

# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDE



AUGUSTANA  
UNIVERSITY

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# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE AND THE AUGUSTANA COMMUNITY

As an institution whose goal is to develop and maintain a campus culture in which diversity is valued and all members of the campus community feel welcomed, supported and included and are actively engaged, this inclusive language guide was created to support this effort.

The usage of inclusive language fosters a community of inclusion and respect while dismantling systems of exclusion, bias and ignorance. While this guide is meant to be as updated and as timely as possible, it is important to remember that language associated with the below terms can be sensitive and is always changing as societal views change and groups choose to redefine their own identities. Allow this guide to be one of many resources you use to continue your intercultural development as an Augustana community member.

## THE BASICS

### DIVERSITY

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and it recognizes our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

### EQUITY

Equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful. Equity refers to proportional representation (by race, class, gender, etc.) in those same opportunities. To achieve equity, policies and procedures may result in an unequal distribution of resources.

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## INCLUSION

Inclusion involves bringing together and harnessing diverse forces and resources in a way that is beneficial. Inclusion puts the concept and practice of diversity into action by creating an environment of involvement, respect and connection – where the richness of ideas, backgrounds and perspectives are harnessed to create business value and overall success. Inclusion is empowerment.

## SYSTEMICALLY MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

Systemically marginalized communities refers to membership outside of the dominant group within systems of oppression. Systems of oppression are created to provide benefits and assets for members of specific groups. The recipient groups are referred to as dominant groups because such advantages grant impacting levels of power, privilege and status within social, economic and political infrastructures of a society.



## FAITH & RELIGION

**Affirming Congregation:** Congregations, usually Christian churches, that welcome LGBTQ people.

**Agnostic:** A person who holds the belief that a greater entity or existence of deities is unknown or unknowable.

**Antisemitism:** Hatred or fear of Jewish people.

**Atheist:** A person who believes that there are no deities.

**Halal:** Refers to food that is compliant with Islamic law.

**Hijab:** Various types of cloth head coverings sometimes worn by Muslim women in public.

**Interfaith:** Involving people of different faiths.

**Koran:** The sacred book in Islam.

**Kosher:** Food made and eaten in compliance with Jewish law.

**Religious Accommodation:** Augustana provides reasonable accommodation for classes or work that conflicts with religious observance upon notice. Learn more at [augie.edu/diversity](http://augie.edu/diversity).

## GENDER & SEXUALITY

**Ally:** A (typically straight and/or cisgender) person who supports and respects members of the LGBTQ community. To be a good LGBTQ ally means that a person is engaged in an ongoing process to (1) understand their own privilege and its effects (2) listen to and learn from those who are most affected by homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, heteronormativity and heterosexism (3) work in solidarity with those most affected by injustice (4) and foster climates of respect, appreciation and equity for diverse genders, sexualities, communities, cultures and histories.

**Agender:** A person with no (or very little) connection to the traditional system of gender, no personal alignment with the concepts of either man or woman and/or someone who sees themselves as existing without gender; sometimes called gender neutrois, gender neutral or genderless.

**Asexual:** A term used as both a self-description and a means to describe those who do not experience sexual attraction and/or lack interest in sex.

**Cisgender:** Someone who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth. If someone assigned “female,” is raised as a girl, and identifies as a girl/woman, then she is cisgender.

**Feminism:** Feminism advocates social, political, economic and intellectual equality for all genders. Feminism means very different things to different people and there are many types of feminism.

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# GENDER & SEXUALITY

**Gender Expression:** The physical manifestation of gender through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc. Most people make their expression match their identity (who they are) rather than their sex assigned at birth.

**Gender Identity vs. Sex Assigned at Birth:**

Gender is the internal sense of being a woman, man, neither, both or another gender. Everyone has a gender identity. Sex assigned at birth is a classification of female, male, or intersex based off anatomy, chromosomes and hormones. Sex does not define gender.

**Gender Neutral/Gender Inclusive:** Spaces and language that do not describe a specific gender. For example, gender neutral bathrooms can be used by anyone regardless of gender.

**Genderqueer:** Someone whose gender identity or expression is neither man nor woman, is between, beyond or some combination of genders.

**Heteronormative:** A world view that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation. *Example: When noticing a wedding ring on a female's hand and asking about her husband.*

**Heterosexism:** A form of bias and discrimination that favors people who are exclusively romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex/gender.

**Intersex:** A general term used for someone who is born with a variation in their anatomy, chromosomes or hormones that doesn't fit the typical definitions of female or male. Hermaphrodite should not be used as a synonym.

**LGBTQ/LGBTIQ:** Stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer. The acronym sometimes includes Asexual, Intersex, Questions, Ally, Unidentified or Genderqueer.

**Misogyny & Transmisogyny:** Misogyny is a general hatred and hostility towards women. Transmisogyny is the same hatred, but targeted at transfeminine people.

**Nonbinary:** Identities that are not defined along the male/female binary. Nonbinary people may feel that they exist as both, neither or a mix of identities.

**Outing:** A term used to describe the act of exposing someone, without their consent, as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex or questioning; in essence "outing" them from the closet. It is considered disrespectful and potentially harmful to "out" someone who has not given their consent to do so.

**Pansexual:** A person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions; often shortened to "pan."

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## GENDER & SEXUALITY

**Pronouns:** Gendered pronouns include she/her and he/him. Gender neutral pronouns include the singular they/them and ze/hir. Many other pronouns exist as well. If unsure of someone's pronouns, simply ask, "What are your pronouns?"

**Queer:** A reclaimed term used to self-identify as part of the LGBTQ community. Not everyone uses this term as it can be used as a slur. Consider context before using this term.

**Romantic Attraction:** An emotional connection to another individual that often involves desire to be in a romantic relationship. Sexual attraction is not a requirement.

**Sexual Orientation:** The direction of one's erotic attraction. Asexuality (lack of sexual attraction) is also an orientation.

**Title IX:** Protects people from sex-based discrimination in educational programs or activities which receive federal financial assistance.

**Transgender:** Someone who does not identify as the gender they were assigned at birth. Transvestite or transsexual should not be used as a synonym.

**Two Spirit:** An umbrella term traditionally used within Native American communities to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both feminine and masculine genders.

## AMERICAN INDIAN

**Anpetu Waste:** Good day.

**Hau Kola:** Hello, friend!

**Hau** (how): Hello!

**Land Acknowledgement:**

Acknowledgment is a simple, powerful way of showing respect and a step toward correcting the stories and practices that erase Indigenous people's history and culture and toward inviting and honoring the truth. It is commonplace to open events and gatherings by acknowledging the traditional Indigenous inhabitants of that land.

**Mitakuaye Oyasin:** A phrase from the Lakota language. It reflects the worldview of interconnectedness held by the Lakota people of North America. This concept and phrase is expressed in many Yankton Sioux prayers, as well as by ceremonial people in other Lakota communities. The phrase translates in English as "all my relatives," "we are all related" or "all my relations." It is a prayer of oneness and harmony with all forms of life: other people, animals, birds, insects, trees, plants and even rocks, rivers, mountains and valleys.

**Pilamaya** (pee la ma ya): Thank you!

**Wakan:** Powerful; sacred.



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# SAFETY

**Clery Act:** The federal law that requires colleges and universities to disclose information about crime on and around campus. Find Augustana's information at [augie.edu/annual-safety-and-security-report](http://augie.edu/annual-safety-and-security-report).

**Consent:** A mutual, enthusiastic agreement to engage in any sexual activity. Partners can revoke consent at any time. Consent cannot be legally given while intoxicated.

**Crisis Hotline:** A number to call when in crisis run by trained volunteers. Some lines serve specific groups, like transgender people, rape survivors, veterans, etc.

**Helpline Center:** Suicide prevention and crisis support, information and support – whether financial, family, health or disaster-related. [helplinecenter.org/](http://helplinecenter.org/).

**Green Dot:** Any behavior, choice, word or attitude that promotes safety and communicates intolerance for rape, sexual assault, relationship violence, child abuse and stalking.

**Rape:** According to the U.S. Department of Justice, “penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without consent of the victim.”

**Rape Culture:** A culture in which sexual assault is common and maintained by attitudes about sexuality and violence. Rape culture is perpetuated through the use of misogynistic language, objectification of women's bodies and glamorization of sexual violence, thereby creating a society that disregards women's rights and safety.

*Examples:*

*“boys will be boys”*

*sexually explicit jokes*

*assuming men don't get raped*

*teaching women to avoid getting raped,*

*instead of teaching men not to rape*

**Sexual Assault:** Any unwanted sexual contact or threat.

**Survivor/Victim:** Debated terms focused on how to identify those who experience crime, usually sexual assault. Some use survivor as a way to empower those who have lived through an experience, while others believe it should be a chosen title.

**Title IX:** Protects people from sex-based discrimination in educational programs or activities which receive federal financial assistance; includes all forms of sexual misconduct such as harassment, non-consensual contact, rape and exploitation. Find out more about Augustana's Title IX Policy and Processes at [augie.edu/student-life/dean-students-office/title-ix-policy-and-process](http://augie.edu/student-life/dean-students-office/title-ix-policy-and-process).



# SAFETY

**Victim Blaming:** When a victim is held responsible, even partially, for a crime. Make sure to affirm survivors and avoid blaming statements.

*Examples:*

*“Why didn’t you fight back?”*

*“Look what they were*

*wearing/drinking/doing, they were clearly asking for it.”*

*“They went back to her place after flirting all night? What did they expect?”*

# ABILITY

**Ableism:** Discrimination or prejudice, whether intentional or unintentional, against persons with disabilities.

**Accommodation:** A modification, whether in the classroom or workplace, that ensures that a person with a disability can participate on a “level playing field” as those without disabilities.

**Accessible:** Accessible spaces and programs are made to be inclusive of persons with disabilities, and generally don’t require accommodations.

**Disability:** A physical or mental condition that affects major life activities.

**Person First Language:** It is important to use person first language when speaking about persons with disabilities. Person first language, such as saying “person with a disability” rather than using expressions like “handicapped” or “challenged,” emphasizes that the person is more important than the disability.

**Person on the Autism Spectrum:** Refers to a person who identifies as having a form of autism or Asperger syndrome. Some persons on the spectrum prefer to say “autistic person.”

**Person with a Cognitive or Intellectual Disability:** Refers to people with various disabilities affecting the brain. This broad category includes, for example, people with ADHD and people with Dyslexia. Many of these disabilities are also referred to as “learning disabilities.”

**Person with a Hearing Disability:** Refers to a person who has a disability affecting hearing. Some people with hearing disabilities, particularly those who speak sign language, prefer the term “deaf person” and view their disability as a cultural identity.

**Person with a Physical Disability:** A general term which refers to people with various disabilities affecting functions of the body.





# ABILITY

## **Person with a Psychiatric Disability:**

Refers to a person with a disability that involves emotional and/or psychological issues. Examples can include people with anxiety disorders and depression. It is important to use this term rather than saying “mentally ill” or “mental illness.”

**Person with a Vision Disability:** Refers to a person with low vision or who is blind. Many people who are blind see their disability as a cultural identity and actually prefer to call themselves “blind.”

**Wheelchair User:** Refers to a person who uses a wheelchair for mobility. It is important to use this term rather than saying a person is “wheelchair bound” or “confined to a wheelchair.”

# RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONAL ORIGIN

**Color Blind:** This term originated from civil rights legislation, but is currently used by those who oppose race-conscious policies like affirmative action, to argue that race does not and should not matter in decision making. It is also used to mean that one does not “see” race. This can be disempowering for people whose racial identity is an important part of who they are.



**Cultural Appropriation:** Taking and benefiting from the expression, ideas and artifacts of another culture without permission; often done by the dominant culture.

**Immigrant:** A person who moves to another country usually for permanent residence. They may or may not be citizens. It is very important to refrain from using the word “alien.”

**International:** Relating to two or more nations. Augustana currently has more than 130 international students.

**Multiracial:** Representing various races or a person whose parents are of different races or ethnicities.

**Person of Color:** An umbrella term for anyone who is non-white. Colored is considered offensive although some individuals still prefer it. “Ethnic” and “urban” are considered to be terms with negative undertones and are not synonymous.

**Racism:** The belief that there are inherent differences between racial groups, regarding one’s own group – usually the dominant as superior with the authority to dominate others.

**Undocumented:** Anyone residing in any given country without legal documentation.

**Xenophobia:** A fear or hatred of strangers or foreigners.



## RESOURCES

### **Augie Access**

[augie.edu/augieaccess](http://augie.edu/augieaccess) — 605.274.4926

### **Accessibility**

[augie.edu/student-success](http://augie.edu/student-success) — 605.274.4127

### **Chapel of Reconciliation**

[augie.edu/chapel-reconciliation](http://augie.edu/chapel-reconciliation) — 605.274.5403

### **Counseling Services**

[augie.edu/counseling-services](http://augie.edu/counseling-services) — 605.334.2696

### **Department of Campus Safety**

[augie.edu/student-life/department-campus-safety](http://augie.edu/student-life/department-campus-safety) — 605.274.4014

### **Gender and Sexuality Alliance**

[gsa@ole.augie.edu](mailto:gsa@ole.augie.edu) — 605.274.4041

### **Title IX Reporting**

[augie.edu/incident-report-form](http://augie.edu/incident-report-form) — 605.274.4124

### **Violence Prevention**

[augie.edu/campuslife](http://augie.edu/campuslife) — 605.274.4124

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