

Where else can I find help?

Other Campus Services @ WLU:

- **Counselling Services**
- Ext. 2338 or
www.mylaurier.ca/counselling/

Off Campus Resources

- **LGBT Youthline**
- 1-800-268-YOUTH
- www.youthline.ca
- **Trans Pride at the 519**
- 519 Church St., Toronto ON
- 416-392-6874
- www.the519.org
- **Transition Support**
- 416-925-9872 x2121
- **Xpressions**
- <http://www.xpressions.org/>
- **Gender.org**
- <http://www.gender.org/>
- **EGALE Canada**
- <http://www.egale.ca>
- **Tri-Pride**
- <http://www.tri-pride.ca>
- **PFLAG Canada**
- <http://www.pflag.ca>

How to find us:

The Rainbow Centre can be found in Room 104 on the first floor of Macdonald House Residence. Enter into the front doors of MacDonal House from the Mac House Quad (across from the Dining Hall). Turn left and the Rainbow Centre is the first door on the left just past the recycling bins!



Macdonald House 104
75 University Ave West
Waterloo, Ontario
Canada
N2L 3C5
Phone: 884-0710 ext. 3010
Email: rainbow@wlu.ca
<http://www.mylaurier.ca/rainbow>

Gender Identity 101



Macdonald House Room 104
P. 519.884.0710 x3010
rainbow@wlu.ca
www.mylaurier.ca/rainbow

What is Gender?

What is the difference between sex and gender?

Biological sex is determined by the genetics, anatomy and physiology of the individual.

Gender identity is how an individual identifies their internal and psychological sense of self with regards to gender, femininity, masculinity and/or androgyny.

Gender is often mistakenly believed to be determined by biological sex, but the two are actually **independent from one another**. For instance, although the gender of *man* is traditionally assigned to the sex of *male*, being born biologically male does not necessarily mean that someone will identify as a man.

What is about sexual orientation and gender?

Sexual orientation is romantic, sexual, and emotional attraction to others, categorized by the gender (man, woman, third gender, etc.) to whom one is attracted to.

Sexual orientation is something that is determined **independently of gender identity**. Just because someone is transgender does not necessarily mean that they are gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, etc.

What does Transgender mean?

Transgender: The Rainbow Centre uses this as an 'umbrella' term that can be used to describe anyone whose gender expression/identity falls outside of the what a culture or society generally considers 'normal'. This includes:

- Transsexual
- Intersex
- Third gender
- Two-spirited
- Transvestite/Cross dresser
- Drag King/Queen
- Any self-identified transgender individual

At times, transgender is used as a more specific term referring to someone born into the body-type associated with one gender, but identifying with another gender.

Intersex describes an individual who's biological sex, anatomically and/or physiologically, is somewhere between that of male and female.

Third gender describes an individual who identifies with a gender not of the traditional man-woman binary.

Two-spirited is a Native American designation that describes an individual that is partly male and partly female or fully male and fully female in gender. They are highly valued as healers and peacemakers.

Transgender Issues

As you can imagine, daily life can be hard for individuals who are intersex or identify with a gender other than their biological sex. Many things that people take for granted are complicated for trans people by pressures to conform to the strict gender binary of male/female.

Some examples of difficult situations:

- For safety, does one choose the washroom of the gender they identify with or their biological sex?
- What box do you check on a form that asks for gender, but only has a box for male and female?

Inclusive Language

In English, we have pronouns to describe things as gender-masculine or feminine, but what about a non-specific gender?

The pronouns **zie** (pronounced 'zee') and **hir** (pronounced 'here') have been developed to provide a gender-neutral alternative.

Subject Pronouns: He, Zie, She

Eg. Zie is going to the park.

Possessive Pronouns: His, Hir, Her

Eg. Hir dog is barking.