



UMass Pronoun Policies and Practices for Staff

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My Pronouns: they/them

Why Pronouns Are Important

- As a society, we commonly assume the gender of others by their appearance and indicate these assumptions by using gendered language, such as she/he, ma'am/sir, Ms./Mr., and ladies/gentlemen.
- This practice results in many individuals, especially trans and gender-nonconforming individuals, being misgendered, which makes them feel marginalized and invisible.
- As an institution that is committed to the inclusion of historically underrepresented groups and ensuring a respectful, safe, and inclusive campus for all members of the community, UMass is working to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to indicate their pronouns and to have their pronouns be respected.

Pronouns in SPIRE

- As of June 1, 2018, students have been able to go into SPIRE and indicate their pronouns.
- Incoming students are being encouraged to enter their pronouns when they register for classes during NSO.



Pronouns in SPIRE

My Pronouns

UMass Amherst strives to create an inclusive and respectful living and learning environment. One way to support this effort is to encourage the usage of the correct pronouns for members of our campus community.

The pronouns you select here will be available to faculty and staff in a number of academic and administrative offices including but not limited to, the Registrar's Office, the Bursar's Office, Financial Aid, UMass Police, and Residential Life. Pronouns will also be listed on class rosters.



The screenshot shows a form titled "Pronouns" with a blue header. Below the header, the text "Please select your pronouns:" is followed by a list of six radio button options: "He/Him", "She/Her", "They/Them", "Ze/Hir", "Name only", and "Choose not to disclose".

Screen shot of
the pronoun
page in SPIRE

Because members of our community may not always have immediate access to SPIRE, you are also encouraged to share the pronouns that you use with your instructors, peers, and campus administrators directly. They are not automatically alerted if you change your pronouns here.

Please note that the pronouns you select here may be seen by your parent(s), family members or legal guardian(s), especially if you grant them access to your SPIRE account.

Listing pronouns here and making them available throughout the SPIRE system is meant to facilitate and encourage the usage of correct pronouns for members of the campus community. Additional information on campus efforts in this area is available at the [Stonewall Center website](#).

Pronoun Options

Subjective	Objective	Possessive	Reflexive	Examples
He	Him	His	Himself	The book is his. He identifies outside a gender binary.
She	Her	Hers	Herself	The book is hers. She identifies outside a gender binary.
They	Them	Theirs	Themselves	The book is theirs. They identify outside a gender binary.
Ze (pronounced “zee”)	Hir (pronounced “here”)	Hirs (pronounced “heres”)	Hirself (pronounced “hereself”)	The book is hirs. Ze identifies outside a gender binary.
Name Only				
Choose Not to Disclose				

- Class Rosters
 - Advisee Lists
 - Student Services Center
 - Other administrative pages in SPIRE
-
- Pronouns will thus be available to instructors, advisors, academic deans and department administrators, and the staffs of administrative offices, including, but not limited to, the Registrar's Office, the Bursar's Office, Financial Aid, Residential Life, and UMPD.

Where You Will See Pronouns

SPIRE University of Massachusetts

Favorites | Main Menu > Campus Profiles > **Student Services Center**

██████████ (He/Him) ID: ██████████

student center | finances

Student Center

Academics

Deadlines | URL

Fall 2018 Schedule

	Class	Schedule
W 1	██████████	██████████

weekly schedule ▶

Mobile View

Message Center

[About the Message Center](#)

You have NO messages in your Message Center. ▶

SEARCH FOR CLASSES

Holds

No Holds.

To Do List

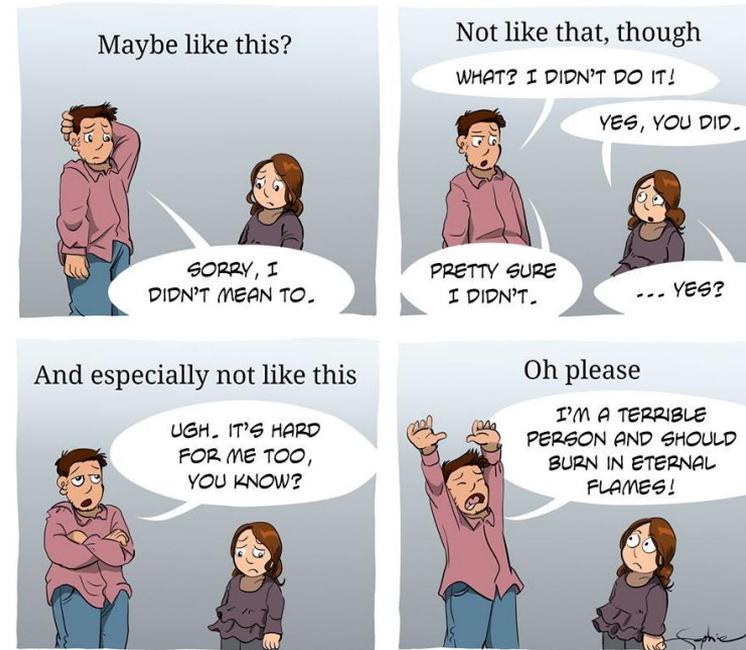
No To Do's.

- In interacting with a student, it is unlikely you will have a reason to refer to them in the third person. But if you need to do so, be sure to see if they have pronouns listed and always use those pronouns.
- In interacting with a parent/guardian, **do not** use the pronouns listed, if these pronouns are “ze/hir” or are “the opposite” of the gender assigned to them (i.e., someone assigned female who uses “he/him” or someone assigned male who use “she/her”), **until** you hear how the parent/guardian genders their child. To do otherwise will out that student to their parent/guardian. Until you hear how the parent/guardian genders their child, you should use “they/them” as generic pronouns, the student’s name, and phrases like “your child” and “the student.”
- If a parent/guardian uses the pronouns listed, begin to do so likewise. If the parent/guardian misgenders their child, do not correct them. You can continue to use “they/them,” the student’s name, and phrases like “your child” and “the student” so that you do not misgender the student too.

What If I Mistakenly Use the Wrong Pronouns for Someone?

- ❑ The best thing to do if you use the wrong pronoun for someone is to say something right away, such as “Sorry, I meant they.” Fix it, but do not call special attention to the error in the moment. If you realize your mistake after the fact, apologize in private and move on.
- ❑ It can be tempting to go on and on about how bad you feel that you messed up or how hard it is for you to get it right. But please, don't. It is inappropriate and makes the person who was misgendered feel awkward and responsible for comforting you, which is not their job. It is your job to remember people's pronouns.

How to react
when you misgender a trans person



Sophie Labelle, Assigned Male Comics

What If Someone Else Mistakenly Uses the Wrong Pronouns for a Person?

- ❑ In most cases, the best thing to do if you hear someone misgender another person is to gently correct them without further embarrassing the individual who has been misgendered. You can say something, such as “Actually, Xena uses she/her pronouns for herself,” and then move on. If a person refuses to use the appropriate pronouns for someone, do not ignore it. It is important that the harassment of others not be tolerated. It may be appropriate to speak to the student in private to correct the misgendering behavior.
- ❑ It may also be appropriate to check-in with the person who has been misgendered and say something, such as “I noticed that you were being referred to by the wrong pronouns earlier, and I know that this can be really hurtful. Would you be okay with me taking the person aside and reminding them about your appropriate pronouns? I want to make sure that this space is safe for you.” Follow up if necessary, but take your cues from the comfort level of the person who has been misgendered.

Keep in Mind

- ❖ Say “the pronouns someone uses” or “their personal pronouns,” rather than “their preferred pronouns,” because the pronouns someone uses are not a preference.
- ❖ Not everyone feels comfortable indicating their pronouns in every setting and they should not feel forced to do so. If you ask people in a meeting to indicate their pronouns when they indicate their names, say something like, “please say your name and, if you want, please provide the pronouns you use for yourself.” You can set an example by introducing yourself first and stating your pronouns.
- ❖ There is more information about pronouns on the UMass Amherst Pronoun FAQ on the front page of the Stonewall Center’s website under the icon at right.



Questions?

Feel free to email me:

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