



DATE: 22 April 2021

TO: Talia Bettcher, Chair
Academic Senate

FROM: Michael Clarke, Chair *molark/ke*
Student Policy Committee

CC: N. Wada-McKee, R. Chavez

SUBJECT: **Proposed Policy Modification, Chapter V of the Faculty Handbook: Preferred Name Policy**

During Spring 2021, the Student Policy Committee, upon the prompting of petitions from ASI, pursued the possibility of instituting a university policy in support of including what are commonly called "preferred gender pronouns" in university records. Over the course of the term, the committee consulted with voices and representatives from ASI, the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, the Cross Cultural Center, and the University Registrar to draft a policy that seriously considered both feasibility and sensitivity.

The result of this inquiry is the below policy modification which outlines the right by which student can self-identify their chosen gender identity, a choice that will be archived by university information systems and will be made available to pertinent staff, faculty, and administrators. The implementation of the policy will allow students the privacy to self-identify prior to and outside of classroom interaction.

The decision to give students the right to identify themselves is based on theoretical investigations of gender and contemporary advances in trans, queer, and feminist theory that have worked to decouple biological bodies from notions of gender identity along with the social roles typically associated with them.

The committee feels that this policy will help all students by allowing them to self-identify, but will also advance the university's commitment to inclusion by reducing the "tyranny of gender" which shapes many public institutions; by lessening instances of misgendering which can threaten students' sense of self and thereby reduce a sense of belonging in our academic community; and by dismantling the cis- and heteronormative biases that can marginalize vulnerable students.

The proposed modifications:

- Line 1:** Title change reflects the inclusion of chosen pronoun policy
- Line 3-4:** Added "and pronouns" to establish students' right to self-identify own pronouns, which are distinguished from assigned gender pronouns, the term used to denote medically dictated not self-identified gender pronouns
- Lines 5-6:** Added "student's" for grammatical clarity and "preferred or chosen pronoun," which denotes student agency and self-determination.

Lines 14-20: We first establish the rationale behind the modification by connecting it to the university's non-discrimination policy and then suggest the tangible action of how and where to store students' chosen pronouns

Line 21: see line 1

Lines 22-25: This sentence was included on the advisement of the Registrar. The practical implementation of this policy would produce an empty field box in which students could choose to write anything. This sentence provides the ability of the Registrar's office to counteract any abusive or disruptive use that may result.

1 **Preferred Name & PRONOUNS Policy**

2 (Senate: 9/12/17; President: 10/10/17)

3 California State University, Los Angeles recognizes that some students may prefer to use a first name AND
4 PRONOUN other than their legal name OR ASSIGNED GENDER PRONOUNS to identify themselves. The
5 university acknowledges that a STUDENT’S “preferred name” AS WELL AS THEIR PREFERRED OR CHOSEN
6 PRONOUN can and should be used where possible in the course of university business and education

7 Students who would like to use a preferred name must formally make a request. If approved, the student’s preferred
8 name will be used in the university directory, in campus communications, on class rosters, on the student’s Golden
9 Eagle One Card, and in reporting, except where the use of the legal name is required. For example, some records,
10 such as paychecks, legal documents, and transcripts, require use of a legal name; in such circumstances, the
11 university will not be able to use the preferred name. However, whenever reasonably possible, the preferred name
12 will be used.

13 TO AFFIRM THE UNIVERSITY’S COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY OF ALL STUDENTS
14 AND TO HONOR THE UNIVERSITY’S COMMITMENT TO NON-DISCRIMINATION BASED ON GENDER
15 IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION AS OUTLINED IN THE UNIVERSITY’S NON-DISCRIMINATION
16 POLICY, UNIVERSITY STAFF, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD USE STUDENTS’
17 PREFERRED OR CHOSEN PRONOUNS WHENEVER POSSIBLE. THE UNIVERSITY ALSO WILL USE
18 PREFERRED CHOSEN PRONOUNS IN STUDENT RECORDS DOCUMENTED ON UNIVERSITY
19 LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS. THESE RECORDS
20 SHALL BE MAINTAINED TO FACILITATE THE PROPER USE OF CHOSEN PRONOUNS AND TO FOSTER
21 EDUCATIONAL EQUITY.

22 Inappropriate use of the preferred name AND PRONOUNS, including but not limited to misrepresentation or
23 attempting to avoid a legal obligation, may be cause for denying the request. THE UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR
24 SHALL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO AUDIT AND REVIEW STUDENT CHOSEN NAMES AND
25 PRONOUNS TO PREVENT USE OF ABUSIVE LANGUAGE.