

Pronouns Proposal

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Overview

MCPHS's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion asks that all members of our community appreciate and celebrate differences in others and to contribute to an environment of equity and inclusion in which everyone feels included and valued. An important aspect of fostering a gender inclusive workplace is using language that individuals and communities use to describe themselves, including gender inclusive pronouns. Implementing an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to express their gender identity supports MCPHS's core values relating to diversity and inclusion, respect, and authenticity and our strategic priorities for student, faculty, and staff success.

What are pronouns and what is the significance?

A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun or a noun phrase to refer to individuals. Pronouns can be in the first person singular (I, me) or plural (we, us); second person singular or plural (you); and the third person singular (e.g., she/her, he/him, they/them, ze/hir) or plural (they/them). We use pronouns to understand how someone identifies, and not make assumptions based on appearance.

Reasons to have pronouns

Students and employees now have more opportunities to encounter a wider range of gender identities and expressions in academic, professional, and social settings. Providing an opportunity to use pronouns and consistently using them correctly, is one of the most basic ways to show our respect for folks' gender identity.

How to ask Pronouns

"What pronouns do you use for yourself?" or "What pronouns should I be using for you?" This may feel awkward at first, but eventually it becomes more and more comfortable.

What if I make a mistake?

In most cases, you may gently correct the person who made the mistake without further embarrassing the individual who was misgendered. You can say something like, "Actually, they use the pronouns, 'they' for themselves."

Pronouns at MCPHS

Faculty, staff, and students can affix personal pronouns to the various means by which they communicate if they so prefer. Several areas where faculty, staff, and students may wish to display personal pronouns includes their video conferencing platforms (e.g., MS Teams, Zoom) as well as their email signature line. **If interested in adding a personal pronoun to email signature line, please submit a request to the Help Desk to add personal pronouns to your email signature. Please indicate what preferred pronouns you would like to have displayed on your email.** For formatting consistency, the University will use subject/object/possessive pronoun.