

Biological Sex and Gender Identity

The New Testament refers to the followers of Jesus as being “in Christ” (e.g. 2 Cor. 5:17). As a Christian institution, Wheaton College thus seeks to understand all aspects of human existence and experience in connection to Jesus Christ. This includes understanding biological sex and gender identity in connection to Christ.

The College’s policies and practices on biological sex and gender identity for the members of our community are informed by the following biblical and theological convictions:

- All human persons are made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26), whose original intent and action was to create humanity to bear his divine image as two distinct sexes, male and female (Gen. 1:27), which are further designated as “man” and “woman” (Gen. 2:21-23). Jesus Christ affirmed this teaching, stating that “at the beginning the Creator made them male and female” (Matt. 19:4). According to God’s creation intention, each person is divinely intended to experience congruence between the physical and experiential dimensions of his or her sex as male/man or female/woman.
- As a result of the choices of our first human parents, Adam and Eve, sin and death permeate the human condition (Rom. 1:18-32). Human beings are both the victims and the perpetrators of transgression. The totality of our experience is fallen in many ways, affecting the sexual, biological, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of living. One effect of the fall on creation is that our personal experience of gender may be inconsistent with God’s original design for our biological sex.
- The biblical narrative expresses both the distinction of human beings as male and female and the equal dignity of men and women as made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). When unbiblical expectations and/or extrabiblical standards for gender distinctiveness are promoted, both men and women are denied their equal dignity, with damaging consequences. Similarly, we see harmful consequences arising out of distorted messages about biological sex, gender identity, and gender expression, such as any view that gender distinctions hinder our flourishing as divine image-bearers in a fallen world.
- As Christians who experience the pain and difficulty of living in a fallen world, we empathize with anyone who seeks to reduce the distress that may accompany gender incongruence. Yet the College does not believe that adopting a psychological identity, public persona, or physiology contrary to one’s divinely given biological sex is a biblically faithful way to resolve incongruence between biological sex and gender identity. We believe instead that gender expression should cohere with a person’s biological sex.

Wheaton College defines “biological sex” as referring to physical and biological traits manifest from birth and “gender” as referring to social, psychological, and/or cultural traits. “Gender identity” includes but is not limited to a person’s internal sense of being a man or woman. “Gender expression” refers to the ways people convey gender through clothing, physiology, and behaviors.

The College recognizes that while most people experience gender identity in ways that are congruent with their biological sex, some experience their gender identity in ways that are at variance with their biological sex or with cultural norms (gender incongruence), and still others exhibit physical characteristics that are both male and female (intersex).

The College further acknowledges that certain matters concerning biological sex and gender identity are challenging and complex. The following guidelines and principles will inform the College's decision-making when a student or employee engages in actions or behaviors that display incongruence between their biological sex and gender identity:

- The College desires to be a loving, supportive community that cares for and respects each person, including those among us who experience incongruity between their biological sex and gender identity and those whose physiology does not fit into a male/female binary, some of whom may have had surgical interventions to alter their physiology. We oppose unloving responses toward these individuals, lament the hurt caused by any member of the Christian community, and recognize our calling to cultivate a loving Christian environment for every member of the College, and every campus guest.
- The College assigns access for students and employees to sensitive spaces such as housing, locker rooms, and bathrooms on the basis of biological sex. As an accommodation, the College provides single-use bathrooms in most public spaces (see Resources for the Campus Community below).
- The College regards undergoing a surgical or other medical sex transition as contrary to the biblical and theological commitments in Wheaton's [Statement of Faith](#) and the promises that students and employees make to one another in the [Community Covenant](#). However, the College will consider enrolling or employing an individual who has undergone a surgical or other medical transition from his or her biological sex if the circumstances that led to the transition do not violate the College's biblical and/or theological convictions (e.g., to address certain unique medical conditions).
- The College understands the English pronouns she/her/hers and he/him/his as expressing the creational intent of a biological binary (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4). The College does not recommend or request the statement of preferred personal pronouns by members of the College community in any campus context.
- The College also does not permit the statement of an employee's preferred personal pronouns (including student workers) when conducting College business, when on a platform where they are publicly identified as College employees, and/or when using the College brand in print or digital media, except when employees are required to specify such pronouns for participation in certain professional contexts. In such cases, employees must use personal pronouns that align with their biological sex and with the College's convictions on biological sex and gender identity.

- With the exception of academic research conducted under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (“IRB”), College-created forms, surveys, and questionnaires should only include male and female without additional sex options (although “prefer not to say” is also permissible).
- College leaders will address possible violations of this policy within the appropriate pastoral and/or conduct processes of the College.

The College reserves the latitude to make reasonable judgments about matters not explicitly addressed in this Policy based on the Statement of Faith, the Community Covenant, and the biblical and theological principles that underlie these commitments. The Wheaton College Board of Trustees reserves final authority for the interpretation of these documents as well as the biblical and theological principles that guide them.

Resources for the Campus Community

The following resources are available for students, faculty, and staff who need care, seek information about related policies, or wish to learn more.

For Students and Employees

- [Wheaton College Chaplain’s Office](#)
- [Sexual & Gender Identity Institute at Wheaton College](#)
- [The Marriage & Family Therapy Clinic at Wheaton College](#)
- [Bias Incident Policy and Report Form](#)
- [Nondiscrimination Policies \(including Equity & Title IX\)](#)

For Students

- [Wheaton College Student Wellness Resource Referral](#)
- [Wheaton College Counseling Center](#)
- [Refuge](#)

The following is a list of single-use restrooms available for student use by building:

- Amending Center for Music and the Arts: Rooms 138 and 167
- Billy Graham Hall: Rooms 155, 156, 245, 247, 564, B07A, B07B, M216, and M217
- Chrouser Sports Complex: Rooms 164, 166, 202, 206, 237, and 239
- Edman Chapel: Rooms 122, 206, and 211
- Evans-McManis Hall: Rooms 125 and 126
- Fischer Hall: Rooms 242A and 242B
- Jenks Hall: Rooms 107, 101C, 127A, and 129B
- Library: Room 107
- McAlister Hall: Rooms 122 and 124
- Meyer Science Center: Room 111B
- North Harrison Hall: Rooms 157, 158, and 159
- Traber Hall: Rooms 102 and 103

- Smith Hall: Rooms 131 and 133
- Williston Hall: Room 113
- Melvin E. Banks Welcome Center: Rooms 022 and 032