Purpose: Define basic terms related to gender and sexuality to center students, equity and relationships in the classroom.

• **Intersectionality (n.)** - a framework for understanding the way that the multiple aspects of identity intersect, influence one another, and compound to create unique experiences (coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw—check out this video to learn more)

• **Intersex (adj.)** - a general term (not a gender identity) used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male

• **Endosex (adj.)** - the opposite of intersex, or when a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that seems to fit the typical definitions of female or male

**Note:** Some people use slightly different definitions for themselves. These are not universal, just a starting place to get comfortable with terminology.

**GENDER TERMINOLOGY**

• **Sex (n.)** - an assigned category of male, female, or intersex, based on genitals, gonads, chromosomes, etc.

• **Gender (n.)** – one’s internal sense of being a man, woman, non-binary, both, neither, or another gender.
  • Sometimes “gender identity”

• **Gender expression (n.)** - the way a person acts, dresses, speaks, behaves, and expresses themselves according to the culture they are in—feminine, masculine, a combination of the two, or neither.
  • **Note:** Gender identity and gender expression do not have to match. Do not assume someone’s gender identity based on their gender expression.

• **Transgender (adj.)** – umbrella term referring to anyone whose gender identity (man, woman, non-binary, etc.) does not match the sex they were assigned at birth (female, male, intersex).

• **Cisgender (adj.)** – refers to someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

**SEXUALITY TERMINOLOGY**

**Note:** Some people use slightly different definitions for themselves. These are not universal, just a starting place to get comfortable with terminology.

• **Gay (adj.)** – often used as an umbrella term for anyone who is LGB, can also refer specifically to men and man-aligned people who are solely attracted to other men/man-aligned people.

• **Lesbian (n./adj.)** – referring specifically to women and women-aligned people who are solely attracted to other women/women-aligned people.

• **Bisexual (adj.)** – referring to a person who is attracted to two or more genders, sometimes defined as attracted to their own gender + others.

• **Pansexual (adj.)** – referring to a person who is attracted to others regardless of gender.

• **Queer (adj.)** – a reclaimed slur often used as an umbrella term for anyone who is LGBT, or as a more vague personal identity label.

• **Asexual/Ace (adj.)** – experiencing no or little sexual attraction to any gender.

• **Heteronormativity** – the belief that heterosexuality is the norm or the assumption that all people are heterosexual.

(Continued on page 2)
**TERMINOLOGY: THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE**

**Purpose:** Define basic terms related to gender and sexuality to center students, equity and relationships in the classroom.

(Gender terminology continued)

- **Non-binary (adj.)** – refers to a person who is neither a man nor a woman.
  - Some non-binary people are aligned with manhood, some are aligned with womanhood, and some are neither.
  - Some non-binary people have a more specific gender identity, like “agender.”
  - In some cultures, there are other “norm” gender options besides men and women, like the Fa’afafine in Samoa.

- **Cisnormativity (n.)** – the belief that being cisgender is the norm or the assumption that all people are cisgender.

- **Deadname (n.)** – a transgender or non-binary person’s old name; often a name given at birth, which is NOT their actual name anymore.

- **Misgendering (v.)** – using the wrong pronouns for someone or using gendered language that does not align with their gender
  - e.g. using “she” to describe someone who has stated that their pronouns are they/them

- **Gender-neutral language (n.)** – language such as “menstrual products” instead of “feminine hygiene products”