

Transgender Student Guide

Bowdoin College

(Updated Fall 2024)

Introduction

Bowdoin College is committed to the support of all students inclusive of their gender expression and/or gender identity. This guide was created by the Transgender Working Group, a collaboration of the Sexuality, Women and Gender Center (SWAG), Counseling and Wellness Services, Health Services, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of the Dean of Students, the Office of Residential Life, the Department of Athletics, and the Office of Student Aid. The guide was created to assist students who identify as transgender, agender, genderqueer, gender non-binary and/or gender questioning. For the purpose of this guide, transgender will be used as “an umbrella term that encompasses any individual who does not conform to society’s expectations of what it means to be male or female, often an individual whose gender identity does not ‘match’ their sex [assigned at birth].”ⁱ

This guide is intended to be used by both current and prospective Bowdoin students, faculty, and staff. It is designed to be a fluid document that will change over time.

Please note: while this guide includes a variety of offices listed as resources, there are many other lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning (LGBTIQ)-friendly staff and faculty on campus. “Affirming@Bowdoin: All Genders All Sexualities” stickers and pins are an indication of allies who have gone through a workshop to learn about sexual orientation and gender identity; however, there are other allies who have yet to attend the workshop. Additionally, any office can be an entry point for a student; there is no presumption that transgender students need to go to a specific office first. Often students will identify a support person to serve as a liaison to other offices on campus. Ours is a small residential community. We deeply respect all students as individuals and strive to personalize our support of individual students and their needs.

Bowdoin College Non-Discrimination Policy

“Bowdoin College strives to provide a place of study and work free from unlawful harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, and gender-based violence of any kind. In compliance with the Maine Human Rights Act, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and other federal and state laws, Bowdoin College prohibits any member of the faculty, staff, administration, student body, or third party (including persons visiting campus, patrons, independent contractors, and vendors) from harassing or discriminating against any member of the Bowdoin College community based on a person’s race, color, ethnicity, ancestry or national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, marital status, place of birth, genetic predisposition, veteran status, or physical or mental disability, or any other legally protected status in connection with hiring or employment, admission or financial aid, or other aspects of its educational programs or activities.”ⁱⁱ

Administrative Resources

Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center (SWAG)

The Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center cultivates a campus environment in which women and queer people feel safe, valued, and supported through academic, co-curricular, and personal development. It engages the full community to build awareness surrounding issues of gender and sexuality existing on campus and in the world.

The values of the Center are:

Safety for all students in their residential, academic, and social environments;

Support for LGBTIQ staff and faculty, which allows people to assist LGBTIQ students, serve as community role models, and perform best in their jobs;

Acceptance for people’s complete identities including sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality socioeconomic class, age and ability;

Confidential and non-judgmental spaces to discuss sexuality and gender identity; and

Exploration and self-discovery for all college students.

Students can connect directly with the director of the Center. The director is available to offer individual support, make connections with other campus departments, and provide campus and external resources.

Please note: It is often required that medical records use a student’s current legal name and birth sex. Should a student wish to be addressed by another name or gender, this can be accommodated in our office, but may not transmit onto medical records sent off campus.

Contact: Sandra Hayes, Executive Director of Health and Counseling, shayes@bowdoin.edu or 207-725-31784.

Counseling and Wellness Services

Counseling and Wellness Services (CWS) is committed to providing a safe, confidential, advocacy-oriented, and nonjudgmental relationship to explore thoughts, reactions and feelings regarding gender and sexuality. The Counseling and Wellness Services staff regularly participates in trainings to remain current with transgender theory and practice, and several staff members have particular interest and experience counseling students around transgender issues and concerns. Specific services available to students include:

Brief or long-term counseling as requested by the student;

Psychiatric consultation, assessment, or psychotropic medication monitoring as needed with physicians who are LGBTIQ friendly; and

Staff committed to advocating for sexual and gender equality concerns beyond the realm of one-to-one counseling whenever possible.

Counseling and Wellness Services welcomes feedback and constructive criticism if there are ways that our services can be more effective and helpful to transgender students on the Bowdoin campus. You can set up an appointment at CWS by calling 207 725-3145 and speaking with the Receptionist or by emailing CWS a counseling@bowdoin.edu. Or if you need to speak with a counselor after hours regarding an urgent or emergency situation, please call the same number and press “1” after the voice message.

Contact: Dr. Shannon Jackson, Director of Counseling and Wellness Services, s.jackson@bowdoin.edu or 207-798-4113.

The Department of Athletics

Athletics is committed to supporting every student who wishes to participate in intercollegiate sports. If a student has any questions or feels uncomfortable with anything related to LGBTIQ students athletics, we strongly urge them to meet with the Director of Athletics or the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA), or the director of the Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center to discuss possible accommodations. If a student is considering medically transitioning or is in the process of medically transitioning, it is important for them to discuss with the Director of Athletics or the SWA the rules put forward by the NCAA with which the College must comply. As a guideline, pursuant to NCAA rules, a student transitioning from female to male and who is engaged in hormone treatments may play on a men’s team, but not a women’s team. A student transitioning from male to female may play on a women’s team after completing one calendar year of testosterone suppression and complying with NCAA Serum Testosterone Level threshold guidelines.

At its January 19, 2022 meeting, the NCAA Board of Governors [updated the transgender student-athlete participation policy](#) governing college sports.

The new policy aligns transgender student-athlete participation with the [Olympic Movement \(PDF\)](#). The resulting sport-by-sport approach is designed to preserve opportunities for transgender student-athletes while balancing fairness, inclusion and safety for all who compete. Like the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the updated NCAA policy calls for transgender student-athlete participation for each sport to be determined by the policy for the national governing body of that sport. If there is no NGB policy for a sport, it would then be determined by the policy for that sport’s international federation. If there is no international federation policy, it would be determined by [policy criteria \(PDF\)](#) previously established by the International Olympic Committee. Sport-specific policies are subject to ongoing review and recommendation by the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports to the Board of Governors. The policy has three phases of implementation; the policy, along with a number of helpful resources, are available on the [NCAA Transgender Student-Athlete Participation Policy](#) website.

Whenever documentation is required, staff in Athletics will work Health Services to ensure confidentiality.

Contact: Tim Ryan, Director of Athletics, tryan@bowdoin.edu, 207-725-3247 or Alice Wiercinski, Senior Women’s Administrator, awiercin@bowdoin.edu, 207-798-4342.

Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar maintains information related to students’ legal and lived names, pronouns and legal sex. Lived name, the name you go by, will be used in most College systems as the default name, except where the use of the legal name is required or necessary. Students can update their lived name at the start of each semester on the Enrollment Form. Alternatively, when the

open period for the Enrollment Form has closed, students can complete the online Student Biographical Change Form for name and other contact changes. Access to legal sex is limited to those departments that need it, such as the Health Center. For more information, including changing legal sex and legal name in our system, please check this link: bowdoin.edu/registrar/students/credentials/lived-name.html or contact Julie Grossi to make an appointment. Contact: Julie Grossi, Associate Registrar, jgrossi@bowdoin.edu or 207-725-3872.

Student Aid

While many policies governing financial aid are subject to federal regulations and oversight, staff in both the Student Aid and Student Employment offices will help transgender students navigate processes relevant to changes in name and/or listed sex. Contact: Dr. Michael Albano, Assistant Vice President, Director of Student Aid, malbano@bowdoin.edu or 207-725-3146.

Student Employment

The Student Employment Office (SEO) strives to help students find meaningful work opportunities on campus. SEO is committed to assisting transgender students interested in working on campus with finding a job. We will meet with students

assistance with legal name changes, impact litigation, the Trans Health Project, and public education. Accessible at <http://www.transgenderlegal.org>

Hubbard, 2nd floor and back “mezzanine” floor (between the first and second floors, at rear)
85 Federal (Development Administration) – 1st floor, 2nd floor
216 Maine St. – 2nd floor, 3rd floor
Ham House – 1st floor, 2nd floor
Riley House (Education – 7 Bath Rd) – 1st and 2nd floor
Pols House (Philosophy and Latin American Studies – 5 Bath Rd) – 2nd floor
Copeland House

Additionally, in all residential buildings with shared hallway bathrooms we use the “E-System”. The large E replaces the gendered signage and can be changed by individuals upon entering the bathroom. If it looks like an E everyone can use the bathroom regardless of gender. If the sign is rotated to look like a W, only women identifying students may use the bathroom. If rotated to look like an M, only men identifying students may use the bathroom. E-system use is taught to all first years to ensure that students know how to use them properly.

i <http://www.mainetransnet.org/spectra.html>.

ii <https://www.bowdoin.edu/institutional-equity-compliance/index.html>