

Invisibilities, Uncertainties and Unexpected Surprises

**The Experiences of Transgender and Gender
Non-Conforming Students, Staff, and Faculty
at Colleges and Universities in Colorado**



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The Experiences of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students, Staff, and Faculty at Colleges and Universities in Colorado (Executive Summary)

By

Kristie L. Seelman, N. Eugene Walls, Kelly Costello, Karly Steffens, Kyle Inselman, Hillary Montague-Asp, and Colorado Trans on Campus Coalition

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Few research studies have focused exclusively on the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals on college campuses, and even fewer have sampled trans staff and faculty as well as trans students. Further, there does not appear to be any previously published study specifically examining this topic for universities solely within the State of Colorado. This research project aimed to address these gaps in the research by interviewing 30 students, staff, and faculty who identified as transgender or gender non-conforming or who were perceived as gender non-conforming by others and who had been affiliated with a Colorado institution of higher education in the past year. The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of the barriers to full participation in campus life faced by transgender community members and to provide concrete recommendations for administrators and advocates on campuses of higher education in Colorado.

In analyzing the qualitative data from the 30 interviews conducted for this project, a data structure emerged regarding campus experiences that consisted of: (a) what people bring to campus (their identities, roles, and expectations); (b) contributing factors on campus that influence a person's experience (including the campus environment, use and abuse of power, policy communication and implementation, campus resources, sense of community, and degree of tokenization); and (c) resulting outcomes of the sum of those experiences and how they affect transgender and gender non-conforming campus members (inclusion or exclusion, and visibility or invisibility). Findings from each of these three main themes are summarized here in the Executive Summary. For more in-depth analysis, example quotes, and definitions of terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers used in this Executive Summary, please see the full report which can be found located at the website address listed on the back page of this document.

SUMMARY: ARRIVING ON CAMPUS – WHAT PEOPLE BRING

Although this project used a purposive sample (and is therefore not generalizable to the larger transgender population), among the 30 individuals sampled there were a variety of identities, roles and experiences represented. A summary of the sample's demographics is provided in Table 1.

Our sample represented a multitude of departments and offices on campus, including departments in the social sciences, arts and humanities, and natural sciences, as well as administrative departments. A total of 10 different college and university campuses located in Colorado were represented among our sample and ranged in size from having fewer than 2,000 students to over 20,000 students.

Table 1: Summary of Sample Demographics

Demographic	Sample Breakdown
Campus Role	63% students, 10% faculty, 10% staff, 17% multiple roles
Public/Private Campus	30% of the campuses discussed were private, 70% were public
Urbanicity of Campus	100% of the campuses discussed were in urban areas in Colorado
Race/ethnicity	70% White, 16.7% Latino (includes White & Latino), 6.7% Jewish, 6.7% Other
Gender Identity	40% Genderqueer/non-binary, 23% FTM or trans masculine, 14% MTF or trans feminine, 23% combination of categories
Perceived as How They Identify?	20% always/almost always perceived as how identify, 57% sometimes perceived as how they identify, 13% never/rarely perceived as how identify, 10% unknown ¹
Physical Transitions While on Campus?	30% Yes, 60% No, 7% Unknown, 3% Other ¹

Some of the key points of emphasis in terms of our sample's demographics include:

- Transgender people are found at all types of campuses—including private and public, large and small—and are found among staff and faculty as well as among students.
- People identify in lots of different ways, and identities are not always visible. Or, as one of the members of our participatory research team said: "You perceive people, but you may not always be correct in how you perceive them-- so be careful!"
- Transgender and gender non-conforming people have differing backgrounds, identities, roles, and experiences...and these differences matter. The unique individual characteristics that each person embodies often shape their experience of being transgender on campus in nuanced ways.

SUMMARY: CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO THE CAMPUS CLIMATE

While campus experiences are impacted by the identities, roles, and expectations people bring with them, results of this study also indicate that there are various aspects of the campus itself

¹ The percentages reported for this item are based on interpretation of these aspects of experience by the research team from the text of the interview rather than reported directly by the respondents.

and the actions of people who make up the campus community that also affect a transgender individual's experience. We have titled this theme "Contributing Factors to the Campus Climate" and conceptualized this theme as including: (a) the campus environment; (b) the use & abuse of power by staff, faculty, and administrators on campus; (c) policy communication & implementation; (d) campus resources; (e) the sense of community on campus; and (f) the degree to which transgender people are tokenized and/or allowed to self-define their own boundaries and roles.

THE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

When someone first arrives at a college or university, the tone of the setting has a great impact on whether that person feels welcomed, accepted, and valued, or excluded, rejected, and ignored. The 30 participants in this study spoke most often about two particular campus settings: work environments and classroom environments. Broadly, there were three main themes in relation to employment climates on campus: (a) the role of perceived gender expression and physical transitions; (b) the recognition of name and pronoun preferences and acknowledgment of non-static and/or non-binary gender identities; and, (c) the likelihood that a department/office will be trans-inclusive is not always related to whether that department has an explicit mission to reach out to the LGBTQ community.

There were also three major themes in relation to experiences in the classroom environment: (a) transphobia in the classroom; (b) the need for bringing transgender issues and voices into the classroom without tokenizing trans people, threatening their safety, or excusing cisgender people from educating themselves; and, (c) the need for recognizing and respecting an individual's name and pronoun preferences and gender identity.

USE AND ABUSE OF POWER BY STAFF, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATORS

The authority inherent in the roles of dean, supervisor, administrator, or professor (among others) allows people in these roles, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to deeply influence the experiences of trans and gender non-conforming students, staff, and faculty on college campuses and determine whether university policies are addressed, enforced, or ignored. A major theme that emerged through the 30 interviews was ignorance regarding trans issues among people who held positions of power on campus. Administrators and professors can unknowingly "out" people due to their lack of information surrounding the importance of privacy for transgender individuals and its implications for safety. The concern here is not that unauthorized people may have access to information about legal name or gender changes, but that it may be revealed at inappropriate times or in inappropriate ways. Ignorance regarding trans issues among people in positions of power may lead to a distinct lack of accountability. Because authority figures are unaware that their actions are harmful, they are seldom held responsible for the very real damage they can inflict on a trans or gender non-conforming

person's experience. Participants repeatedly described experiences where ignorance regarding transgender issues on the part of campus medical staff and professors led to overwhelmingly negative interactions, which influenced their overall experiences on campus.

POLICY COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

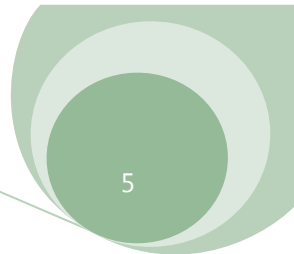
Our findings discussed policy both in terms of *communication* – how effectively and clearly rules and processes are explained and presented to people on campus and how accessible the actual policies are—and *implementation*—the ways these rules are (or are not) consistently carried out on campus and how this impacts transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Some of the key findings about policy implementation and communication included:

- Transgender and gender non-conforming campus members were most confident in their knowledge about nondiscrimination policies and least confident in knowledge about health insurance coverage for transition-related care and domestic partner benefits.
- Students tended to be less confident in their knowledge of campus policies compared to staff, faculty, and people in multiple roles.
- Participants experienced a variety of forms of discrimination on campus, even though many campuses had nondiscrimination policies that included gender identity and/or gender expression.
- Few schools were thought to provide health insurance coverage for gender reassignment procedures of any kind.
- Inflexible medical guidelines that require transgender individuals to be diagnosed with a mental disorder in order to receive hormone treatments or surgeries created limitations on patient care and inappropriately treated transsexuality as an illness.
- In general, participants indicated less knowledge or direct experience with domestic partnership benefits compared to other policies. However, one topic that was discussed was the question of how transgender people, particularly those who have transitioned, are included in domestic partner benefits.
- Transgender individuals often had negative experiences with campus policies related to identification cards/records, name and gender marker changes, and/or physical transitions.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

A campus *resource* was defined as any institutionally sanctioned and recognized form of help, support, acknowledgement, and/or information provided by a college or its employees for the benefit of its students, staff, and faculty. This report reviewed findings related to 10 different



types of campus resources; these resources are listed in Table 2 along with a summary of related findings.

Table 2: Summary of Findings Related to 10 Different Types of Campus Resources

Type of Resource	Research Findings
1. Campus organizations intended to have a focus on transgender community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a wide range in participants' knowledge & familiarity with these organizations. • Most campuses had LGBTQ organizations, while a lot fewer had organizations exclusively focused on the transgender community. • Some participants said there were groups working hard to be inclusive of trans people, while others said this was lacking or was a major struggle.
2. LGBTQ, Multicultural, and Women's Resource Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants frequently knew whether such resources existed on campus, and some regularly turned to these offices for support & found them to be positive places. • These offices, and those who work in them, were generally active advocates for transgender-related campus issues. • A smaller group of participants said that transgender people and related issues were not visible in these settings.
3. Transgender-related Campus Programming and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some participants spoke about the positive impact of events such as educational speakers, trainings, and panel discussions on transgender issues. • LGBTQ trainings were beneficial when trainers integrated the "T" and distinguished gender identity and expression from sexual orientation. • Holding a transgender-related conference on campus had a beneficial impact on campus climate by communicating a message that transgender people are valued.
4. Administrative Task Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task forces have the potential to be key resources for helping to address transgender rights on campus, including creating better systems and procedures for name/gender change requests, making facilities safer and more inclusive, addressing gender violence, and changing campus policies to be more inclusive of transgender people. • Some campuses had task forces exclusively dedicated to transgender issues, while others had committees with other primary foci that also addressed trans-related issues. • Some participants believed that task forces were not effective or supportive, especially when not focusing exclusively on transgender issues or when members were hand-picked by administrators.
5. Student Services (Career Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants discussed some instances where Student Services offices were mindful of the particular needs of transgender and gender non-conforming students—such as concerns about finding a job as an "out" trans person after college or feeling like they were actively included and welcomed by these offices because their communication to the student body used gender inclusive pronouns.

6. Sexual Assault Programming/ Victim's Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of participants reported being outed or addressed with incorrect pronouns, experiencing property damage, or being verbally harassed on campus. Those participants who sought help from sexual assault staff or victim's assistance tended to have negative experiences—such as encountering a lack of knowledge among staff about the trans community or being told, "We can't help you."
7. Trans-Inclusive Curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many participants noted a severe lack of transgender-related curricula, even among LGBTQ or diversity curricula. This led to feelings of frustration, discomfort, and invisibility. In some cases, there was resistance by campus officials about offering trans-inclusive curricula as part of workshops or department curricula. Some specific areas of trans-related content that were lacking from curricula included: (a) content on cissexuality/cisgender identities and related privileges, and (b) content about people within gender non-conforming communities who are NOT transsexual (e.g., people who are genderqueer, androgynous, gender non-conforming, etc.).
8. Academic Programs with a Focus on Gender Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small subset of the research participants spoke about women's and gender studies programs as being important campus resources for them. Faculty and staff in women's and gender studies programs were not always trans-friendly, as evidenced by participant anecdotes about negative interactions with people in these departments.
9. Health & Mental Health Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several participants spoke of having very positive experiences accessing health and mental health care or health education programs on campus. A number of individuals spoke particularly of useful mental health services, such as one-to-one counseling sessions and support groups. For more general visits to the health center, participants noted that effectiveness of the visit often depended upon accessing the person on staff who was the most knowledgeable about transgender patient issues and comfortable in working with trans clients. In some cases, participants said there continued to be major problems with seeking competent health care services even after the health center staff received trainings about transgender competency.
10. Safe Spaces for Transgender People on Campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous participants spoke of difficulties in locating bathrooms on campus that they could use safely and without being harassed or questioned. Some participants avoided using <u>any</u> bathrooms on campus, which both increased their general level of anxiety and placed their health at risk. An individual's experiences and level of safety in bathrooms and locker rooms were highly related to gender expression—people who were perceived by others in these spaces as "matching" the gender listed on the door were at less risk for harassment than those who were perceived as being another gender or as androgynous. If someone was

earlier in the transition process or occupied a more androgynous space on the gender expression continuum, they were usually at increased risk for harassment or questioning in bathrooms than someone who had been transitioning for a while/more easily passed.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Sense of community was defined as participants' perceptions of whether there is a group of people on campus that they feel a part of, regardless of whether that group was intentionally formed by the campus or has developed organically. Participants discussed several different types of actions that contributed to a sense of community on campus for transgender people. These included: (a) acknowledging the unique challenges that transgender and gender non-conforming people face on campus-- including being willing to admit when mistakes were made that negatively impact transgender people and not simply blaming transgender individuals for the problems they face on campus; (b) checking in with a person about the correct name and pronouns to use when addressing them; (c) knowing that allies are already educating themselves on transgender issues and are taking action steps to make campus more inclusive; (d) knowing at least one safe individual on campus to approach for support; and (e) being asked by others about how people can best be allies. Some participants also spoke of ways that their sense of community on campus was negatively impacted by the actions of others. Actions that detracted from the sense of community on campus included: (a) campus members' lack of acknowledgment or reflection on how trans individuals face unique challenges; (b) in-fighting between campus groups, particularly those focused on LGBTQ communities; (c) campus members' assumptions about a person's pronouns or identity; and, (d) a lack of support for individuals' other intersectional identities (race, ethnicity, disabilities, etc.).

Several individuals said it was very helpful when there were some staff or faculty who were very visible and/or "out" as transgender (or even LGB) while on campus, while a smaller subset of participants said that simply knowing other trans people on campus was *not* enough to feel part of a community on campus. Other participants described how they knew very few people who were transgender or gender non-conforming, and this made it harder to feel welcomed and at home on campus. A few individuals described how a smaller campus meant that they had stronger relationships and others understood their needs better than would have occurred on a very large campus. Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals on commuter campuses were more likely to express that they felt a lack of community.

Another factor was the overall campus culture and diversity of the student body—some participants reported that a lack of diversity on a variety of cultural axes made them tentative to express themselves, while others noted that what was more important was the overall openness or culture of the campus. Campus or departmental leadership was also noted to have an effect on one's sense of community on campus—for example, the presence of a dean who prioritized multicultural inclusivity and called for greater recruitment of trans people had a positive impact

on a trans person's feelings of belonging. Feeling a sense of community also had a connection to an individual's academic division or work setting—when this setting did not encourage a lot of interaction or community-building, participants were less likely to feel well-connected.

Several participants discussed some examples of feeling welcomed and being supported within the LGBTQ community on campus. Other participants felt that major issues within the campus LGBTQ community or the lack of inclusion of transgender people (or other marginalized groups) proved to be a problem and detracted from community.

SUMMARY: OUTCOMES

The third major over-arching theme within this research project focused on outcomes—the specific consequences a transgender or gender non-conforming person experiences at that college or university based upon that campus' actions (or lack of actions). Our data detail both positive and negative outcomes, representing two continua: (a) from inclusion to exclusion of transgender and gender non-conforming people on campus, and (b) from visibility to invisibility of this population. These outcomes suggest specific areas that universities can change to foster greater inclusion and greater visibility.

The evidence from this project suggests that transgender and gender non-conforming people at Colorado universities and colleges experienced the outcomes of inclusion or exclusion in a variety of dimensions of campus life. These dimensions included: (a) the university's or department's values, mission statement, or general culture; (b) curricula, classrooms, trainings, and workshop content; (c) campus LGBTQ groups and other LGBTQ-specific initiatives; (d) staff members' areas of competency, knowledge, and expertise; (e) processes and spaces that group people by gender, classify everyone as male or female, or ignore or refuse to use a person's correct name, gender, and pronouns; (f) advocacy efforts and institutional policies; (g) the words and actions of university leaders and their stated priorities; (h) intake processes, forms, and applications; and (i) employment settings.

Outcomes of visibility and/or invisibility were found to occur in the following areas of campus life: (a) campus programs and organizations, including LGBTQ organizations; (b) the presence of other transgender and gender non-conforming people in the campus population; (c) university policies; (d) campus records about one's identity; (e) curricula/trainings; (f) the presence or absence of allies, advocates, and trans-competent individuals on campus; and (g) the availability of gender-neutral bathrooms.

ACTION STEPS

While much of this report has revealed the many ways that transgender and gender non-conforming people face barriers, discrimination, transphobia, and violence on campus, the

stories of the 30 individuals interviewed for this project also reveal innumerable ways that colleges and universities in Colorado (and beyond) can take concrete actions to better include and affirm transgender and gender non-conforming people and to welcome their presence on campus. We have organized these suggested action steps into general areas of campus life that are often relevant for colleges and universities, regardless of size or geographic location.

ACADEMICS AND STUDENT SERVICES

- During student orientation, include programming, training, or additional support on trans-related topics to incoming students of all genders.
- Encourage and support faculty in developing pedagogical practices that bring transgender issues and voices into the classroom without the tokenization of trans people and without forcing individuals to disclose trans status; at the same time, encourage and challenge cisgender people to educate themselves on content about the transgender community.
- Have standard rules in place about whether forms of identification (ID cards, driver's licenses, etc.) are required to take exams, receive campus services, etc.
- Establish procedures for students and faculty to report instances of hateful language or behavior in the classroom that targets transgender and gender non-conforming individuals or other identity groups so that such situations are addressed quickly and effectively.
- Support and recognize faculty efforts to infuse content about the transgender community and issues related to gender identity and gender expression in classroom curricula and syllabi.
- If there are on-campus staff who are familiar and competent in working with transgender people, advertise and *promote* these individuals' expertise across campus.

STUDENT, STAFF, & FACULTY ORGANIZATIONS ON CAMPUS

- Realize that not all transgender and gender non-conforming people will feel welcome or be willing to participate in LGBTQ groups and programming. Ensure that these groups create a welcoming environment for transgender people and include some focus on topics and issues relevant to transgender and gender non-conforming people. If the campus does not have a transgender-specific campus organization, find ways to offer occasional guest lectures, discussion groups, or other activities about this population and to refer people to applicable community resources.
- Work on increasing inclusion of the "T" in LGBTQ campus organizations and offices in terms of awareness, programming and commitment.

- Create trans-specific campus organizations, academic programs, library resources, support groups, and scholarships, all of which can help support trans individuals, retain them, and ensure their success.
- Offer some transgender-related campus programming that is uplifting and light-hearted, rather than depressing, serious, or overtly political.
- Advertise, advertise, advertise! Communicate, in multiple ways, about resources that exist for transgender and gender non-conforming campus members.
- Offer trans-related programming on campus, and ensure these events are widely publicized. Improve these programs by making sure to ask for preferred gender pronouns at trainings and other small group events, incorporate the transgender community in broader conversations about gender-related violence on campus, offer transgender awareness-raising events such as conferences, and adequately fund LGBTQ initiatives. Realize that some transgender individuals may not access or research such programs, but they are nevertheless important to increasing visibility.

CAMPUS HOUSING & BATHROOM FACILITIES

- Offer gender-blind housing options. Ask all housing applicants to designate level of interest in and/or openness to LGBTQ roommates; allow housing applicants to designate if they would prefer sharing a room/floor with women, men, or both. Have alternate housing options for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals who, for safety reasons, would rather not have a roommate (e.g., single-occupancy dorm rooms; off-campus housing options).
- Have some bathrooms designated as gender-inclusive (especially within on-campus housing), and emphasizing appropriate behaviors rather than appropriate gender in bathroom use policies.
- Develop a map of campus that points out where there are single-stall and gender-neutral bathrooms in each building. This map could be distributed at orientations, workshops on trans issues, and at LGBTQ and multicultural offices or other settings that receive a lot of traffic from the general campus population.

ON-CAMPUS HEALTH CARE & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Provide a list of trans-competent health care providers who are located either on campus and in the community.
- Offer regular trainings and continuing education to campus staff, particularly health care providers, on working with transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.
- Make sure all staff respectfully honor a patient's gender identity (e.g., on medical records, on the phone, in the doctor's office, or in the waiting room).

- Advocate for the patient by working around bureaucratic hurdles that do not recognize gender fluidity (e.g., writing the patient's preferred gender and/or name in pencil on the patient's file, even if it cannot be formally changed in records; writing a carry letter for the patient).
- Think logistically about what issues may arise for patients who are gender non-conforming, are transitioning, and/or have changed their name and gender marker since previous visits to the health center and how these issues may affect patient care.
- Make mental health care services available, accessible, and affordable to gender non-conforming individuals. If a competent mental health provider for transgender and gender non-conforming people is not available at the university health center, then on-campus staff need to be able to refer clients to competent off-campus providers.

ATHLETICS

- Encourage and respect the athletic involvement of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals in collegiate sports. Research the policies of national/regional sports association in regards to the involvement of transgender athletes and those who are undergoing hormone therapy (such as injections of testosterone) and decide whether the college will have its own policy.
- Challenge transphobic rules and regulations of larger athletic associations in which the university or college participates.

EMPLOYMENT

- Create a campus culture and system of campus policies that support and welcome "out" transgender employees and students. Have policies that prohibit punishing an employee or student for being "out" and visible as transgender or gender non-conforming. At the same time, respect that it is an individual's choice of whether or not to be "out" and to disclose their gender identity.
- Ensure that the work environment for campus staff and faculty supports people of all genders and welcomes people to be themselves on the job; this may involve establishing policies that prohibit discrimination in hiring, promotion, firing, and tenure based upon a person's gender identity or gender expression, as well as offering regular trainings to campus staff about respecting gender diversity in the workplace.
- Recruit university leaders who desire to be advocates for the transgender and gender non-conforming population and are willing and able to speak publicly to the challenges faced by transgender and gender non-conforming students, staff, and faculty, and push the campus to take action to improve outcomes for this population.

- Make targeted efforts to recruit faculty and staff personnel who are experienced and specially trained to provide support to transgender people or who focus on this population as part of their research or teaching.
- Offer incentives for staff and faculty to go through trainings that increase competence for working with transgender people and to volunteer to be visible allies/mentors to transgender people on campus.
- Make targeted efforts to better recruit, support, and retain staff and faculty who have androgynous or other gender non-conforming presentations and ensure that they thrive on campus.
- Train staff and supervisors about how to support and respect transgender and gender non-conforming colleagues, students, and faculty, as well as situations when it is appropriate and not appropriate to share personal information about an employee with other staff, including information about medical transitions and previous names/genders.
- Ask new and current staff to indicate preferred names and pronouns for use in the workplace. Recognize that some individuals may have different preferences for different settings (e.g., work vs. personal life) and that some people may prefer non-binary pronouns such as they/them/theirs.
- Before conducting a background check on new hires, provide them with a “sample” background check so that they can anticipate the kind of information that may be shared with the university, including previously used names and gender markers.

FINANCIAL AID & BUDGETARY SUPPORTS

- Create scholarships and grants that support transgender and gender non-conforming students and encourage their retention and success.
- Develop internal funding mechanisms to support faculty who wish to research topics related to gender identity, gender expression, and the transgender community.
- Create budgetary supports for transgender-related organizations and programming as part of campus efforts to affirm and welcome transgender people within a diverse campus community.

GENERAL CAMPUS (INCLUDING IT SYSTEMS, ADMINISTRATION, POLICIES)

- During initial interactions with potential students, staff, and faculty, communicate that transgender individuals are welcome on the campus—some key opportunities for communicating this commitment include during student admissions interviews, job interviews, orientation sessions, and campus tours, when individuals call the campus to inquire about housing or student services, and on promotional materials and university websites.

- Acknowledge and value the variety of gender identities and gender expressions that campus members hold, including those identities and expressions that are fluid or differ by setting. Evaluate how to best design campus forms to respect sex and gender diversity. Coordinate campus information systems so that there is an easy, one-stop place for changing a person's name and/or gender marker across all campus records. Have consistent rules about what documents (if any) are required to change one's name and/or gender marker on campus records, regardless of whether someone identifies as transgender;
- Emphasize everyone's right to self-determination, which includes the right to be addressed with one's preferred name and pronouns. Check in with people about the correct name and pronouns to use when addressing them. If others use an incorrect name or pronoun in addressing someone, correct them in a way that is direct but does not make a big deal or draw unnecessary attention to a gender non-conforming or transgender person.
- Establish a means for campus members to seek support and redress in situations of blatant discrimination and transphobia, whether in the classroom, dormitory, work environment, or other setting. Have clear procedures about the consequences of unethical or disrespectful actions by community members and widely distribute information about who should be contacted in cases of harassment, name and gender marker change requests, and discrimination.
- Widely distribute information about university policies related to nondiscrimination, housing, bathroom access, domestic partner benefits, and health insurance coverage at orientations, diversity trainings, LGBTQ offices and organizations, and other aspects of campus with which most individuals will interact.
- Inform and educate staff about when it is relevant to share information about an individual's change of name or gender within campus systems. Train staff who use campus information systems about how name and gender change requests should be processed and displayed in campus systems.
- Make sure that your campus has visible allies—students, staff, and/or faculty who are trained on working with transgender people and are willing to be a support system for this population on campus. Create a way for allies, advocates, and trans-competent campus staff to communicate and advertise their presence to others—whether through a listserv, a formal mentor or resource network for transgender people, or through a resource list made available in multiple settings on campus.
- Disseminate information broadly to administrators about the experiences and risks faced by trans people in campus settings and how administrative actions and decisions impact this population.
- Offer frequent trainings on transgender issues to students, staff, faculty, and campus police.

- Have a point-person (or a team of people) designated as “advocates” for trans-identified campus members who can help them navigate the university bureaucracy and problem-solve issues that arise.
- Develop a well-rounded multicultural mission that ensures that students, staff, and faculty from other marginalized groups (people of color, first generation college students, people with disabilities, etc.) can find support and belonging on campus. Increasing support for these initiatives can contribute to the sense of community for gender different people, especially those who are marginalized in other aspects of their identities beyond gender.
- Recognize that people in different points in their transition, with varying identities and degrees of outness, will need and utilize different types of campus resources.
- Acknowledge the unique challenges that transgender and gender non-conforming people face. Be willing to admit when mistakes are made that negatively impact transgender people, rather than blaming transgender individuals for the problems they face on campus.
- Educate yourself about transgender issues and the frequent needs of transgender and gender non-conforming people on college campuses and take action steps to make the campus more inclusive of this population. Take these steps regardless of whether you know of a transgender or gender non-conforming person on campus.
- Provide the space and opportunity for transgender and gender non-conforming people to offer suggestions for ways the campus can be improved. Have at least one method for providing feedback that is anonymous.
- Be mindful of campus and departmental factors that may make it more difficult for transgender individuals and others to build community. These factors might include being a primarily commuter campus or a student body that is not particularly diverse, having an administrator who does not prioritize multicultural issues, or how a particular department’s focus on professional skills may leave little time for relationship building among students. Problem-solve ways to address the lack of community, such as initiating some student groups, creating a study lounge or meeting room that can be used for socializing, prioritizing administrative candidates who emphasize diversity, or offering a mentorship program for students of color or students from marginalized groups.
- Identify campus policies that need to be changed to better support transgender and gender non-conforming individuals, including nondiscrimination policies, domestic partner benefits, health insurance coverage for transition-related care, gender violence prevention, etc.;
- Incorporate these activities alongside other efforts to promote inclusivity based upon race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, disability status, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, etc., particularly because many people within the transgender community belong to other marginalized groups as well.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was designed to address the need for detailed information about transgender and gender non-conforming individuals' experiences within institutions of higher education in Colorado as part of an effort to further the work of Colorado Trans on Campus Coalition to increase the inclusivity of colleges and universities in this state. We specifically chose to have a sample that included trans-identified staff and faculty, as well as students, because of the sheer lack of information about staff and faculty in the scholarship—and so this project adds useful data about these subgroups that have not been previously captured by other researchers. This project was also designed to collect qualitative data as a way to capture the depth and nuance of each individuals' trajectory at a college or university; because of this qualitative focus, we used a purposive sample, meaning that the data gathered cannot be generalized to either all transgender individuals or all trans-identified students, staff, and faculty in Colorado or other states. This is a limitation of the current project and something to consider when deciding whether findings are applicable to other universities and colleges.

Some areas that were not able to be explored through this research and are potential directions for future research include:

- The experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals on rural or semi-rural campuses. (All campuses represented within this project are within urban zip codes, as classified by the 2000 U.S. Census.)
- Quantitative studies of trans-identified students, staff, and faculty across multiple campuses.
- Studies with samples of trans-identified students, staff, and faculty that involve larger proportions of people of color, people with disabilities, or international respondents.
- Comparisons of the experiences of trans-identified students who are of traditional college age with students who are of non-traditional age.

A full copy of the final report can be found at <http://portfolio.du.edu/ewalls2>.

If you have any questions about the report, you may send them to Eugene.Walls@du.edu.