RIT Diversity Terminology Guide

As of April 14, 2022

<u>Introduction</u>

This guide and living document was created to educate current and future RIT community members on terminology to support basic interactions across different life experiences and cultures. These common yet ever-changing terms and their definitions should be applied to employees' work and help to foster informed and constructive conversations across campus.

Led by Dr. Taj Smith, Director of Diversity Education, a group of RIT Rochester administrators, staff and students from various backgrounds and expertise helped to shape this resource. They referenced citations, leveraged life experiences and attempted to make it accessible and relevant for a community that has different levels of knowledge and understanding. We thank them for their efforts.

<u>General Terms</u>

Diversity: All students, staff, faculty and people are diverse. It allows us to understand how individual and group differences contribute to the diverse thoughts, knowledge construction, value systems and experiences.

Consistent with applicable federal and state laws, as well RIT policies relating to protected group, class, or category, RIT currently identifies race, religion, age, citizenship, color, creed, culture, including Deaf culture, actual or perceived disabilities, gender, marital status, ethnic or national origin, political affiliation or preference, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic predisposition in its Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (C6.0) as one aspect of diversity.

Equity: An organizational, institutional or societal level strategy that seeks to achieve fairness and justice. In doing so, it can consider factors that have limited opportunities for historically underrepresented and/or marginalized people in order to make adjustments to imbalances in access and/or outcomes.

Inclusion: A practice or policy that provides equitable access to opportunities and resources, especially for groups who are historically underrepresented, marginalized or excluded all together. It is concerned with community members being valued, respected and supported. Inclusion values a sense of belonging and community building and takes the necessary steps to making it happen.

DEI: Shorthand for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Inclusive Leadership: A form of leadership that is self-reflective and incorporates the contributions of all stakeholders within an organization. It invites managers, in particular, to lead with emotional and cultural intelligence, display curiosity of others, and be open to collaboration.

(Disability) Accommodation: Modifications or adjustments designed to allow access to otherwise qualified individuals with a goal of full participation in employment and/or an educational program. Accommodations are tools designed to create equity and level the playing field for members of the disability community.

Assistive Technology: Any device, software program, or system used to facilitate or improve functional capabilities, particularly for individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology is wide-ranging. Some examples include screen-reading software, magnifiers, dictation software, mobility aids, Braille displays, personal amplification devices, or captioning (check out the [TigerChat app](#), designed at RIT to facilitate communication!)

Safe(r) Space: A supportive environment in which an individual or group agree to avoid causing any physical, mental or emotional harm to others. In a safe space, there is no expectation to educate others.

Brave Space: An accountability and dialogue environment that recognizes differences and hopes to come to new understandings despite the discomfort which may arise in the environment. Unlike safe(r) spaces, there is an expectation to educate and learn.

(Gender) Pronouns: A longstanding practice that indicates shorthand for gender identity instead of stating or signing their name. Pronouns have always existed for cisgender people to use. Today, pronoun options should include those who are non-binary, genderqueer or transgender. An example is they/them/theirs. Some individuals may choose not to use pronouns and may instead prefer to be referred to by their name. Individuals should respect another person's choice in how they identify instead of trying to define them through their worldview.

Intersectionality: Acknowledges the social impact of our overlapping identities and their relationship to systems of advantage and disadvantage. Coined in 1989 by Kimberle W. Crenshaw, intersectionality is a framework allowing us to examine how power interlocks and intersects with some combination of our identities and the oppressions that may be associated with them.

Culture: A set of common beliefs, worldviews, behaviors, practices, traditions or values that a specific group of individuals identify with and practice. Culture comes from all of our identities including our roles as student, staff and/or faculty.

Cultural Humility: A life-long process that involves awareness of self and others, testing knowledge, acquiring skills and addressing attitudes (e.g. biases, stereotypes, values). Humility is critical in understanding cultures different from your own. While our lived experiences are a source of knowledge, humility is critical in understanding how others experience the same or different culture.

Multiculturalism: A theory and practice that promotes the coexistence of multiple cultures or social groups in a given society. It actively seeks to celebrate and sustain language, encompasses daily practices (e.g. dance, food preparation), and includes values which are accepted by members of multiple cultures or social groups.

Bias: Conscious or unconscious, is an inclination in favor of or against a person, group, object or place. Without self-awareness, these biases can have positive or negative effects on our decision making.

Stereotypes: A mixture of assumptions, expectations and strong beliefs about members of certain groups that present an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment. Stereotypes may be true for some members of a social group, but not true of all.

Stereotype Threat: Coined by Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson (1995), it refers to the fear or anxiety of confirming negative stereotypes about groups you intentionally belong to or are assumed to belong to.

Imposter (Syndrome) Phenomenon: A belief that you are not as competent as others perceive you to be. It may express itself as a feeling of not being worthy of belonging in an environment that is different from your typical environment. It is a conflict between how you perceive yourself and the way others perceive you. In the context of a diverse environment, previous messages of exclusion may contribute to this phenomenon.

Prejudice: Extending beyond bias and stereotypes, these sets of attitudes and beliefs tend to not only be negative, but deeply rooted in feeling superior to others and are often not based on reason or fact.

Discrimination: The treatment of an individual based on that individual's group, class, or category. Discrimination can occur with or without the specific intent to treat others differently. When conduct has the result of disproportionally impacting members of a particular group, class, or category, it may be deemed to be discrimination. Discrimination includes harassment and sex discrimination. Sex discrimination is the adverse treatment of an individual based on that individual's gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Sex discrimination includes gender-based harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence. Individuals of all backgrounds can engage in individual level discrimination. It is more common for social groups with societal influence/social power/social privilege to have the ability to discriminate at the institutional, structural and cultural levels.

Structural Discrimination: Emphasizes looking beyond interpersonal ways individuals experience discrimination. It calls for us to consider how institutions reinforce experiences of inequity on the basis of being a member of a protected category.

Language Deprivation: When a person, often a child, does not have access to language in their developmental years. Deprivation of language can be an experience of some of our Deaf colleagues and students. For more information [read](#).

Person First Language (PFL): PFL is a way of talking about disability which centers and prioritizes the person before the disability. For example, "people with disabilities'' rather than "disabled people." PFL is a format of preference by some members of the disability community, and tends to be used and advocated for most heavily by those who do not identify with disability. For more information on disability language, read. See also, "identity first language."

Identity First Language: In contrast to person-first language, identity first language is a way of talking about disability which centers and prioritizes disability before the person. For example, "she is a disabled woman" rather than "a woman with disabilities." IFL is a format of preference by some members of the disability community and tends to be used and advocated for by those seeking to dismantle fearful, disability-avoidant tendencies by insisting that disability and disabled people are valuable. For more information on this approach to language, read Lydia Brown's 2011 post on their blog, *Autistic Hoya*.

Microaggressions: Coined by Derald Wing Sue, it refers to common or everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental slights, snubs, insensitivities or insults that communicate biases, negative messages, stereotypes, hostile, derogatory or negative compounding messages to a person based on their marginalized or underrepresented status. For examples use the following links:

> https://static1.squarespace.com/static/582e825159cc68e27c16179c/t/5ce709afe4966b8c957f9fd2/1558645167375/Microsoft+Word+-+4_2018+TBL+Microagressions+worksheet+%281%29.docx.pdf

> https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/officeofthemayor/2019/deepmicroaggressionsworksheetfilledin012619.pdf

Microinequities: Coined by Dr. Mary Rowe, it refers to behaviors that are subtle, often unconscious, messages that devalue, discourage, single out, dismiss and negatively impact an individual. They may or may not be related to an employee's membership in a protected group. For more information read.

Microaffirmations: Refers to behaviors that are subtle acknowledgments of a person's importance and accomplishments, which creates a feeling of being valued and a sense of belonging that can lead to them experiencing an environment or person as less exclusionary or hostile.

Privilege: Is a right or societal advantage granted as a benefit or favor to members of a particular group. It is a social system of relationships rooted in a select few that distributes societal advantages across generations to those who are seen as typical, dominant or better than others. While not guaranteed for all, those identified as privileged have greater access or more opportunities to succeed based on an identity they hold. In other words, privilege is an additional factor to explain one's life experience.

Caste: Is the granting or withholding of access, rights and worth in a society based on current position, power, or rank. One of the most popular examples of caste is rooted in the interpretation of Hinduism by those in power. For more information read.

Oppression: Refers to a systematic effort where at least one social group uses individual, institutional, structural and cultural strategies and tactics to create advantages or privileges that lead to injustices and inequalities for groups deemed as inferior. Adapted from the work of Rita Hardiman and Bailey Jackson, 1997 and Iris Marion Young, 2000.

Ableism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination at the individual, institutional, and cultural levels against disabled people on the basis of actual or presumed disability. It is rooted in the false presumption that absence of disability is normal and ideal, leads to better quality of life, or that disabled lives are less worth living. It generates societal privileges for non-disabled people.

- Language to work to eliminate: functioning language (e.g., high functioning or low functioning), handicap, special needs, "differently-abled," crazy, or wheelchair bound. Learn more via Lydia Brown's blog.
- It's also critical to avoid inspiration porn, which involves objectification of disabled people through pity and inspiration stories. For more information, watch Stella Young's (captioned) TEDx Talk, "I'm Not Your Inspiration, Thank you Very Much."

Ageism/Youth Oppression: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination at the individual, institutional, cultural levels against people of a certain age or age range. It is rooted in the false presumption that certain ages are ideal for specific tasks without assessing their actual ability to perform job or life responsibilities asked of them. It isolates the most vulnerable ages and exploits them for the benefit of others. It generates societal privileges for specific generations of people and impacts the young and old most often.

- Language to work to eliminate: OK, boomer!, young and dumb, you can't teach an old dog new tricks or that person's being a geriatric. For additional information on youth oppression read.

  You might also consider using words or phrases that focus on learning from new experiences despite one's age or emphasize the contributions that seniors or older employees can make.

Anti-Semitism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination at the individual, institutional, and cultural levels against Jews and Judaism. It does so on the basis of actual or presumed connection to this ethnic, religious or ethno-religious identity. It commonly manifests through harassment and vandalism, such as property damage, cemetery desecration or anti-Semitic graffiti. It generates societal privileges for people who don't identify as Jewish. Adapted from the National Multicultural Institute and Anti-Defamation League.

- Language to work to eliminate:

  https://www.adl.org/news/press-releases/adl-publishes-new-guide-to-antisemitic-tropes

Anti-Muslim: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination at the individual, institutional, and cultural levels against Muslims. It does so on the basis of actual or presumed connection to the Islamic religious identity. It commonly manifests through harassment and vandalism,

such as property damage, anti-Islam graffiti, acts of violence or harassment (e.g. called a terrorist just because their Muslim). It generates societal privileges for people who do not identify as a Muslim.

Audism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination at the individual, institutional, and cultural levels against Deaf and hard of hearing people. Typically, it manifests by way of casual conversation, education and living arrangements. Hearing people may communicate disparaging remarks, unwillingness to facilitate accessible communication, or expect Deaf people to adopt hearing practices (e.g. oralism). It generates societal privileges for hearing people.

Classism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination on the basis of having an actual or perceived social class status that is less desirable. It is dependent on how a society views and structures its economic system to benefit some more than others. It generates societal privilege to wealthy, rich and in some cases middle class people.

Cissexism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination at the individual, institutional, cultural levels against transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and genderqueer people. It is rooted in cis-normativity or the idea that those whose assigned sex at birth corresponds with their gender identity and expression are considered normal. It generates societal privileges for cisgender people.

Examples can include:

- Refusing to think outside of the gender binary
- Misgendering or using different gender pronouns than what people have identified by
- Deadnaming, which means using a person's birth name after they have legally changed their name or informed you of a new name to use.
- Using greetings like "ladies and gentlemen," which can alienate nonbinary folks
- Having forms and applications that require a person to identify their gender and only offering a "male" or "female" or "men" or "women" options
- Attempting to pass laws or policies that would prevent trans people from using the restroom that aligns with their gender

Heterosexism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination at the individual, institutional, cultural levels against lesbian, gay, bi/pan sexual, and other sexual or romantic minorities. It is rooted in hetero-normativity or the idea that straight/heterosexual people are normal. It generates societal privileges for heterosexual people. A useful tool to better understand this experience and perhaps develop empathy is the Heterosexual Questionnaire.

Examples can include:

- Anti-gay jokes or humor used by heterosexuals to make other heterosexuals laugh
- Bullying for being or perceived as LGBQ+
- Families disown LGBQ+ once they "come out"

- Finding their organization's posters for support meetings or social events defaced or removed
- Workplace policies and practices that assume heterosexuality

Sexism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination against an assigned biological sex and/or gender that is said to be inferior within a gender binary mindset. It generates societal privileges for men (cis or trans). For more information [read](#).

Racism: A form of oppression that uses stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination at the individual, institutional, and cultural levels against an actual racial or perceived racial group that is said to be inferior. As Ibram Kendi put it, "[racism] is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities." As we've seen it manifest in the U.S., it generates societal privileges for White people or people perceived to be White passing.

Anti-Racism: An active and demonstrated practice of critically reviewing individual attitudes and behaviors with the goal of minimizing and eliminating prejudice or discrimination that limits opportunities for historically underrepresented and marginalized groups.

Common factors for becoming an anti-racist institution may include:

- Defining concepts and developing a shared vision
- Assessing the institutional climate and each areas willingness to create an inclusive culture
- Evaluating common practices and policies for inequities
- Supporting racial healing and reconciliation efforts
- Fostering accountability systems to ensure progress
- Developing new practices and policies of inclusion and equity
- Telling stories of success and racial diversity

<center>Identity Group Related Terms</center>

AALANA: Refers to self-identified African American, Latin American and Native American students, staff or faculty. Asian American and White, as a primary ethnic group and race, are not included in this identity group.

ALANA: Refers to self-identified African American, Latin American, Asian American and Native American students, staff or faculty. White, as a primary racial group, are not included in this identity group.

AAPI/API: Refers to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders or Asian and Pacific Islander. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders share a number of intersecting histories and issues, but it is important to also remember they are diverse with various ethnic and nationality backgrounds.

BIPOC: Refers to self-identified Black, indigenous, and people of color. It is intended to show solidarity while at the same time acknowledging their unique identities and differences.

People of Color/Student of Color (POC): Refers to a diverse group of people who have similar and unique experiences as it relates to dealing with a shared history of and present- day racism. It is intended to show solidarity. That said, it has different usages throughout time and geographic locations. Some may use it to refer only to Black people. Others might have used it to identify multi-racial people. Some include the following groups Black/African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American/indigenous, Chicano/Latina/o/x, some Arab/Arab American or multi-racial.

Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Racial: A multi-ethnic person comes from a diverse lineage of different ethnic groups. All people have the potential to hold multiple ethnic identities that inform common and unique ways of demonstrating culture, historically and in our present day. A person can also be multi-racial, which means they have ancestors who represented different racial groups and lived experiences. Some people have forgotten or do not have a connection to their ethnic diversities as a result of immigration, migration, imperialism, and assimilation. Others have a strong connection because it is taught in their home or learned about later in life. Some multi-racial people may choose to identify with this term.

Minority Groups: Refer to categories of people who are differentiated from a social majority due to having less social power. Historically, "minority" is often associated with people of color (e.g. Asians, Latinos, and Black people) but it actually can be applied to other identities like gender, sexuality and religion. Some people (often informed by their generation) are ok with being referred to as a minority and others are not because it communicates inferiority.

Underrepresented Groups: Subset of the population that holds a historically smaller percentage of representation in a career, major or institution due to their identity and social status in a society.

Historically Marginalized Groups: Refers to social groups that have experienced a history of being viewed as or made to be powerless within a society, institution or community. These groups have faced barriers or exclusions from accessing basic mainstream services or having the chances to thrive.

First Generation Student: Refers to a student who is the first in their families to attend college.

Legacy Student: A student whose parent(s) or other family member attended the same college.

Socioeconomic Status: Socioeconomic status is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income, geographic location and occupation. The status that comes with specific social class groups often reveal inequities in access to economic and social networking resources.

Disability: There exists both legal and societal definitions of disability. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The ADA also includes people who have a history or record of such an impairment, or a person perceived by others as having such an impairment, within the scope of disability.

RIT takes a socially just approach to disability, understanding it as a social, political, and cultural identity that shapes people and communities in meaningful ways. Disability is a facet of human diversity. We firmly reject the equating of disability with deficit, and instead recognize that the lived reality of disability changes as the world around us increases in accessibility. We all share a collective responsibility to prioritize accessibility and inclusion, and value folx not in spite of, but because of all aspects of their identity, including disability.

Deaf vs. deaf: Coined by Carol Padden and Tom Humphries, we use the lowercase deaf when referring to the audiological condition of not hearing or having a very minimal amount of hearing ability. The uppercase Deaf is used when referring to a particular group of Deaf people who share a language and a culture. For example, American Sign Language (ASL) is both a language and a culture that bonds a group of people in community attitudes and behaviors.

Hard of Hearing (HOH): Refers to a person with mild-to-severe hearing loss. Some may use cochlear implants and others use hearing aids. Many are able to use their spoken voice clearly. Hard of hearing is the correct terminology to use rather than hearing impaired, which can be deemed offensive.

SimCom: Stands for "simultaneous communication". The purpose is to use sign language while also using your voice to speak. Some view it as a form of bilingual communication that helps bridge communication gaps between hearing and deaf. Some Deaf people view it in a negative light because ASL has its own grammatical pattern that sim-com cannot capture effectively.

Religion: An organized system of beliefs, ceremonies, moral ethics, rules, and practices that inform a worldview. Some religions use texts, sacred places, objects/artifacts, or clothing.

Spirituality: The recognition of a feeling or connection to something beyond self. It does not require a single path to discovery. For some, it also is used to acknowledge a disconnect with organized or more formal religion. Similar to religion, it is centered in seeking meaning and restoring hope and optimism.

Ethnicity: Refers to a sense of belonging to a specific group's place of origin, communication styles, or customs. Often a nation or country is going to have many ethnic groups. It is possible for these ethnic groups to have individuals who identify differently on the basis of race. In a U.S. context, ethnicity can be African-American, Jamaican, Haitian, Dominican, Puerto Rican, Nigerian, Irish-American, Italian-American, Greek, Arab-American, Afro-Latina, Jewish, Hispanic, Cuban, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Korean, Japanese, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese or Taiwanese.

Nationality: Tends to focus on where one has citizenship, was born or finds pride in being from a country or territory. People from a specific nation can share a common history, tradition and language. Some of the ethnic groups mentioned previously can also be considered nations outside of a U.S. understanding of race. Indigenous peoples in the U.S. view themselves as nations with tribal groups branching from them. Unfortunately, they have been forced to racialize and group themselves as one people due to racism.

International Student: Students that are non-immigrant visitors, who come to the United States temporarily to take classes and/or graduate with a degree(s). RIT's internal definition is a student with a non-immigrant visa status that permits study (F-1, J-1, H-1B, H-4, TD, etc.)

A non-immigrant is someone who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Intends to stay in the U.S. temporarily for educational purposes
- Does not have U.S. citizenship or legal permanent resident status (a valid "green card")
- Currently is in the U.S. on a non-immigrant visa status (without a valid green card)
- Applies for a visa to be allowed entry into the U.S.

Note: Dual citizens holding U.S. & another nationality, or those with U.S. permanent residency ("green card" holders), are not classified as "international students" for RIT system purposes; nor are DACA or undocumented students however, any of these students are welcome to seek guidance from International Student Services (ISS). Immigration status will impact Financial Aid eligibility and ability to be employed by RIT. Aspects of this definition are guided by information from: https://wenr.wes.org/2009/09/wenr-september-2009-feature.

Undocumented Student: Someone without a currently valid immigration status who might have entered the country without approval of US Customs & Border Protection, entered with unauthorized documents, or remained in the US after their authorized status has ended.

RIT systems do not classify or flag these students. Most college-bound undocumented students:

- Have lived in the U.S. most of their lives
- Been brought to the U.S. by their parents at a young age
- Learned English and think of themselves culturally as American
- Attended elementary, middle, and high school in the U.S.
- Those who have excelled academically want to pursue a college education
- Currently lack a clear path to become legal residents or citizens

DACA Student: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is designed to protect eligible immigrant youth who came to the United States when they were children from deportation. These students (previously in an undocumented immigration status) have been granted temporary legal status to remain in the US, along with an employment authorization document.

Race: Refers to a group of ethnically and nationally diverse people. Race is often confused with ethnicity and vice versa. Race groups a diverse group of people or ethnicities together under an umbrella category on the basis of sharing common physical features such as skin color, eye shape, nose size, and hair color or texture. Stereotypes can also play a role in deciding who belongs or what common behaviors may be attached to a specific racial group.

In the U.S., primary racial groups are Black, White, Asian, Native American and multiracial/more than two races. People could have a mixed race or ethnic heritage and choose to identify with a salient race, multiple races, multiple nations and/or multiple ethnicities.

Neurodiversity: The [Autistic Self Advocacy Network](#) defines neurodiversity in the following way: "Neurodiversity means that no two brains are exactly the same. Every person has things they are good at and things they need help with, and there is no such thing as a "normal" brain. The neurodiversity movement says that people with brain-based disabilities (like autism, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, or mental health disabilities) should be accepted and included in society just like neurotypical people (people without brain-based disabilities). The neurodiversity movement also says that we should not try to cure or get rid of autism. Autistic people should be allowed to exist, and we should work to make sure that everyone gets the accommodations we need to reach our full potential."

Heterosexual: People who are sexually or romantically attracted to someone opposite from them within a gender binary context.

LGBTQIA+: Refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, agender, and ally. The plus sign symbolizes additional identities could be added.

QTPOC/QTBIPOC: Refers to queer, transgender, people of color or queer, transgender, Black, indigenous, and people of color.

Sex: Typically assigned at birth, this identity is a collection of somatic features that have male and female variations, including chromosomes, genitals, gonads, hormone levels, secondary sex characteristics, etc. It is important to understand that this binary way of assigning, understanding and celebrating biological sex diversity is limited. It often leaves out intersex people.

Intersex: describes a person whose assigned/biological sex features (e.g. chromosomes or genitalia) do not fully match the male or female exemplars. Some features might have an intermediate appearance or fall somewhere between the binary framework of male and female chromosomes, genitalia or reproductive organs. Some identify as cisgender and others as transgender.

Gender: Gender involves an internal sense of identity and expression. Gender identity is your sense of who you are, not how society sees you. Gender expression focuses on the attitudes and behaviors that align with how you see yourself. Sometimes expression is influenced by individuals or society's expectations of you.

- Subcategories can include: cisgender, transgender, nonbinary, agender, masculinity, femininity. For additional information read Dr. Alan Smerbeck's *Gender Diversity: A Guide for Higher Education Faculty*.

Cis-gender: Refers to having a gender identity that "matches" the gender assigned at birth and adhering to binary gender expressions.

Nonbinary: Refers to a person who isn't looking to align with the gender binary of cis-men and cis-women. Some people may also define themselves as genderqueer, agender, intersex and gender fluid.

Transitioning: The process a trans individual takes to live in the gender with which they identify. For some it could involve medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries. Not all trans people want or have the resources to engage in medical procedures to align their body with their gender identity.

Transgender: Can be used as a specific identity or more of an umbrella term that clusters a number of gender/agender identities outside of the cis-men and cis-women gender binary. It is not necessarily related to or "matches" one's gender assigned at birth. People can identify as transmasculine and transfeminine.

- Language to work to eliminate: *The idea that all transgender people are confused about their gender identity.* Often they know what their gender identity is, but others do not accept it. Transsexual or transvestite is no longer an acceptable identifier. It is rooted in transphobia, cis-gender shame, and criminalizing sex workers.

Queer: Serves as an umbrella term that brings together a number of often marginalized gender and sexuality identities. Historically, this term was used by some cis-gender and heterosexual people to communicate disapproval and superiority. To be queer today, can mean a desire to challenge the status quo. It embraces fluidity and intersectionality of identities. For additional information read.

Sexual Orientation: Refers to a person's pattern of emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of a particular gender, pangender or agender.

Veteran Student: Refers to a student who is currently serving or has served in the military, naval, air or space service and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable. Considered a nontraditional student, student veterans may be older than traditional undergraduate students. They are also more likely to be married or have children, and often have full-time jobs off campus. For more information read.

Military Affiliated Population: The title assigned to describe the group of individuals who are a veteran, service member, dependent or cadet. Below is a list of official and everyday language used to describe specific kinds of service:

- Someone serving in the United States Army is a "Soldier"
- Someone serving in the United States Marine Corps is a "Marine"
- Someone serving in the United States Navy is a "Sailor"
- Someone serving in the United States Air Force is an "Airmen"
- Someone serving in the United States Coast Guard is a "Coast Guardsmen"
- Someone serving in the United States Space Force is a "Guardian"

Service Member: Individuals who are currently serving in the armed forces. This includes active-duty personnel and those who serve in the reserve components (e.g. Reserves or the National Guard).

Cadets: An individual who is a college student and is concurrently participating in Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) to become a commissioned officer in the armed forces. At RIT there are two ROTC departments, the United States Army and the United States Air Force.

Dependents: An individual who is a family member to a service member and/or a veteran. It tends to be a spouse or a child.

Disabled Veteran: An individual who has served on active duty in the armed forces, has been separated under honorable conditions, and has established the present existence of a service-connected disability or is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension because of a public statute administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs or a military department. This status does not always relate to a civilian disability.