

Guidelines on Gender and Sexual Diversity

Eikei University of Hiroshima

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1. Introduction

At Eikei University of Hiroshima (EUH), we place great importance on **diversity** and **sustainability**, and we aim to develop competencies for contributing to building a better society by addressing global challenges. "Competency" refers to the ability to transfer and use knowledge and skills acquired in one's field of study across various domains and situations. Through a cycle of **Academic Input**—learning via liberal arts subjects, subjects aimed at improving thinking skills, and practical English—and **Practical Output**—application via Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Experiential and Practical Programs (EPP)—we support students in acquiring the five competencies by the time they graduate: **Foresight, Strategy, Global collaboration, Energetic drive and Self-improvement**.

Among these, **Global collaboration** emphasizes global civic engagement in diverse communities. Civic engagement is action toward achieving a better society and toward developing knowledge, skills, and values that make such action possible. In today's globalized society, global and inclusive civic solidarity beyond state-based "international" collaboration is required. At EUH, we nurture global citizenship that respects and collaborates with various diversities, including nationality, origin, language, gender, sexuality, and bodies. Therefore, global collaboration is crucial for all members of our university community.

Promoting and sustaining diversity in society is not easy. Discrimination (unfair or biased actions toward individuals or groups based on specific characteristics) against sexual minorities as well as the lack of legal protection for people based on sexual orientation or gender identity continue to result in human rights violations against many gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. EUH respects the diversity of each individual. As such, we uphold a **zero-tolerance policy** toward all forms of harassment that infringe upon human rights and dignity. With our diverse student and staff body from regions across Japan and around the world, it is essential that we cultivate and maintain a campus environment where diversity is fully respected and all students feel safe and welcome. This aligns with our mission to develop individuals who will address societal challenges as global citizens.

In order to build a society that embraces gender and sexual diversity and ensures respect for all people regardless of sexual orientation and gender identities without discrimination, it is essential to engage with and reflect on issues related to them. This mutual engagement and transformation—what we call "**mutual interaction/transformation**"—requires skills and understanding that enable people to learn and act together across personal and institutional boundaries.

This guideline is formulated based on the "Fundamental Principles and Basic Policy on Diversity" adopted by EUH in April 2024. Focusing on the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity, it aims to foster an environment where each member of the University community can respect one another's diversity and feel safe and comfortable in their educational, research, and daily lives. We hope this document will promote a deeper understanding of the diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity. The guideline will also be periodically reviewed and updated through university-level initiatives.

Fundamental Principles and Basic Policy on Diversity

Fundamental Principles

Eikei University of Hiroshima is committed to respecting human rights and valuing the diversity of all individuals. We strive to be a place free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, language, religion, creed, values, social status, ancestry, cultural background, disabilities, medical conditions, or personal history. Additionally, we aim to create an educational and research environment where each member respects the individuality and diversity of others, allowing everyone to live and learn in comfort and safety.

Basic Policy

Based on these fundamental principles, Eikei University of Hiroshima establishes the following basic policies:

1. Ensure the thorough protection of personal information.
2. Always respect individual autonomy and choices.
3. Encourage collaboration among all university stakeholders to work toward these goals.
4. Provide reasonable accommodations across all aspects of university life.
5. Promote activities that raise awareness of the importance of respecting diversity.

2. Diversity of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Why Understanding and Respecting the Diversity of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Matters

As outlined in the "Basic Principles and Basic Policy on Diversity," EUH is committed to human rights and respecting the diversity of all individuals. We aim to be a university free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, language, religion, beliefs, values, social status or family background, cultural background, disabilities, illnesses, or life history.

To ensure that all students can attend university without concerns about being discriminated against or unconsciously discriminating against others, it is essential for every member of the University community to understand the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and to act proactively in preventing prejudice and discrimination.

A lack of accurate knowledge and understanding of issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity can lead to prejudice (holding stereotypical views or biased attitudes towards individuals or groups solely based on specific characteristics), which in turn can result in discrimination. Discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, can damage an individual's dignity and mental and/or physical well-being.

In today's society, where vast amounts of information are easily accessible, it is also possible for personal information related to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity to be disclosed by others without their consent. This act is referred to as *outing*, the non-consensual disclosure of someone's SOGI-related information. Outing and discrimination are serious human rights violations. Outing is a serious human rights violation and it can result in serious legal issues..

To deepen one's understanding of diversity means recognizing the differences and similarities between oneself and others, while also gaining correct knowledge about the harm caused by ignorance and intolerance—such as prejudice, discrimination, and outing—which can inflict emotional pain and violate human rights.

In the following sections, we will introduce:

- 2 (1) Explanation of Key Terms,
(2) Behaviors that Disregard Diversity with Examples of Such Behaviors,
(3) Basic Principles of Consideration and Response,
- 3 (1) Administrative Procedures, Classes, and Student Life,
(2) Consultation Service.

(1) Explanation of Key Terms

A. Gender

A person's gender is constructed through a combination of several components. Each of these elements is diverse, and their combinations vary widely, resulting in a wide spectrum of gender identities.

- **Sex Assigned at Birth:** The classification of a newborn as "male" or "female" based on physical and biological characteristics such as external genitalia and chromosomes.

- **Gender Expression:** How a person presents their gender in everyday life through actions and appearance. These include clothing, makeup, gestures, hairstyle, speech, and other forms of expression.

The acronym **SOGI** stands for *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*. Sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are independent aspects of a person's identity. Therefore, one cannot determine someone's sexual orientation or gender identity based on their gender expression alone.

B. SOGI – Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation refers to the enduring pattern of a person's romantic and/or sexual attraction. How someone defines "same-sex" or "different-sex" relationships may depend on their own gender identity.

- **Homosexual (same-sex attraction):** Attracted to members of one's own sex.
 - **Lesbian:** A woman being attracted to other women.
 - **Gay:** A man being attracted to other men.
- **Heterosexual:** Attracted to members of the other sex (e.g., women attracted to men or men attracted to women).
- **Bisexual:** Attracted to both men and women or two or more genders.
- **Asexual:** Experiencing little or no sexual attraction to others, or experiencing it infrequently.
- **Aromantic:** Experiencing little or no romantic attraction to others, or experiencing it infrequently.

C. SOGI – Gender Identity

Gender, unlike sex assigned at birth, is a social and cultural construct that defines characteristics associated with being male or female (e.g., masculinity, femininity). Expectations and norms associated with each gender can vary across cultures and contexts, including within the multicultural environment of EUH. **Gender identity** refers to how one understands and identifies their own gender—also known as gender identity or gender self-awareness. Gender identity is distinct from sexual orientation.

- **Transgender:** One's gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth.
- **Cisgender:** One's gender identity corresponds the sex assigned at birth.
- **X-gender:** Identifying as neither male nor female, genderless, both genders, or whose identity fluctuates between genders.
- **Non-binary:** An umbrella term for gender identities that fall outside the traditional binary of male and female.

D. LGBTQ – Representing Gender and Sexual Diversity

LGBTQ stands for **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender**, and **Queer/Questioning**. It is often used as a general term to refer to sexual minorities.

- **Queer:** A term that describes identities or expressions that do not conform to conventional gender or sexuality norms. While originally used as a slur meaning "strange" or "unusual," it has been reclaimed by many as an inclusive, affirming identity.
- **Questioning:** A term for people who are uncertain about or exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

In recognition of the full spectrum of gender and sexual diversity, expanded terms such as **LGBTQ+** or **LGBTQIA+** are often used to be more inclusive of people who are not fully represented in the original acronym.

- In **LGBTQIA+**, **I** stands for *Intersex*, and **A** can represent *Asexual* or *Ally*.
- The “+” symbol is added to recognize and include other sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions that are not explicitly listed, making the acronym more inclusive.

Not every sexual minority person identifies strictly as L, G, B, T, or Q. And unless the individual wishes to identify this way, there is no need to force a classification. People’s experiences and identities are varied and complex.

(2) Behaviors That Disrespect Diversity with Examples of Such Behaviors

A. Behaviors That Disrespect (or Deny) Diversity

- **Outing:** An act of disclosing someone’s private information, such as their sexual orientation, gender identity, or legal gender assignment, without their consent. Outing is a serious violation of human rights that can deeply harm the dignity of the individual, cause social disadvantages, and create significant emotional distress. Outing done with intent or malice must be strictly avoided. However, even well-meaning actions can inadvertently result in outing. If you believe you have been outed, talk to someone you trust about your situation. You are also encouraged to consult the support services listed in section 3(2) (p.15) if necessary.
- **Discrimination:** Any action that causes disadvantage to an individual or group.
- **Microaggressions:** Subtle, often unconscious actions or remarks that, while not intentionally discriminatory, stem from bias and cause discomfort or offense to others.

Examples of Microaggressions:

- “Boys are naturally better at math and science, right?”
- “Of course [Name] has great fashion sense—they’re gay!”
- “Since you’re transgender, you must understand how both men and women feel. Can I get your input on this proposal?”

B. Examples of Behaviors That Disrespect (or Deny) Diversity

Issues That May Arise Among Students

- Sharing someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity with a third party without their consent after they came out to you (outing).
- Posting potentially identifying SOGI-related information about someone on social media, such as their former school, student club affiliations, or partner. This may lead to outing.
- Requiring students to disclose which high school they graduated from in self-introductions during orientation or sharing that information without permission. This can lead to outing, particularly for transgender students.
- Expressing hatred, ridicule, or disgust toward LGBTQ individuals. This is a form of discrimination.
- Making binary and heteronormative assumptions in conversation (e.g., “What kind of men/women are you into?”, “He’s handsome, so why doesn’t he have a girlfriend?”, or saying to a transgender student, “You look just like anyone else”).

Issues That May Arise in the Classroom

- An instructor uses gendered titles like “Mr.” or “Ms.” based solely on the class roster or a student’s appearance.
- An instructor refuses to use the name or pronoun requested by a transgender student, or persistently misgenders them.

- An instructor facilitates class discussions or debates on controversial topics likely to provoke discriminatory remarks, without adequately preparing or protecting the learning environment.
- Teachers or students make assumptions about all students' interests or identities using binary or heteronormative language (e.g., "All boys/girls want a girlfriend/boyfriend, right?").
- Teachers or students make offhand or joking remarks based on homophobic stereotypes (e.g., "I heard [Name] swings that way in their private life").

Issues That May Arise in Interactions with Administrative Staff

- Staff act as if it is natural or unquestionable that gender options in official documents should be limited to "male" or "female."
- Staff speak loudly enough for others nearby to hear when asking sensitive questions at a service counter, such as "So you want to apply for a change in gender description in the system?" or "You need special arrangements for the health check, right?", showing a lack of concern for the student's privacy.

(3) Basics Principles of Consideration and Response

Understanding human diversity requires more than simply acquiring knowledge to distinguish who does or does not need special consideration. Rather, such knowledge should be used to accept individuals as they are, recognizing diversity as an essential part of each person's identity. The term "**ally**" (originating from *alliance*, meaning mutual support or partnership) refers to someone who understands and supports LGBTQ individuals. Anyone can be an ally, regardless of whether they are part of the LGBTQ community themselves.

Coming out refers to when an LGBTQ individual voluntarily discloses their SOGI to the person they choose to disclose. In many cases, this becomes necessary because societal systems are based on binary gender norms and assumptions of heterosexuality, which can create disadvantages or unreasonable expectations for LGBTQ individuals. However, coming out is **entirely voluntary**. It is a deeply personal decision that should only be made by the individual, at a time and place of their choosing, and only to those they feel comfortable confiding in. Many LGBTQ individuals may choose *not* to come out, and that choice must also be respected. No one should ever be pressured or forced to come out.

On the other hand, if someone comes out to you, it is natural to feel surprised or unsure of how to respond. If this happens, first express your appreciation for their trust in you, listen to their story carefully to the end, and confirm what kind of support they need or what they hope to achieve by sharing their experience. Be sure to ask how much of this information may be shared, with whom, and in what contexts. Respecting these boundaries builds trust and creates a safe environment where others feel comfortable seeking help.

Outing, the act of disclosing of someone's SOGI without their consent, is a serious violation of human rights. Such an act can harm trust, personal relationships, and the individual's sense of safety. Even well-meaning responses like "It's just a phase" or "I believe you'll grow out of it" are problematic. While such comments may be intended as encouragement, they imply that the person's identity is something to be "changed" or "corrected," which invalidates their experience and may cause further harm.

If you are unsure how to respond, or feel overwhelmed, it is acceptable to seek guidance from trained staff or counselors who are bound by confidentiality—**with the consent of the person who came out to you** (see section 3(2) for support contacts). Likewise, if you are an LGBTQ individual considering coming out and unsure of how or to whom to do so, or if you have experienced outing, please also consult the same resources.

Everyday Practices for Supporting Sexual and Gender Diversity

- Communicate as if LGBTQ students and staff may be present in any setting. Avoid making statements that deny or criticize LGBTQ identities.
- Avoid assumptions based on appearance, names, or personal impressions (e.g., hairstyle or clothing do not indicate a person's sexual orientation or gender identity).
- Do not use gendered forms of address based solely on appearance; opt for gender-neutral titles (e.g., "-san" in Japanese) or respect the individual's preferred pronouns and name.
- Do not use discriminatory language or gestures.

If you witness behaviors or comments that could be considered harassment related to sexual or gender diversity:

- Check in with the affected individual.
- If appropriate, gently inform the person responsible that their words or actions could be considered harassment.
- Offer to accompany the individual to a counselor or other support service.

Key Points for University Personnel When Receiving Consultations

(Adapted from the Japan Student Services Organization [JASSO], "Promoting Understanding of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Diversity in Higher Education") Every member of the University community plays a vital role in promoting understanding and inclusion of SOGI diversity on campus. The following points are intended for staff, faculty, or advisors who may receive consultations from students regarding sexual orientation or gender identity.

Knowledge

- Do not disclose consultation contents or the individual's identity to third parties without their consent (confidentiality must be upheld).
- Gain accurate knowledge about SOGI and diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity.

Awareness

- Be mindful that it may be very difficult for the person to put their experience into words.
- Do not pressure them into reaching a conclusion or decision quickly (e.g., what to do next).

Attitude

- Treat them with respect as an individual.
- Approach the conversation with an open and accepting mindset regarding diverse identities.

Language

- Use polite and respectful language as in all counseling situations.
- Use inclusive language that recognizes and affirms diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

3. University Support System

(1) Administrative Procedures, Classes, and Student Life

A. Use of Preferred Name

If a student wishes to use a preferred name due to their gender identity, they shall submit a request to the University's president using the designated form. Once approved, the preferred name will be used in principle on official documents such as student rosters, certificates, and student ID cards. The name will also be reflected in the academic systems (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Outlook).

Inquiries about this process should be directed to the Student Support Section of the Academic Affairs Office. All consultations regarding the use of a preferred name will be kept strictly confidential.

If you are asked to explain the difference between your preferred name and your legal (registered) name, you may present the official *"Permission to Use a Preferred Name"* issued by the university. You can also obtain a certificate that confirms your approved use of a preferred name from the Academic Affairs Office (please note that legal names may be used on certain documents such as identification papers). If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to consult with staff members in the Academic Affairs Office, your faculty advisor, or another trusted faculty or staff member.

B. In Classes

(i) Academic System (MyEikei)

The student name lists available to faculty through the MyEikei system do not include gender information.

(ii) Off-Campus Practicums

For courses involving off-campus activities (e.g., Problem-Based Learning, Experiential and Practical Programs, Degree Project), the conditions at the host organization may affect accommodations. While it may not always be possible to fully meet all requests, students may consult in advance regarding facilities such as restrooms or clothing expectations.

(iii) Use of Forms of Address

In class, students can request how they would like to be addressed (e.g., using "-san" instead of gendered titles such as "-kun", or "Ms." vs. "Mr." in other languages). These preferences can be honored based on prior consultation.

C. Student Life

(i) All-Gender Bathrooms

The university has "All-Gender Bathrooms" located on the 1st, 6th, and 15th floors. Men's and women's restrooms also include signs below the gender symbol reading "All Gender Bathroom" and "Daredemo Toilet" (in Japanese). These facilities support the right of transgender and non-binary individuals to use restrooms comfortably without hesitation. Additionally, sanitary boxes are available in the men's restrooms.

Details: <https://eikei.ac.jp/news/3938/>

(ii) Health Checkups

Regular health checkups are conducted every April and October. There are no gender-based time slots. If you require special arrangement, please contact the Health Section of the Academic Affairs Office.

(iii) International Student Dormitory

The international dormitory is a shared living and learning environment for students of diverse backgrounds. While preferences may be subject to availability, the dormitory includes male, female, and mixed-gender floors. Room placement can be arranged according to the student's self-identified gender.

(iv) Extracurricular Activities

Club activities and other extracurricular events are student-led and self-managed. All participants are expected to contribute to an inclusive and respectful environment.

(v) Job Hunting and Career Support

If you have concerns about issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity during job hunting, please consult the Career Design Office.

(2) Consultation Services

While the University does not currently have a specialized support desk for SOGI related issues, students may consult with either the **Student Support Section** or the **Student Counseling Room (Student Counselors)**.

Do not hesitate to reach out. You do not need to face issues alone. Depending on the nature of your concern, we may refer you to external support organizations and collaborate with them as needed. These services are also available to those who wish to learn how best to support peers in the community.

Contact Information

General Affairs Office (For Faculty and Staff)

- Email: generalaffairs@eikei.ac.jp
- Phone: 082-225-6201

Student Support Section, Academic Affairs Office (For Students)

- Offers assistance with procedures and helps direct you to appropriate consultation resources.
- Email: studentsupport@eikei.ac.jp
- Phone: 082-225-6272

Student Counseling Room (Room 617)

- Counselors specialized in clinical psychology are available to discuss various student life concerns.
- In addition, University faculty and Academic Affairs staff are available as general advisors to all students.
- Counseling hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – 12:30 PM to 6:30 PM
- Email: counselor@eikei.ac.jp
- Phone: 082-225-6272

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