



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CHANGING NATURE OF GENDER IN THE 21ST CENTURY: HOW TRANS AND NONBINARY STUDENTS APPLYING TO COLLEGE TODAY SELF-IDENTIFY

Gender Identity Findings

- Of the more than 1.22 million students who filled out the Common App for Fall 2022 college admission, 2.2% (more than 26,300 students) identified as trans or nonbinary, and of these students, 83.3% indicated a nonbinary identity.
- Overall, about 56% of the students who completed the Common App reported that their legal sex was female, but among the students who indicated that they were “nonbinary” or “another gender,” it was 80% and nearly 83%, respectively.
- On the Common App, 3,521 students wrote in a gender by using the “add another gender” option by itself or in combination with one of the gender choices provided. These students offered about 130 different genders; the most frequent responses were genderfluid (41.5%), genderqueer (9.8%), trans man (9.0%), agender (8.4%), and demigirl (5.1%).
- The students of color were less likely than the white students to identify as trans or nonbinary (2.18% vs. 2.42%), but were slightly more likely than the sample overall (2.18% vs. 2.15%), because far fewer international students (referred to on the Common App as “nonresident alien” students) indicated being trans or nonbinary (1.04%) than the racial groups residing in the U.S.

Pronoun Findings

- Just over 3% of the students who filled out the Common App (36,841 individuals) referred to themselves using pronouns beyond just “she/her” or “he/him.” The most common pronouns used by these students were “she/they” (i.e., “she/her” and “they/them,” 45.9%), “they/them” (22.0%), and “he/they” (i.e., “he/him” and “they/them,” 16.3%).
- More than 96.5% of the students who went by more than just “she/her” or “he/him” wanted to be referred to at least some of the time by “they/them.”
- More than 75% of the students who went by more than just “she/her” or “he/him” used multiple sets of pronouns for themselves, and these pronoun sets sometimes included neopronouns. The students provided about 75 different neopronouns, resulting in their use of about 145 different pronoun sets.
- The greatest racial difference in pronoun use among the nonbinary respondents was between U.S. and international (“nonresident alien”) students. The international students were significantly more likely than their U.S. peers to continue to go by the pronouns assigned to them at birth (i.e., “she/her” or “he/him”) and were far less likely to use only “they/them” pronouns (38.3% vs. 50.4%).





Recommendations for Colleges

- Colleges that use the Common App need to import the gender and pronoun information, as well as the names that students go by, from the application into students' campus records so that the college will use students' appropriate names and pronouns in mail, email, and in-person communications; course rosters and advisee lists; housing assignments; online directories; ID cards; diplomas; and other documents.
- Trans students do not always indicate the names and pronouns they go by and their gender identities on the Common App or recognize their trans identities or come out until after they enter college, so colleges need to have a simple process for students to add or change their names, pronouns, and gender markers on campus records.
- Colleges that use their own admissions application rather than the Common App should be asking optional questions on the names and pronouns that students go by and their gender identities and then incorporating this information into students' campus records.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL REPORT ONLINE AT [CAMPUSPRIDE.ORG/RESEARCH](https://campuspride.org/research)

This report is produced by Campus Pride and written by **Dr. Genny Beemyn**, the coordinator of Campus Pride's Trans Policy Clearinghouse and director of the UMass Amherst Stonewall Center.

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Since 2001, Campus Pride has been the leading national organization building future LGBTQ and ally leaders as well as creating safer communities at colleges and universities. The Campus Pride Index annually helps 80,000 people find LGBTQ-inclusive colleges and universities. In addition, the organization has specifically tailored programs and resources to support LGBTQ youth and campus communities.

