

## Gender Identity: What We Can Learn from Inclusivity

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## Session Objectives

- Understand more about the gender identities of college students
- Understand about how students with different gender identities engage in effective educational practices
- Understand how to write more gender-inclusive demographic questions

## Session Outline

- Discussion about campus issues regarding gender identity
- Brief overview of NSSE and NSSE's new question about gender identity
- Overall findings about different gender identities
- Discussion about writing gender-inclusive demographic questions
- Findings about the engagement of students with different gender identities
- Summary discussion

## Before We Begin...

What conversations about gender identity are happening on your campus right now?

## Thinking Further...

What is your campus doing to investigate gender identity and student experiences?

## Key Terms

- Cisgender- current gender identity aligns with birth-assigned category (Tate, Ledbetter & Youssef, 2013).
- Transgender- current gender identity has moved beyond or differs from birth-assigned category (Tate, Ledbetter & Youssef, 2013). Often used as an umbrella term for those who are not cisgender.
- Gender-variant- another umbrella term to encompass all of the diverse gender identities and communities.

## What We Know

- Most scholarship focuses on the woman-man binary (Sax, 2008; Tate, Ledbetter & Youssef, 2013)
- A growing number of students identify as gender-variant (Beemyn, Curtis, Davis, & Tubbs, 2005; Beemyn, 2003)
- Little is known about their overall experiences and needs as students (Broido, 2004)

## What We Know

- Despite limited research, there is evidence that gender-variant students experience challenges on campuses including increased risk of discrimination and harassment (Beemyn, Curtis, Davis, & Tubbs, 2005)
- No accurate way to measure the number of gender-variant students (Beemyn, 2003)
- A call for large-scale surveys to include gender-inclusive questions (Renn, 2010)

## Asking about Gender

Before

After

Your sex:

- Male  
 Female

## Why Change Now?

Why we hadn't changed:

Why we changed:

- Consistency
- Very small numbers for some response options, survey practice
- Quantitative difficulties
- Does this matter to engagement/is there a literature base?
- Increase inclusivity
- Increased attention in higher education
- Fortunate timing—survey overhaul
- Energy behind using the data

## Asking about Gender

Before

After

Your sex:

- Male  
 Female

What is your gender identity?

- Man  
 Woman  
 Another gender identity, please specify:  
 I prefer not to respond

## Overall Results

What is your gender identity? (n=376,076)

- 34.6% Man
- 63.6% Woman
- 0.3% Another gender identity
  - 1,096 respondents
  - 85% wrote in a response
  - Ranges from 0% to 2.7% by institution
- 1.5% I prefer not to respond

## What did students write in?

- What is your gender identity?
  - Another gender identity, please specify:

What kinds of responses do you expect to see?  
What responses do you think were most popular?

## Another Gender Identity: Top 4

- 25% genderqueer, nonbinary (n=277)
- 12% gender fluid, fluid, polygender (n=131)
- 10% agender, gender neutral, etc. (n=112)
- 10% transgender, trans, FTM, MTF, etc. (n=111)

Any surprises?

## Another Gender Identity: Some Smaller Groups

- 4% androgynous, androgyne (n=38)
- 2% cisgender, cis-man, cis-woman, etc. (n=25)
- 2% bi-gender (n=24)
- 2% nonconforming (n=22)
- 2% two spirit, third gender, pangender, other (n=20)

## Another Gender Identity: Other Responses

- 15% [blank] (n=159)
- 12% invalid responses (n=131)
- 2% sexual orientation: gay, lesbian, etc. (n=24)
- 2% questioning (n=16)
- 1% gender expression: masculine, feminine, etc. (n=6)

Any groups  
you expected  
to see but  
didn't?

## Writing Gender-Inclusive Demographic Questions

### NSSE's Question

#### What is your gender identity?

- Man
- Woman
- Another gender identity, please specify:
- I prefer not to respond

### Challenges

- Many students do not understand that there are more than two options
- People can identify with more than one category
- Transgender students may have difficulty answering or may answer in ways you didn't intend
- Cannot accurately determine cisgender and transgender profiles.
- Potential for increased missing data

## Writing Gender Inclusive Demographic Questions

- What could be done to make a more ideal question?
  - Ask two questions! Ask about transgender separately from gender identity
  - Allow students to select more than one response option
  - Increase education on gender-variant identities

Other suggestions?

## Engagement & Satisfaction

<p><b>Academic Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher-Order Learning</li> <li>Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</li> <li>Quantitative Reasoning</li> <li>Learning Strategies</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning with Peers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Learning</li> <li>Discussions with Diverse Others</li> </ul> <p><b>Experiences with Faculty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student-Faculty Interaction</li> <li>Effective Teaching Practices</li> </ul>	<p><b>Campus Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of Interactions</li> <li>Supportive Environment</li> </ul> <p><b>Satisfaction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceived Gains</li> <li>Evaluation of entire educational experience</li> <li>Return to same institution if they could start over</li> </ul>
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Where do you expect to see differences by gender identity?

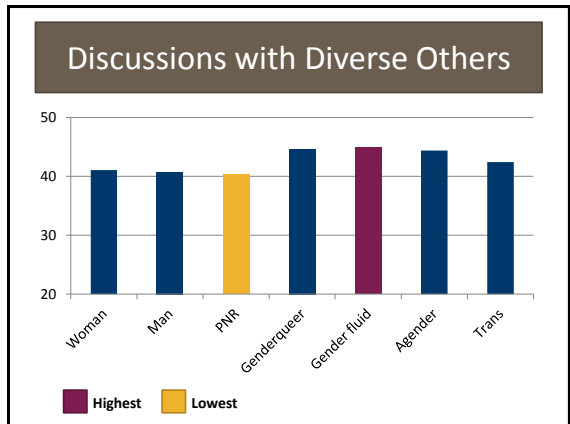
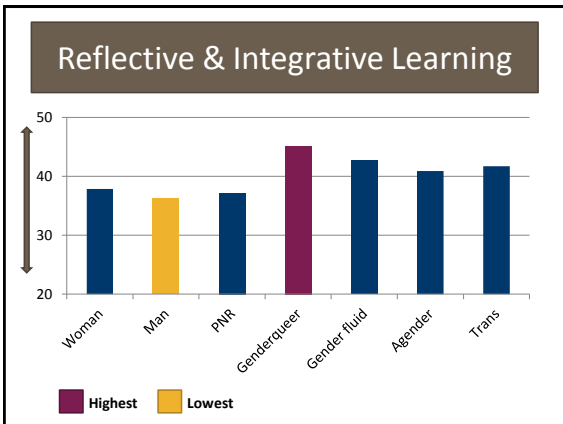
## Engagement Differences Overall

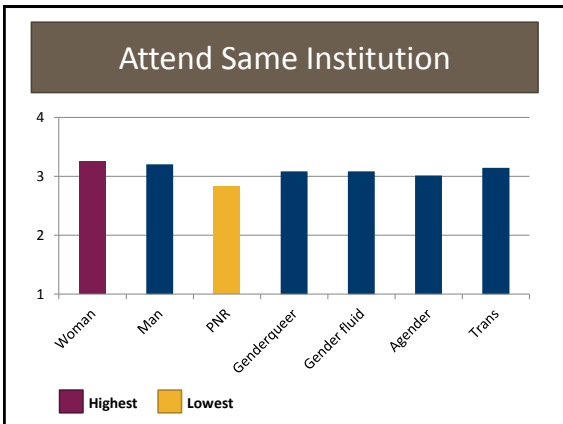
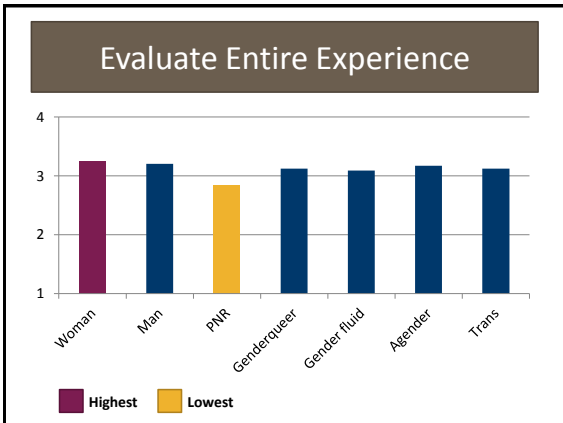
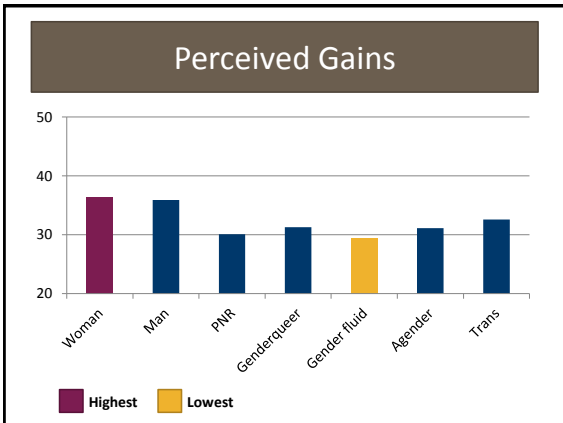
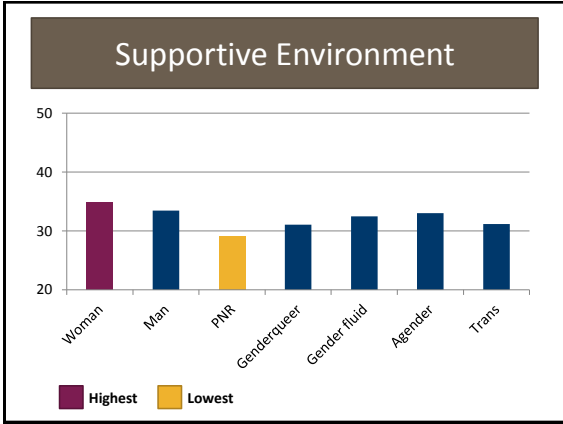
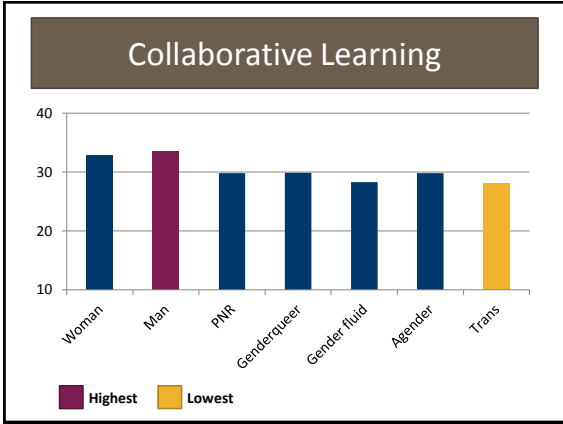
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## Engagement Differences Overall

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How might this differ within gender identity?





### Discussion

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- What have you learned from these results?
- What surprised or disappointed you?
- What else would you like to know?
- How does your work on campus connect to these results?

Final thoughts and  
questions?



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Extra Slides

