INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Writing Support Desk

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About this Workshop

This Workshop is an overview and not all encompassing.

This Workshop will be outdated: Language changes!

Language is a habit.

Language is the first step in showing care.

Overall, it is important to Focus on the agency of the peoples involved!

WHAT IS INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE?

- **Language that does not exclude or other individuals or groups**
- **Language that does not perpetuate discrimination or stereotypes**
- **Language that strives for equity & to avoid harm**

WHY USE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE?

- **Language is powerful. It not only describes but can perpetuate and create our realities.**
- **Inclusive language demonstrates respect for others.**
- **UWindsor is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion.**

Who determines inclusivity?

Inclusivity is a practice, not a system of rules.

Individuals and their communities determine the language used to describe themselves.

Sometimes, people use "person-first language."

Other times, people use "identity-first language."

(We'll get into more details in the next section)

Focus on the agency of the individual or groups you are interacting with or writing about.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

RESPECT

- **Respect an individual or group's language preferences to describe themselves and their experiences.**
- **These preferences may vary between individuals within groups and communities.**

RECOGNIZE

- **A term that may be appropriate as a member of a group may not be appropriate for use by someone who is not in that group.**

REMEMBER

- **Groups of people are diverse in their experiences. Avoid describing people or experiences as monolithic.**

RE-LEARN

- **Language is constantly changing, so be open to learning new inclusive language standards.**

GENERAL INCLUSIVITY TIPS

BE INCLUSIVE

- **Do not assume that your audience has the same background or experiences as you.**
- **Recognize and respect the diversity of your audience**

BE CURRENT

- **Seek to use the most current language and information.**
- **If you aren't sure, do some research and find out**

BE RELEVANT

- **Don't focus on a person's race, ethnicity, religion or spiritual beliefs, disability, sexuality, or gender identity if these are not relevant to your writing.**
- **This does not mean erasing these aspects of someone's identity, but consider if there is a need to mention these identifiers.**

Using Older Source Material

You may come across older texts that use outdated or inappropriate terms and language conventions in your research.

When using these sources, ask yourself if the problematic term(s) are relevant or necessary to your analysis. If not, omit them.

Sources that use outdated generalizations (e.g., 'Oriental") should be refined and specified in your writing.

Remember, your works should always subscribe the guidelines and rules of the most up-to-date style guide used by your discipline.

On Making a Mistake

Mistakes happen. However, there are some good practices that can help you manage the situation with respect:

- **If you make a mistake and realize it, just quickly say "sorry," followed by the proper term and continue the conversation.**

- **If you mess up and someone tells you after. Thank them, apologize, and try to fix it going forward.**

- **If you continue to make the same mistakes, try getting used to the new words through practicing usage.**

- **We all mess up!**

Disability & Mental Illnesses

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Disability & Mental Illnesses

Race & Ethnicity

Disability and Mental Illnesses

Inclusive language aims to reduce ableist language from everyday speech.

What is Ableism?

- **A belief system that sees persons with disabilities as "less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate, or of less inherent value than others."**

- **Can be conscious or unconscious.**

- **Can be systemic.**

- **"can limit opportunities of persons with disabilities and reduce their inclusion in the life of their communities."**

Definition https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-ableism-and-discrimination-based-disability/2-what-disability

PERSON-FIRST VS. IDENTITY-FIRST LANGUAGE

PERSON-FIRST LANGUAGE

- a person with epilepsy
- a person with a learning disability
- a person with diabetes
- a person with schizophrenia

- **Different individuals, groups, and communities may have different preferences for person-first vs. identity-first language**
- **Person-first language emphasizes the person before the disability or chronic condition**
- **Some suggest that this type of language separates the person from the disability or implies that disability is negative**

PERSON-FIRST VS. IDENTITY-FIRST LANGUAGE

IDENTITY-FIRST LANGUAGE

an amputee

a blind person

a Deaf person

an autistic person

- Identity-first language forefronts the disability, often as an act of reclamation or personal/cultural pride
- Individuals within communities may vary in their preference for identity-first vs. person-first (ex. in the autism community)
- Always check with individuals if possible for preferences
- APA 7 allows both as appropriate

LANGUAGE & DISABILITY

- **Not all disabilities may be visible**
- **Avoid tropes implying that people with disabilities are 'inspiring' or exceptional because of their disabilities**
- **Ensure that content is accessible by following the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), including alt text for images and captioning for audio.**

LANGUAGE & DISABILITY

- **Avoid using common phrases that imply that disability is a problem**
- **Barriers to accessibility are the problem, not disabilities**

AVOID ❌

suffers from MS
is confined to a wheelchair
handicapped parking
able-bodied
crippled

USE ✅

has MS
uses an assistive device
accessible parking
non-disabled
has a physical disability

LANGUAGE & DISABILITY

- **Avoid condescending and offensive terms that have been imposed on the disability community.**
- These terms often imply that having a disability is negative and place the onus for accessibility on the person, not the environment.

AVOID

special/special needs

differently abled/challenged

defect/deformity

normal/abnormal

LANGUAGE & DISABILITY

- **Many commonly used words and expressions are ableist in nature**
- **These terms are often used metaphorically, but many originate in the oppressive treatment of people with disabilities**
- **These terms can unknowingly perpetuate stigmas**

AVOID ❌

that's so lame
that's crazy
this is stupid/idiotic/dumb
insanely talented

USE ✅

that's boring/uncool
that's unexpected/surprising
this is frustrating/pointless/boring
extremely/exceptionally talented

LANGUAGE PREFERENCES

- **Use language preferred by groups and individuals you're communicating with.**
- **While discussing a "visual impairment" may be appropriate, some in the Deaf community consider "hearing impaired" to be offensive.**
- **Note that one person preferring a term does not make that term appropriate or preferable to a whole group.**

AVOID

hearing impaired

victim

USE

Deaf/hard-of-hearing

survivor

Indigenous Peoples

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Land Acknowledgements

- Recognize the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples
- Acknowledge that settlers are on Indigenous lands
- The University of Windsor sits on the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi.

Indigenous Peoples within Canada

- First Nations, Inuit, and Métis
- Avoid using "Canada's Indigenous Peoples"
- Indigenous Peoples (collectively discussing Indigenous Peoples) vs. Indigenous people (more than one Indigenous person)
- Nations are distinct. Reference the specific Nation, community, or band when possible.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Terminology

- **To collectively describe First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in Canada, use Indigenous Peoples.**
- Aboriginal is also generally an appropriate term, but Indigenous is used more universally.
- **Avoid using 'Native American' or 'Indian'.**
- Capitalize Indigenous and Aboriginal just as you would capitalize English or French.

Common Misconceptions

- **Do not confuse Inuit and Inuk. The singular of Inuit is Inuk. Saying Inuit People is redundant (Inuit means people). Their language is Inuktitut.**
  Only use the term Inuit to refer to this group of Indigenous Peoples within Canada and avoid older & offensive terms.
- Do not assume that all Indigenous individuals in the LGBTQ2SIA+ community are Two-Spirit. Two-Spirit individuals may also hold other identities.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- Avoid appropriating cultural terms from Indigenous communities. These have specific meanings that should not be used out of context.

AVOID ❌

we'll have a pow-wow
at the bottom of the totem pole
X is my spirit animal
I found my tribe

USE ✅

we'll have a meeting
at the top/bottom of the hierarchy
I identify with X
I found my community

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- **NorQuest College has produced a guide on citing Indigenous Elders and Oral Traditions in MLA and APA forms**
- **Always learn and follow protocol when contacting and citing Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers**
- **The Four Feathers Writing Guide from Royal Roads University incorporates Coast Salish teachings into academic writing development**

Indigenous Elders & Knowledge Keepers

How to cite Indigenous Elders & Knowledge Keepers

Note: This is an internally developed reference template.

Unlike other personal communications, Elders and Knowledge Keepers are cited in-text and in the reference list. The in-text citation should follow the same guidelines noted for a paraphrase or direct quote:

Name of Elder/Knowledge Keeper with year of communication.

Delores Cardinal described the nature of the... (2018).

OR

The nature of the place was... (Cardinal, 2018).

Note: If you would like to approach an Elder or Knowledge Keeper for teachings, remember to follow protocol or if you are unsure what their protocol is, please ask them ahead of time.

Four Feathers Writing Guide

The *Four Feathers Writing Guide* respectfully presents traditional Coast Salish[1] teachings and approaches to learning to support Indigenous[2] students develop as academic writers. While Coast Salish teachings may not be transferrable across all Indigenous communities, we hope those presented in this guide will create a pathway to academic writing. The teachings and approaches to learning in this guide are shared with permission. The ownership of the Traditional Knowledge remains in perpetuity with the appropriate Nation; accordingly, the information should not be re-used without explicit permission.

We hope the *Four Feathers Writing Guide* will help you to learn more about academic writing. If you are a Royal Roads University student and you have questions or you would like help with your writing, please feel warmly invited to contact the Writing Centre.

Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

LANGUAGE & GENDER

- **Much commonly used language is gendered, even if we do not notice**
- **Using gendered terms and language can exclude people**
- **Use gender-neutral terminology to be inclusive**

AVOID ❌

- mankind
- spokesman
- ladies and gentlemen
- guys

USE ✔

- humankind
- spokesperson
- distinguished guests
- people, friends, folks, all

GENDER IDENTITY

- **Is distinct from sexual orientation**
- **Is each individual's sense of their own gender**
- **Exists on a continuum, not as a binary of male/female**
- **Language should be inclusive of cis, trans, non-binary, Two-Spirit, gender-non-conforming, and all gender-expansive people.**

PRONOUNS, TITLES, & GENDER

- **Singular "they" is grammatically correct when the gender of the subject is unknown or the subject uses they/them pronouns**
- **Pluralizing can also help keep phrases gender neutral**
- **Dr. is a gender-neutral honourific for anyone with a doctorate**
- **Do not assume someone's gender/pronouns/honourific**

AVOID

his/her

each student should choose his classes

Ma'am, Sir, Mr., Mrs., Ms.
(when gender is assumed/unknown)

USE

their

each student should choose their classes
OR students should choose their classes

Dr. (when applicable)
or ask for the appropriate honourific

PRONOUNS, TITLES, & GENDER

- **Always use the correct pronouns identified by an individual. Be aware that they may use neo-pronouns (ex. xe/xem/xyr) or gender-neutral pronouns (they/them)**
- **In research, avoid providing only binary options for participants to declare gender or pronouns**

AVOID ❌

> Select gender: male or female

> Select pronouns:
> he/him, she/her, or they/them

USE ✅

> Write in your gender

> Write in your pronouns

TRANS IS AN ADJECTIVE

- **Using trans as a noun can be dehumanizing (she's a trans)**
- **People are transgender, not transgendered (trans is not a verb)**
- **Trans is an adjective that modifies the noun (for example woman, man, person), not a compound word**

AVOID ❌	USE ✅
he's a trans/transgender	he's a transgender man / trans man
they are transgendered	they are a transgender person
she is a transwoman/trans-woman	she is a trans woman

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- **Is distinct from gender identity**
- **Describes patterns of romantic or sexual attraction**
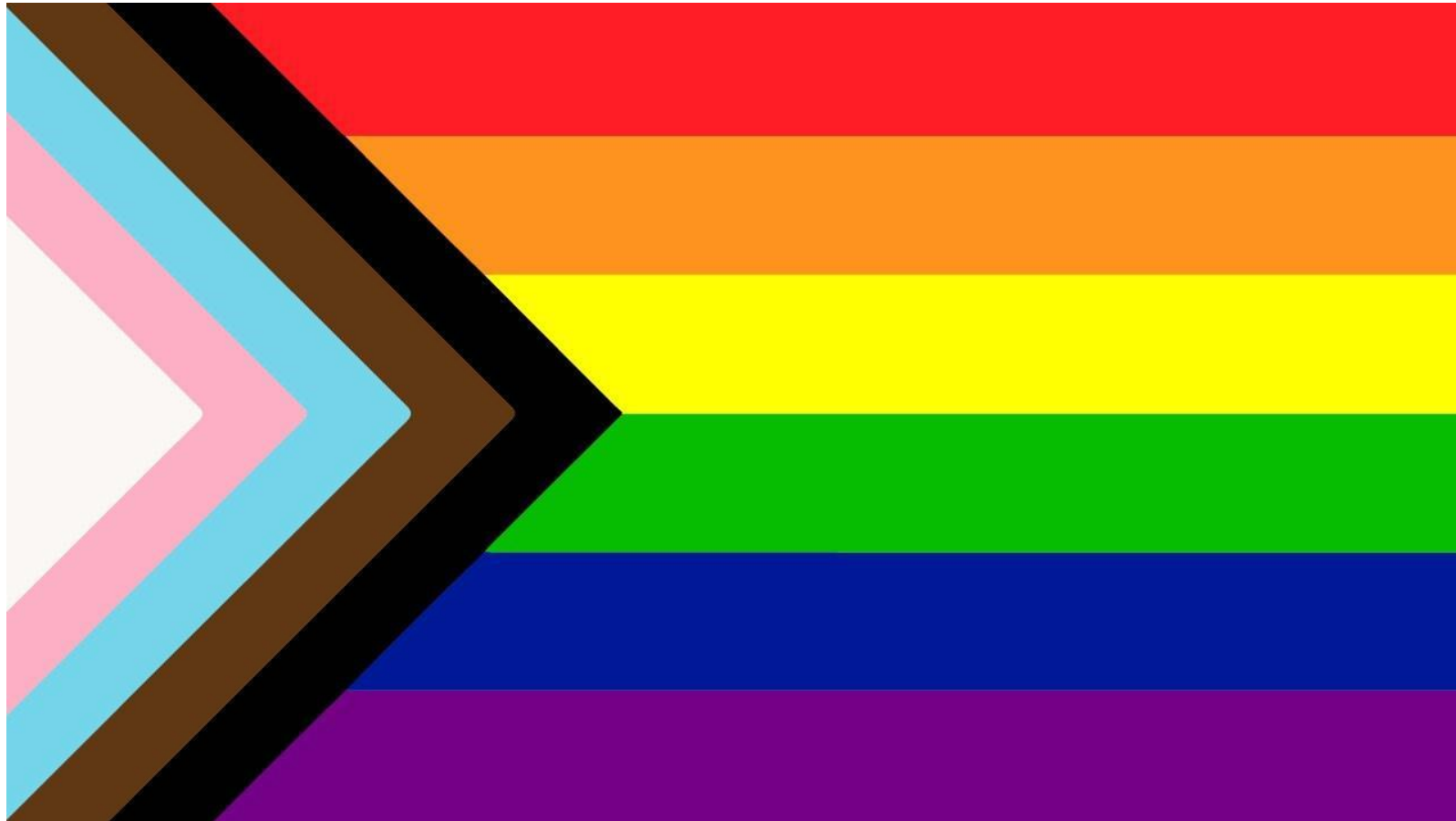
TERMINOLOGY

- Often, an initialization will be used to encompass the rainbow community, but these can differ.
- LGBT has been expanded to be more inclusive. Sometimes shortened versions are used for practicality.
- A + or * symbol may be added to acknowledge orientations and identities outside the letters included.
- These initializations include a range of both sexual orientations AND gender identities.

LGBTQ2SIA+

lesbian	gay	bisexual
transgender	queer & questioning	Two-Spirit
intersex	asexual	+

TERMINOLOGY

- **While the word queer has been reclaimed by many, some do not identify with this term, especially when used by those outside the community**
- **Gay should not be used as a blanket term for all LGBTQ2SIA+ folks**
- **Gay should not be used to mean uncool, bad, or uninteresting**

AVOID ❌

gay marriage
lifestyle/preference
the gay community (unless only discussing gay people)

USE ✅

marriage
sexual orientation
the LGBTQ2SIA+ community/ the rainbow community

Race & Ethnicity

RACE & LANGUAGE

- **Race is a social construct and is mediated by language**
- **Always identify individuals and groups with the terms they choose for themselves**
- **Black and African American or African Canadian are not synonymous**

AVOID ❌	USE ✅
visible minority	racialized person/community
mixed-race people	multiracial people
Oriental	Asian (or specific nationality)

RACE & LANGUAGE

- **Some words have racist origins or call back to racial injustices**
- **These terms are gradually falling out of use and being replaced**

AVOID ❌

grandfather clause
master bedroom
long time no see
no can do
peanut gallery
uppity
sold down the river

USE ✅

legacy clause
primary bedroom
haven't seen you in a while
I cannot do X
critics
snobbish
betrayed

RACE & CAPITALIZATION

- Capitalize proper names of peoples, places, communities, and ethnicities (Arab, Cree, Latine, Jewish, Black, etc.)
- Lower-case black is a colour, not an adjective to describe a person or community. Capitalize Black when it describes people, cultures, and communities of African diaspora.
- There is debate in style guides and newspapers about whether to capitalize white as it refers to a skin colour, not necessarily a culture or community.
- APA style recommends capitalizing both Black and White when they refer to people. The Associated Press does not capitalize white but does capitalize Black.

Other Inclusivity Issues

Some Other Areas of Language to Consider

This Presentation cannot cover each area in depth, and there are many other issues with language use to consider in terms of inclusivity.

- Avoid Ageist Phrases (e.g., geezer," "elderly," "senior," "senile," "old school," etc.)

- Many who have experienced sexual assault prefer to be referred to as survivors rather than victims.

- When discussing suicide, the Government of Canada suggests using person-first language (Person who has died by suicide, Person thinking about suicide, or People who have experienced a suicide attempt) and avoiding problematic language like suicide victim, suicidal, contemplators, attempters. (https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/language-matters-safe-communication-suicide-prevention.html)

- Avoid sizeism and body shaming.

- Generally, avoid discussing someone as a "victim" as many people prefer "survivor".

Style Guides

If you are unsure of specifics related to your discipline, each style guide has notes related to their discipline.
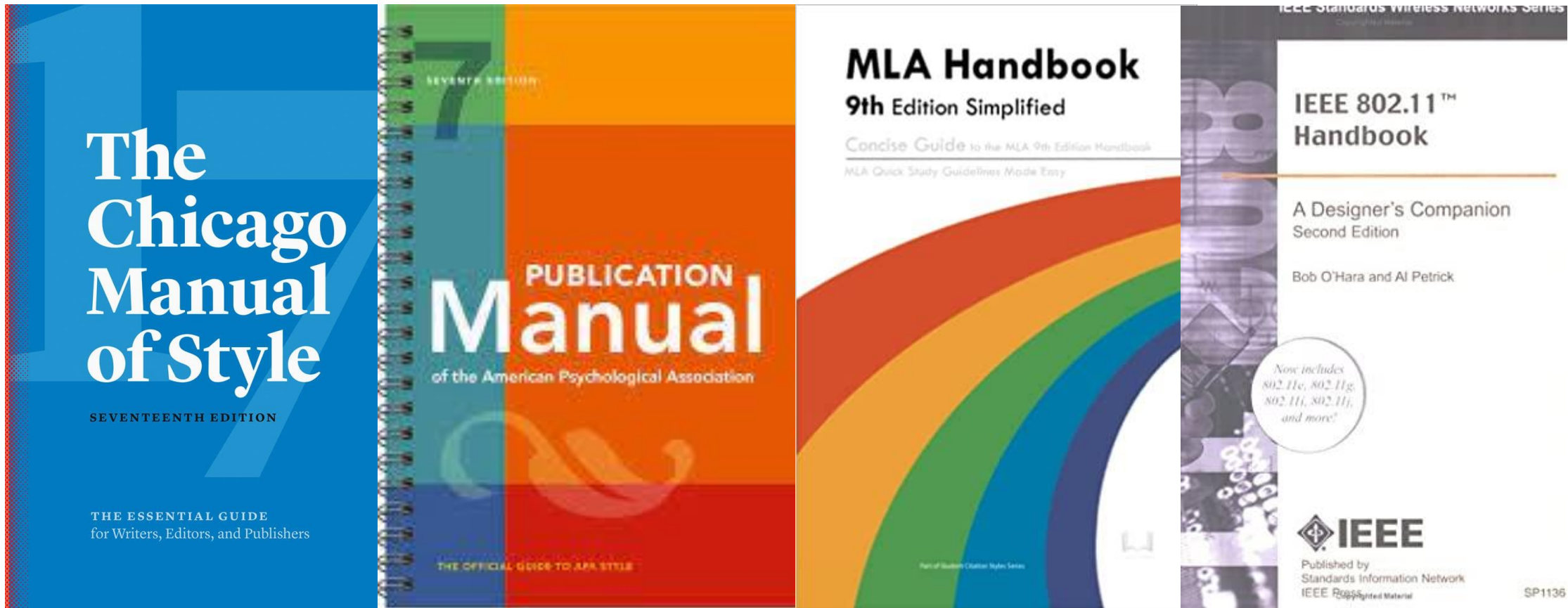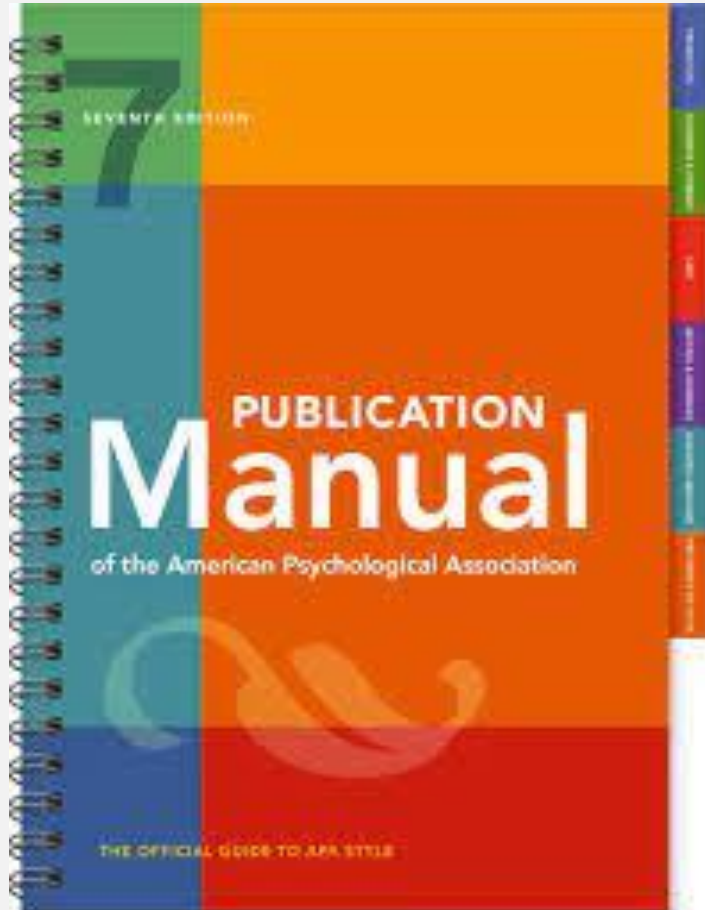
Chicago Style Guide

- Chicago recommends the Conscious Style Guide as a place to explore if you are unsure of terms. This website outlines what might be relevant to understand related to certain areas of language.

- The Chicago Style Guide also outlines some point regarding bias-free language alongside some techniques to ensure gender neutrality:

  - Biased language that is not central to the meaning of the work distracts many readers and makes the work less credible to them.

  - Careful writers avoid language that reasonable readers might find offensive or distracting— unless the biased language is central to the meaning of the writing.

  - Avoid irrelevant references to personal characteristics.

(5.251-5.260 in the Chicago Style Guide)

The Chicago Manual of Style
SEVENTEENTH EDITION

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE
for Writers, Editors, and Publishers

APA Style Guide

- APA's Inclusive Language Guidelines provide outlines and suggestions for language to remove bias and ensure the connection to equity, diversity, and inclusion within writing.

- Their guide has phrases, suggestions related to outdated phrases, definitions related to inclusion, and more on the topic of Inclusive Language.

- If you are unsure of a term, trying searching for it in the webpage below and following APA's guidelines.
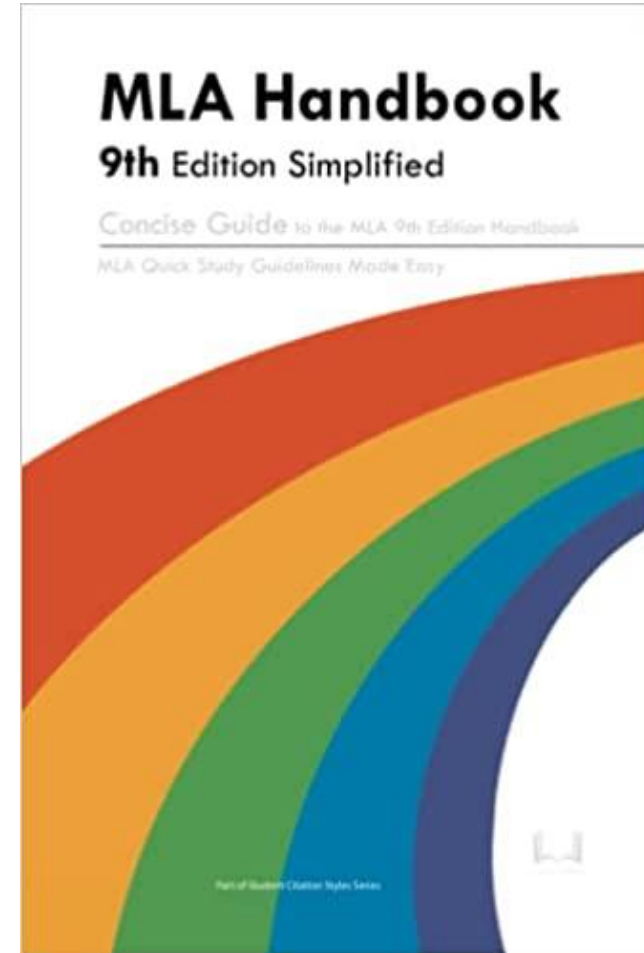
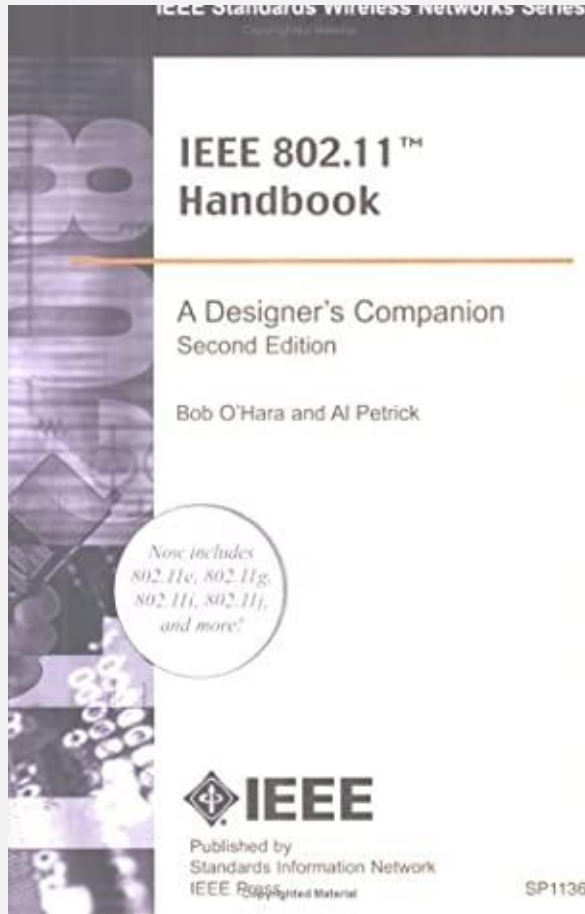https://www.apa.org/about/apa/equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines

MLA Style Guide

MLA offers several tips on how to write using inclusive language

- Ensure identity markers are relevant to your point.
- Be specific and avoid generalizations.
- Respect community terms.
- Use consistent capitalization throughout the work.
- Avoid quotation marks or italicization of identity terms to avoid weaking meaning.
- Avoid gender if not central to your statement.
- Avoid adjectives that suggest negativity in relation to a person or groups experience.
- If quoting an offensive term, use the first letter and a dash in lieu of the complete spelling.

https://guides.lndlibrary.org/c.php?g=1190811&p=8784900

MLA Handbook
9th Edition Simplified

Concise Guide to the MLA 9th Edition Handbook

MLA Quick Study Guidelines Made Easy

Part of Student Citation Styles Series

IEEE Style Guide

IEEE 802.11™ Handbook

A Designer's Companion
Second Edition

Bob O'Hara and Al Petrick

- IEEE requires language that comply with its Nondiscrimination policy, specifically noting a specific resolution from its Standard Board

- "IEEE standards (including recommended practices and guides) shall be written in such a way as to unambiguously communicate the technical necessities, preferences, and options of the standard to best enable market adoption, conformity assessment, interoperability, and other technical aspirations of the developing standards committee. IEEE standards should be written in such a way as to avoid non-inclusive and insensitive terminology (see IEEE Policy 9.27) and other deprecated terminology (see Clause 10 of the IEEE SA Style Manual) except when required by safety, legal, regulatory, and other similar considerations. Terms such as master/slave, blacklist, and whitelist should be avoided."

REMEMBER

Be sure to prioritize respect and inclusivity

Groups and communities are diverse and individuals may have varying language preferences

Always use the language requested by the particular individual or group

Language is always changing, so be open to learning and growing

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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- Respect an individual or group's language preferences to describe themselves and their experiences.
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RECOGNIZE

- A term that may be appropriate as a member of a group may not be appropriate for use by someone who is not in that group.

REMEMBER

- Groups of people are diverse in their experiences. Avoid describing people or experiences as monolithic.

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UWINDSOR RESOURCES

Office of Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility (OHREA)

https://www.uwindsor.ca/ohrea/

UWindsor Indigenous Resources

https://www.uwindsor.ca/ctl/513/indigenous-resources

UWindsor LGBTQ+ Community

https://www.uwindsor.ca/lgbtq/

Student Accessibility Services

https://www.uwindsor.ca/studentaccessibility/

UWindsor Challenging Anti-Black Racism
https://www.uwindsor.ca/antiblackracism/

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- https://www.queensu.ca/styleguide/inclusivelanguage
- https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/home/accessible-government/toolkit/audience-diversity/inclusive-language-and-terms
- http://www.humber.ca/makingaccessiblemedia/modules/01/transript/Inclusive_Language_Guide_Aug2017.pdf
- https://www.dal.ca/dept/communicationsandmarketing/tools-and-resources/editorial_style_guide/inclusive_language.html
- https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/disability

QUESTIONS?

Remember, this slideshow and many others are available to download via the Writing Support Brightspace page.

Students can self-enroll as 'learners' either by selecting 'Discover' from the Brightspace landing page and clicking 'Enroll' on the Writing Support organization.