

Inclusive language guide

(adapted from Washington State University Editorial Style Guide)

	Terms to use	Terms to avoid
Age	Older adult Older people Senior Youth	Elderly Old Kids (unless specifically referring to young children)
Disability	Disabled/has a disability Neurotypical Neuro-atypical or neuro-divergent Accessible parking Deaf with a capital “D” when talking about Deaf culture/ community deaf with a lowercase “d” when writing about hearing loss Born with [condition] Functional needs	Handicapped Able-bodied Normal (when describing people) Birth defect Differently abled
Gender and gender identity/ expression	Everyone, folks, y’all Trans, transgender First-year students Sophomores, juniors, seniors Parents, families, supporters Humankind, humanity Human-made, human-caused They/them/theirs	Ladies and gentlemen Freshmen or freshman Upperclassmen or upperclassman Moms and dads Mankind Man-made He/she, he or she Guys (for a group)
Incarceration	People in jail/prison Incarcerated person/people Incarcerated at X facility Formerly incarcerated person/people Serving X years Held in, detained in On probation/parole Justice-involved individual/ justice-impacted individual	Felon Inmate Offender Convict/ex-convict/ex-con
National origin	Undocumented Born in [country] Immigrant Refugee Developing nation, developed nation	Illegal immigration/illegal alien Alien Foreign Third-world country, first-world country

	Terms to use	Terms to avoid
Native and indigenous nations	<p>Indigenous</p> <p>Native (capitalized for people and nations; lowercased for objects such as plants)</p> <p>Native American</p> <p>American Indian</p> <p>Native Hawaiian</p> <p>Alaska Native</p> <p>Nation</p> <p>Reservation (capitalized when referring to a specific reservation name)</p> <p>Tribal colleges, Tribal council (if the formal name is a council)</p>	<p>Indian (many American Indians/ Alaska Natives still refer to themselves as Indian, but as a general rule, others should avoid the term)</p> <p>Tribe (unless part of a formal name)</p> <p>Tribe and nation together (e.g., the Yakama Nation Tribe)</p> <p>Eskimo (unless preferred by the person)</p>
Race and ethnicity	<p>African American</p> <p>Asian American</p> <p>Biracial, multiracial</p> <p>Black</p> <p>Latine (previously Latinx was used more)</p> <p>White</p> <p>Historically underrepresented group/population</p> <p>Historically marginalized group/population</p> <p>Historically minoritized</p> <p>People of color</p>	<p>Hispanic (unless a person uses this term)</p> <p>Caucasian</p> <p>Oriental</p> <p>Whites, Blacks</p> <p>Black/Latine/Asian community (suggesting all members of a racial or ethnic group are a monolith)</p> <p>Minority</p> <p>Latino/a</p> <p>Diverse (in reference to one person)</p>
Religion	<p>Follower or member</p> <p>Religious group</p> <p>Specific denomination names where applicable</p>	<p>Fanatic/zealot</p> <p>Cult</p> <p>Religious right or religious left</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>LGBTQ+</p> <p>Sexual orientation</p> <p>Spouse, partner</p> <p>Gay, Lesbian</p>	<p>Sexual preference</p> <p>Husband/wife, boyfriend/girlfriend (unless the person prefer these terms)</p> <p>Homosexual, heterosexual</p>
Socioeconomic status	<p>Below poverty level</p> <p>Low/high income</p> <p>Low/high socioeconomic status</p> <p>Section, district, area, quarter</p> <p>Unsheltered</p> <p>Informal developments or dwellings</p>	<p>Disadvantaged</p> <p>Ghetto, barrio, the projects, slums</p> <p>Less fortunate</p> <p>Low/high class</p> <p>Poor/rich</p> <p>Welfare reliant</p> <p>At-risk</p>
Veteran status	<p>Armed forces</p> <p>Military, or specify the branch</p> <p>Service member</p>	<p>Army (for generic for military)</p> <p>Serviceman</p>