclusive environment for everyone.

Respecting and using the correct pronouns is a simple yet powerful way to support and affirm people's gender identities. By familiarizing yourself with these pronouns and practicing their use, you can contribute to creating a more inclusive and respectful world for all individuals, regardless of their gender identity or form of self-expression.