

FOI: Queer Identity and Sexuality

MODULE 1

VERSION 1.1

Letter from LGBTQ+ Action Committee

Welcome to the Queer Identity and Sexuality FOI. We're so happy you're here! While everyone participating may come from different backgrounds, positions at UVU, or levels of familiarity with LGBTQIA+ terminology, we're all united in our desire to learn and understand more about how we can support LGBTQIA+ students in our positions at UVU. We applaud your desire to do this and we hope that we'll be able to help you in this endeavor.

In our training today we'll be going over a lot of LGBTQIA+ topics! We'll be learning about language and vocabulary, culture, DOs and DON'Ts, and more. And, although we will cover a lot of material today, there's always more to learn. We encourage you to integrate your knowledge from outside of this workshop into your learning here. Of course, we also encourage you to incorporate your knowledge from this workshop into your life outside this workshop. For that reason, we ask that you engage with the content with this framework in mind: **How can I apply what I learn here to my position at UVU?** Of course, this isn't the only thing you can take away from this workshop. We also hope that you're able to learn more about LGBTQIA+ identities and how they intersect with other identities.

We'd be remiss to end this letter without thanking a few people and groups that made this FOI possible. A huge thanks goes out to the members of the LGBTQ+ Curriculum Subcommittee and the larger LGBTQ+ Action Committee at UVU. We'd also like to thank the creators of Safe Zone Training who laid the groundwork for this training. Lastly, we'd like to thank the innumerable LGBTQIA+ people who have contributed to the body of knowledge that we present today.

We hope that this training will help you to understand better how to work with LGBTQIA+ populations so that you can provide exceptional care to anyone you come into contact with at UVU.

Warmly,

Signed by LGBTQ+ Action Committee



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Group Norms:

1. Reserve the Right to Change Your Mind

If you say something and then later disagree with yourself, that is okay! This is a safe(r) space to say something and then later feel differently and change your mind. We even encourage it. As a wise Safe Zone participant once said, “Stop, rewind, I changed my mind.” One of the benefits of education is that it can inform our thinking. LEARNING new information can broaden our horizons and give us the opportunity to explore why we think the way we do.

2. Questions, Questions, Questions

Please feel free to ask questions at any time throughout this training. Because these topics are new to many people, everyone will likely have questions about how to deal with or talk about queer issues. Unless someone is mid-sentence, it is always an appropriate time to ask questions. Even if it is not relevant to the topic, throw it out there – get it off your mind and into ours! And remember that if you are thinking of a question or need clarification about a topic, odds are other people in the group do too—so go ahead and ask away! Lastly, while we expect you to ask your questions respectfully, we also know that there is a lot of language that you may not be familiar with yet. Please know that we will assume the best intentions from you, even if you’re not sure of what language to use.

3. Slightly Modified “Vegas Rule”

During the training someone may share something really personal, may ask a question, or may say something that they would not want attached to their name outside this space. Therefore, please remember that what is said here stays here and what is learned here leaves here (except for items that fall under our obligations as mandated reporters). You are welcome to share anything that we facilitators say in this space with others, but we respectfully request that you not name other participants if you choose to talk about these issues outside of this group. To be clear, this is not because queer issues are shameful, but because we need to respect the privacy of others, who may not be ready to make all of their comments public. This applies not just to spoken but written comments—please do not copy and paste someone else’s remarks without their permission.

4. LOL

That said, we would really appreciate it if, at some point, y’all could laugh! We want this training to be fun, and we’ll do our best to keep it upbeat, so just know... it is okay to laugh! Laughter indicates that you’re awake, that you’re paying attention, and that we have not killed your soul. So yeah... go ahead and do that! And that includes typing “LOL” or “J/K” in the asynchronous parts of this workshop!

5. Share the Airtime

If you are someone who participates often and is really comfortable talking – awesome! Do it. But we ask that you try to remain aware of your participation and after you have shared a few times to leave space for other people to also put their ideas out there. And please understand that if you do participate often, the facilitators might ask you to wait while they ask some other folk to contribute.

If you’re shier and you usually wait to share, please jump in (once you feel comfortable doing so)!

First Impressions of LGBTQIA+ People

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability:

1. When is the first time you can remember learning that some people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer?

2. Where did most of the influence of your initial impressions/understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people come from? (e.g., family, friends, television, books, news, church)

3. When's the first time you can remember learning that some people are transgender?

4. Where did most of the influence of your initial impressions/understanding of transgender people come from? (family, friends, television, books, news, church)

5. How have your impressions/understanding of LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning) people changed or evolved throughout your life?

LGBTQIA+* is an initialism...

meant to encompass a whole bunch of diverse sexualities and genders. Folks often refer to the Q (standing for “Queer”) as an umbrella term, under which live many other identities. This is helpful because lesbian, gay, and bisexual are not the only marginalized sexualities that a person can have, nor is transgender the only gender identity. While there are many identities not listed on this diagram, they are just as valid as the ones found here.



*LGBTQIA+ and all acronyms that name identities individually are by nature exclusive because they exclude certain identities. To learn more about this and other complications, check out our upcoming FOI Level 2 (coming in 2021).

Lavender Vernacular:

Below we have compiled an introductory list of terminology related to diverse (a)genders and (a)sexualities in the United States of America. Many of the terms and definitions below are ever evolving and often mean different things to different people. Therefore, it is very important to respect people's self-identifications. One should never assume another person's identity based on that person's appearance. It is always best to ask people how they identify, including what pronouns they use, and to respect their wishes. If you do not understand the context in which a person is using one of these terms, it is usually appropriate to ask respectfully. This is especially recommended when using terms that we have noted can have a derogatory connotation.

Foundational Concepts

coming out 1: the process by which one shares one's sexuality or gender identity with others.
2: the process by which one accepts and/or comes to identify one's own sexuality or gender identity (e.g. to come out to oneself).

gender binary: a conceptualization of gender that includes only two points: male and female. This binary is harmful to individuals whether they identify inside or outside this binary. (See no. 7-10 on the Dos and Don'ts page for usage.)

genderism: similar to the gender binary, this is the belief that there are only two genders. Genderism also dictates that an individual's gender must match their sex assigned at birth.

heteronormativity: the assumption, in individuals and/or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities. This leads to invisibility and stigmatizing of other sexualities e.g. when learning a woman is married, asking her what her husband's name is. This assumption leads to heterosexism.

heterosexism: discrimination against individuals who are not heterosexual on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal and superior sexual orientation.

intersecting identities: identities that compound and complicate one another to create new forms of privilege. These identities can include race, sexuality, gender, and even profession.

intersectional erasure: the minimizing or ignoring of identities and how they intersect to compound and complicate oppression. Intersectional erasure manifests that when the prototype doesn't fit, the issue doesn't get included. For example, when we think about politics, we think about women who experience sexism. We think about people of color who deal with racism, we assume that these are mutually exclusive groups. In reality, most people are experiencing multiple facets of identity that affect their lives.

intersectionality: a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to name the intersections of multiple, mutually reinforcing systems of oppression, power, and privilege. This was first used to describe the experiences of Black women in the legal system. Intersectional theorists look at how the individual experience is impacted by multiple axes of oppression and privilege. These forces compound and complicate one another.

LGBTQIA+; GSM; DSG: shorthand or umbrella terms for all folks who have a non-normative (or queer) gender or sexuality; there are many different initialisms people prefer. LGBTQIA+ stands for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer and/or Questioning Intersex Asexual (often, people at a + at the end to be more inclusive); GSM is Gender and Sexual Minorities; DSG is Diverse Sexualities and Genders.

Other options include the initialism GLBT or LGBT and the acronym QUILTBAG (Queer [or Questioning] Undecided Intersex Lesbian Transgender Bisexual Asexual [or Allied] and Gay [or Genderqueer]). None of these options are right or wrong, but simply different ways to list or categorize gender and sexuality.

minority stress: the excess stress to which marginalized groups are exposed. This includes external and internal factors such as microaggressions and internalized negative societal attitudes.

Queer

- 1: an umbrella term to describe individuals who don't identify as straight and/or cisgender.
- 2: a personal identity generally related to one's sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression, that refers to not fitting cultural norms or expectations. This identity is also commonly associated with being transgressive, revolutionary, and anti-assimilation.
- 3: a slur used to refer to someone who isn't straight and/or cisgender. Due to its historical use as a derogatory term, and how it is still used as a slur in many communities, it is not embraced or used by all LGBTQIA+ people. Though the term "queer" has been reclaimed by many, take caution when referring to someone as queer if they don't immediately self-identify as such. The term "queer" can be used interchangeably with LGBTQIA+ in some spaces (e.g., "queer people" instead of "LGBTQIA+ people").

(A)gender Terminology

cisgender: a gender description for when someone's sex assigned at birth matches their gender identity (e.g., someone who was assigned male at birth identifies as a man). A simple way to think about it is if a person is not transgender, they are cisgender. The word cisgender can also be shortened to "cis."

gender expression: the external display of one's gender, through a combination of clothing, grooming, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors. Also referred to as "gender presentation." Gender expression may or may not match gender identity for a variety of reasons.

gender identity: the internal perception of one's gender and how they label themselves based on how much they align or don't align with what they understand their options for gender to be. This has to do with how an individual identifies rather than how an outside individual might perceive them.

gender: a set of social and cultural constructs that describe characteristics that may be historically related to femininity, masculinity, women, men, non-binary people, or social norms.

genderqueer

- 1: a gender identity label often used by people who do not identify with the binary of man/woman.
- 2: an umbrella term for many gender non-conforming or non-binary identities (e.g., agender, bigender, genderfluid).

intersex: term for a combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and genitals that differs from the incorrect binaries of male or female.

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sex/sex assigned at birth: the anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female or male or intersex at birth, and clearly sex is not a simple binary. This label is recorded and used on an individual's birth certificate and can incorrectly classify individuals because of differences in chromosomal and hormonal expression. This is not to be confused with gender, which is defined above. (See no. 3-4 on the Dos and Don'ts page for usage.)

transgender: an umbrella term for anyone whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity do not match (e.g., someone who was assigned male at birth, but does not identify as a man). (See no. 5-6, and 11 on the Dos and Don'ts page for usage.)

transphobia: the fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of transgender people, the transgender community. Transphobia can be seen within the queer community, as well as in general society.

(A)sexuality Terminology

asexual: experiencing little or no sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in sexual relationships/behavior. Asexuality exists on a continuum from people who experience no sexual attraction or have any desire for sex, to those who experience low levels, or sexual attraction only under specific conditions. Many of these different places on the continuum have their own identity labels (see demisexual). Asexual is sometimes abbreviated to "ace."

biphobia: a range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, invisibility, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have or express toward bisexual individuals. Biphobia can come from and be seen within the LGBTQIA+ community as well as outside of it.

bisexual 1: a person who experiences attraction to some people of their gender and another gender. Bisexual attraction does not have to be equally split or indicate a level of interest that is the same across the genders an individual may be attracted to.
2: a person who experiences attraction to some men and women.

gay: experiencing attraction solely (or primarily) to some members of the same gender. Can be used to refer to men who are attracted to other men, women who are attracted to women, or people of any gender who are attracted to their same gender.

homophobia: an umbrella term for a range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have toward LGBTQIA+ people. The term can also connote a fear, disgust, or dislike of being perceived as LGBTQIA+.

lesbian: women who are primarily attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other women.

pansexual: a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for some members of all gender identities/expressions. Often shortened to "pan."

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questioning: an individual who is unsure about or exploring their own sexual orientation or gender identity.

romantic attraction: a capacity that evokes the want to engage in romantically intimate behavior (e.g., dating, relationships, marriage), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none, to intense). Often conflated with sexual attraction, emotional attraction, and/or spiritual attraction.

sexual attraction: a capacity that evokes the want to engage in sexually intimate behavior (e.g., kissing, touching, intercourse), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none, to intense). Often conflated with romantic attraction, emotional attraction, and/or spiritual attraction.

sexual orientation: the type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one has the capacity to feel for some others, generally labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to.

sexuality: who a person is sexually attracted to. In some cases, people may use the word sexuality to encompass romantic, sexual, and/or spiritual attraction.

straight: a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to some people who are not their same sex/gender. A more colloquial term for the word heterosexual.

For Those Who Aren’t Under the Umbrella

allyship: active and consistent practice of unlearning and re-evaluating beliefs and actions, in which a person seeks to leverage their privilege to work in solidarity with and recognize the intersectionality of a marginalized individual or group of people. Someone who practices allyship consistently in their actions may be considered an ally, but this label must be supported by actions and attitudes, not just empty words.

solidarity: according to Paulo Friere, solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is solidary; it is a radical posture. It involves working with and for marginalized groups and acting on what these individuals need, rather than what an outsider thinks they need.

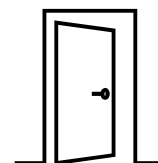
LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Language: DOs and DON'Ts

Avoid saying:	Say instead:	Why?	Example
"Hermaphrodite"	"Intersex"	Hermaphrodite is a stigmatizing, inaccurate word with a negative medical history.	"What are the best practices for the medical care of intersex infants?"
"Homosexual"	"Gay"	"Homosexual" often connotes a medical diagnosis, or a discomfort with gay/lesbian people.	"We want to do a better job of being inclusive of our gay employees."
"Born female" or "Born male"	"Assigned female/male at birth"	"Assigned" language accurately depicts the situation of what happens at birth	"Max was assigned female at birth, then he transitioned in high school."
"Female-bodied" or "Male-bodied"	"Assigned female/male at birth"	"-bodied" language is incorrect; sex is not a binary.	"Max was assigned female at birth; then he transitioned in high school."
"A gay" or "A transgender"	"A gay/transgender person"	Gay and transgender are adjectives that describe a person or group	"We had a transgender athlete in our league this year."
"Transgender people and normal people"	"Transgender people and cisgender people"	Saying "normal" in contrast to "transgender" implies that being transgender is "abnormal". Being transgender is just one of many gender variants.	"This group is open to both transgender and cisgender people."
"Both genders" or "Opposite sexes"	"All genders"	"Both" implies that there are only two genders; "Opposite" also reinforces antagonism amongst genders.	"Video games aren't just a boy thing – people of all genders play them."
"Ladies and gentlemen"	"Everyone," "Folks," "Honored guests," etc.	Moving away from binary language is more inclusive for people of all genders.	"Good morning everyone, next stop is Piccadilly Station."
"Mailman," "Fireman," "Cameraman," etc.	"Mail clerk," "Firefighter," "Camera operator," etc.	People of all genders do these jobs.	"I actually saw a firefighter rescue a cat from a tree."
"It" when referring to a person (e.g. when pronouns are unknown)	"They"	Referring to a human being with the word "it" is dehumanizing and lacks respect for their personhood.	"I'm not sure what pronouns they use."

“Coming Out”

“Coming out of the closet” is the process by which someone:

1. Accepts and identifies with their gender identity and/or sexual orientation; and
2. Shares their identity willingly with others



Sometimes

we talk about coming out as if it were a one-time thing. However, **coming out is a series of decisions** – oftentimes daily ones – that LGBTQIA+ people navigate in every new setting they enter. In other words, most people aren't like Ellen DeGeneres, where they come out once and then the whole world knows. This process is lifelong for many LGBTQIA+ people.

People may be “out” in some spaces and “in” in others. Family, friends, classmates/coworkers, and religious communities are all examples of spaces where individuals may be out in some spaces but not others. A decision to come out to a person or group is always one of safety, comfort, trust, and readiness. Coming out is always an intensely personal decision and should be treated as such.

It's dangerous, unhealthy, and unhelpful to force someone to come out or to “out” out someone else (i.e. disclosing someone's gender identity or sexual orientation to others without the person's consent), regardless of your intentions (sometimes people think they're being helpful or acting on the person's behalf to conquer their fears). **This is never an appropriate choice.**



To avoid outing a person accidentally, be aware of the spaces that a person is “out” and “in”. Don't assume that a person is “out” in a space. **“Outing” a person, whether intentional or unintentional, has real and damaging effects.** On the same token, don't ask about an individual's identity in public. Different spaces can carry different levels of safety and danger. Asking a person's identity in a public setting can essentially “out” them in that space, removing that individual's autonomy and right to decide for themselves what spaces they want to be “out” in.

If Someone Comes Out to You...

DON'T:

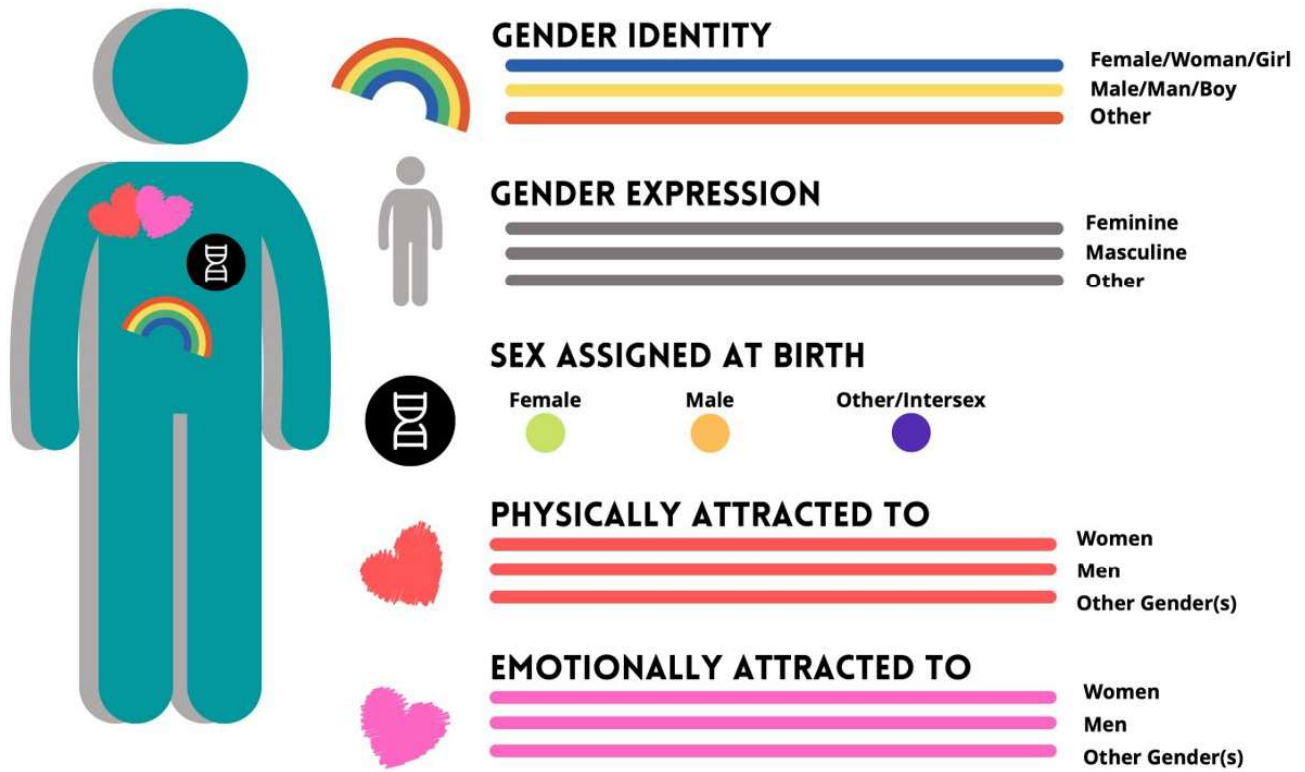
1. Say "I always knew," or downplay the significance of their sharing with you
2. Go tell everyone, bragging about your "new trans friend"
3. Forget that they are still the person you knew, befriended, or loved before
4. Ask probing questions or cross personal barriers you wouldn't have crossed before. ("I didn't know you were trans? So, what do you have down there?")
5. Center yourself in the coming out process ("It's fine if you're gay as long as you're not attracted to me!")

DO:

1. Know this is a huge sign of trust
2. Check in on how confidential this is ("Are you "out" in any spaces or to any people?")
3. Remember that their gender/sexuality is one important part of their humanity among many other important parts
4. Show interest and be attentive to what they say about this part of them that they are sharing with you ("How are you feeling? How's your experience been with coming out to others?")
5. Ask them how you can best support them

Gender and Sexuality Diagram

To visually break down the concepts we've talked about today we've created this diagram. It gives us a starting framework for identifying the differences between gender identity, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, and physical and emotional attraction. Rather than falling into a single category or box, or within a binary definition, individuals can fall along a continuum of any of the above categories.



Navigating UVU Systems

Legal Name and Gender Change at UVU:

Please fill out the “Change of Personal Information” form to request a change to a person’s: name, Social Security number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer I.D. Number (ITIN), date of birth, and gender. All changes require government-issued photo identification that contains the person’s correct name. Please return the form with copies of all required documents (including photo ID) to the UVU’s Registrar’s Office in person (BA 113) or via U.S. mail (MS 106 | 800 W. University Parkway | Orem, UT 84058).

Required documentation (in addition to photo ID):

- Name change: Social Security card
- Gender marker change: Court order or driver’s license

The Change of Personal Information Form can be accessed by going to UVU’s “Student Forms” page and clicking on “Change of Personal Information form”.

How to Change UVU ID Photo:

If you would like to update your UVU ID’s photo because you have transitioned, please contact Dawn Burgess, the manager of Campus Connection at Dawn.Burgess@uvu.edu. If you do not feel comfortable doing so, please contact LGBT Student Services at lgbt@uvu.edu and we can do so on your behalf.

Chosen Name and Personal Pronouns in myUVU:

Log into myUVU and click on the top bar that displays your legal name and photo. Select the gear graphic and then click the Personal Contact Information link. Select “Edit” under Personal Details and you will be able to input your Preferred First Name, Personal Pronouns, and Gender Identification.

Canvas:

To change your name and pronouns on Canvas, access your Canvas settings by logging into Canvas, selecting your profile picture, and then clicking settings. Next, click “Edit Settings” on the right side of the page. Then, it will display boxes for you to edit.

Having Trouble?

If you have trouble with any of the above processes or have any questions, please contact LGBT Student Services at lgbt@uvu.edu and we can help you to resolve problems or answer questions.

Participant Feedback Form

What is one thing that you learned from the training today? What did you enjoy about today's training?

What could be improved for the next time this training is facilitated?

How can this training apply to your role on campus? What behaviors can you change or improve on after what you've learned in this workshop?

Do you have any additional feedback for the facilitators? This could be in regards to the material covered, the facilitation process, or any additional items that you feel the facilitators could use.

Resources

The following collection is not comprehensive but represents an effort to collect sources from different areas that may be helpful to LGBTQIA+ individuals and their allies at UVU. If you have other needs, please contact LGBT Student Services at lgbt@uvu.edu.

On-campus

- LGBT Student Services — LA 118a
- Spectrum: Queer Student Alliance at UVU — LA 126
- Student Health Services — SC 221
- LGBT Action Committee

Community

- Affirmation: LGBTQ Mormons, Families and Friends — affirmation.org
- Encircle: LGBTQ+ Family & Youth Resource Center — encircletogether.org
- Equality Utah — equalityutah.org
- Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Utah — hrcutah.org/home
- Mama Dragons — mamadragons.org
- Mormons Building Bridges — mormonsbuildingbridges.org
- PFLAG Utah County — "Parents, Families, Friends, and Allies United with LGBT People" — pflag.org
- Transgender Education Advocates (TEA) of Utah — teaofutah.org
- Utah Pride Center — utahpridecenter.org

National Organizations

- Family Acceptance Project — familyproject.sfsu.edu
- GLAAD — Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation — glaad.org
- GLSEN — Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network — glsen.org
- It Gets Better Project — itgetsbetter.org
- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force — thetaskforce.org
- The "Not All Like That" (NALT) Project — notalllikethat.org
- The Religious Institute — religiousinstitute.org
- The Trevor Project — thetrevorproject.org
- Transgender Law Center — transgenderlawcenter.org

Websites, Books, and More

- Asexual Visibility and Education Network — asexuality.org
- Bisexual.org — bisexual.org
- Everyday Feminism — everydayfeminism.com
- Get Real — getrealeducation.org
- Guide to Allyship — guidetoallyship.com
- It's Pronounced Metrosexual — itspronouncedmetrosexual.com
- Pedagogy of the Oppressed, by Paulo Friere accessible here: researchgate.net/publication/260297860
- Salacious — salaciousmagazine.com
- Soul Force – soulforce.org
- TransWhat? — transwhat.org
- We Are The Youth — wearetheyouth.org

Are you, or is someone you know, in crisis?

UVU Student Health Services Crisis Line:

Call for an appointment at UVU Student Health Services (801-863-8876, M-F 8am-5pm). If you are currently in a suicide crisis, notify the person answering the phone that this is an emergency for priority scheduling.

Trevor Hotline: “If you’re thinking about suicide, you deserve immediate help.”

Call 1-866-488-7386 or text “TREVOR” to 1-202-304-1200

Trans Lifeline: “A peer support service run by trans people, for trans and questioning callers.”

Call 877-565-8860 (United States) or 877-330-6366 (Canada)