UNIVERSITÄT BIELEFELD

TIN*Discrimination -aware Teaching

A Handout for Lecturers

trans*, inter* and non-binary Students

Bielefeld University

Introduction

TIN* is an abbreviation for trans*, inter* and non-binary people. As an umbrella term it includes all people who do not adhere to the binary gender order. TIN* subsumes a broad spectrum of gender identities and gender expressions, but what they have in common is their marginalisation in our heteronormative society. Universities contribute to the marginalisation of TIN* students, structurally and interpersonally.

Due to the differing legal structures, the barriers TIN* students face differ from each other but in all cases, they are consequential for students' daily life (at university)[1]. Lecturers generally have no control over these varied consequences, but as they implicate students' life at university, lecturers should be aware of the issues. On a base level this simply means being aware of problems and potential solutions or workarounds.

Teaching in person and online: Names, Addressing, Outing

Since the winter term 2021/22 it's been possible to change one's name and e-mail address (which includes one's name) to reflect one's personal preference, before a legal change in name or gender marker. This allows TIN* students to present themselves in the electronic course catalogue (ekvv) and Moodle with the name they use in everyday life. This change also applies to course lists, which also do not include gendered forms of address anymore. Since November 2023 this display name is also used on the UniCard. The display name can be entered directly after enrolment in Prisma. The UniCard will then be printed with the desired name. If the display name is entered or changed after the UniCard has been issued, the old UniCard can be exchanged for a new one with the correct name at the info point in the UHG hall. The first time this is free of charge.

These measures reduce the likelihood of outings in the teaching context, but can never completely prevent them. Outings can still occur in examination situations where, in addition to the UniCard, identification documents with the student's deadname (see glossary) must also be presented. Lectures cannot avoid these and similar situations, but they can deal with them with the necessary sensitivity. In addition, not all students are aware of the possibility of changing their name.

Lectures can act as a multiplying factor here, by disseminating the information to their students. Especially in first year courses, this information is essential, as it is mandatory to enrol using one's legal name and gender. Official university documents, such as diplomas and transcripts, are exempt from the display name policy. The display name cannot be changed independently in the PEVZ. However, student staff can initiate a name change via the contact for correction request.

Excursion: Legal situation of trans*, inter* and non-binary people in Germany

In Germany there are four legal options for the gender marker: diverse, female, male and the option to leave the field empty. At birth, sex[2] is determined through the anatomical examination of the new-born. If intersexuality, following its medical definition, is diagnosed upon birth, the gender marker can remain undetermined or diverse may be used.

Legal changes to the gender marker and first name are regulated by the [Transsexuellen Gesetz](#) (TSG) and the [Personenstandsgesetz](#). The TSG regulates the process of name and gender marker change for trans* people. The basis for the change is the assessment and decision of two different experts. This process is quite expensive (on average 1.868€[3]), lengthy, dependent on residency status and many trans* people experience this process as humiliating and psychologically draining. The Personenstandsgesetz is relevant

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[1] For various reasons, there are no reliable figures on the proportion of trans*, inter* and non-binary people in Germany. The dgti assumes that at least 0.6% of the German population is trans* ([details on figures and estimates here](#)). Applied to Bielefeld University, this would currently be around 150 students.

[2] The sex/gender distinction was first used by feminist scholars to bring light to the ways gender differences are not naturally-biologically determined but stem from historical practices of social conditioning. Since then the distinction has been criticised for itself naturalising a biologistic dichotomy of embodied gender that ignores the ways gendered bodies and our understanding of them is always determined by a cultural lens. (See Judith Butler (1999): Gender Trouble for further reading).

[3] Adamietz, Laura/Bager, Katharina (2017): Regelungs- und Reformbedarf für transgeschlechtliche Menschen. Begleitmaterial zur Interministeriellen Arbeitsgruppe Inter- & Transsexualität, Bd. 7. Berlin: Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, S. 12.

for inter* people. To change their name and gender marker they need to present the diagnosis of intersexuality following its medical definition. There is no established legal procedure for non-binary people but the Bundesgerichtshof decided in 2020 that the TSG can be interpreted in a way that includes the transition from female/male to diverse. The process then is the same as it is for trans* people.

The TSG in particular has been criticised for decades and significant parts of it have been declared unconstitutional by the Bundesverfassungsgericht. The version, as it exists today, is mostly criticised due to the compulsory examination by so-called experts as they make the procedure unnecessarily long, bureaucratic, costly and debilitating. TIN* people and their supporters instead have called for a new law that would centre TIN* people's self-determination and agency. Apart from the length of the current process, the financial and psychological burden may stop trans* and non-binary students from legally changing their name and gender marker.

On 23 August 2023, the federal government passed a draft law on Self-Determination of Gender titled 'Selbstbestimmung in Bezug auf den Geschlechtseintrag (SBGG)', which is to replace the TSG and the regulations for inter* people in the Personenstandsgesetz and will standardise the process for trans*, inter* and non-binary people. Self-disclosure is to be centralised in the process. The law is due to come into effect on 1 November 2024 and is expected to be implemented starting early 2025.

When are what changes possible for TIN* students?

	Change possible at any time	Change possible after legal proceedings have been initiated or submission of legal documents*
Diploma & Transcripts	-	✓
Gender Marker (Male ↔ Female)	-	✓
Name in Outside-facing Computerised Systems and Documents (IDM, Student Office, Examination Office)	-	✓
UniCard (Student ID)	✓	✓
PEVZ entry**	✓	✓
Gender Marker (To Diverse / Not Specified)	✓	✓
E-Mail Address (Creation of Alternative Address)	✓	✓
Name in Internal Digital Computerised Systems and University Library Systems	✓	✓

* Information on changing one's name and gender marker during ongoing proceedings following the TSG is provided by Doris Mahlke in the student office.
** The display name does not automatically change the name in PEVZ. However, student staff can initiate a name change via the contact for correction request.

Space at university: Toilets, Changing Rooms & Showers

Toilets, changing rooms and showers are spaces that satisfy basic human needs. Most university members casually venture to seek relief several times a day, and those who partake in university sports courses, visit the swimming pool or UniFit, will use the changing rooms and showers without much hesitation. For TIN* people, these commonplace, everyday experiences can present themselves very differently.

The spaces mentioned follow a highly binary logic. The gender separation they establish turns them into spaces for TIN* people that are associated with stress, insecurity and even the risk of verbal or physical abuse. Non-binary people must currently subordinate themselves to the binary logic of these spaces. People who identify within the binary as women or men may find it easier to adhere to the binary spatial order, but nonetheless all TIN* people run the risk of being read in such binary spaces as *not-belonging*, as *wrong*, as *'other'* and consequently having to explain themselves. The fear of being called-out in these spaces, which might escalate to physical violence, might keep TIN* people from using these very basic and everyday facilities at university.

Spaces created with a disregard for the gender binary that are accessible to people of all genders can provide a remedy here and be safe spaces for people of marginalised genders. Bielefeld University has committed to including all-gender toilets in every new building and has converted toilets in the existing buildings UHG, X and Z into all-gender toilets. The R1, R2 and Y buildings also have all-gender toilets. There is an all-gender changing

room in the sports facility. The swimming pool does not offer all-gender spaces. Depending on where an event takes place, however, this still means significantly longer walking distances than if someone were to use a binary women's/men's toilet. Lectures should keep this in mind.

What can I do as a lecturer?

- Be aware that TIN* students may also be exposed to verbal and/or physical violence in public spaces off campus.
- Discriminatory statements towards TIN* people by students should not be allowed to stand unquestioned, but should be challenged.
- Use your position as a disseminator of information and contact your students by e-mail before the start of the semester. Point out the possibility of changing the display name and correction of the UniCard. At the same time, you can also encourage students to tell you which name and pronouns they want to use during the course. You can also include useful information as part of your syllabus. Some examples of potentially relevant resources for students can be found at the end of this document.
- When introducing yourself at the beginning of the course, mention which pronouns you use yourself.
- If you take attendance at the beginning of the course, rely on a round of introductions rather than your course list. Encourage students to introduce themselves with the name and pronouns they prefer. If you use name tags, ask your students to add pronouns to them as well. Stating one's pronouns should not be compulsory. If people do not appear on your list, ask the student privately to give you their matriculation number. This will allow you to give credit to the correct person. Point students (again) to the possibility of changing their display name in Prisma.
- Call students by their first and last names instead of using the title (Mr/Ms XX), especially if you are unsure of the correct form of address.
- Include your preferred pronouns in your e-mail signature.
- Pay attention to using gender inclusive language.
- If you use Zoom or other external software, include your own pronouns in the name display field and encourage students to do the same. Tell them to use the name they actually want to be addressed with. If a name appears that you do not recognise, ask the student privately via the chat function to give you their matriculation number.
- Accept requests from e-mail addresses that are not directly associated with Bielefeld University. Not all students will be aware that they can set up an alternate e-mail address with their preferred name. Point out this option.
- Be aware of how far away your classroom is from an all-gender toilet. If a student arrives late or leaves (for a longer time) during the session, it may be because it takes much longer for that person to quickly 'step out'.
- Before exams address the discrepancy caused by being able to change one's display name on the UniCard, while official papers might show one's deadname. Offer TIN* students who are affected to contact you beforehand so that you can carry out the identity check personally. Raise awareness amongst your colleagues, including student staff, about a possible discrepancy during the exam.
- If during an exam, the appearance and first name differ from the identification papers, this should not be commented on in front of fellow students. As a lecturer, you have the option to make a note of the person and check the information afterwards, in order to secure the person's security and privacy in the moment.

TIN* Glossary:

Agender

Agender people do not feel they belong to a specific gender identity or reject the concept of gender for themselves altogether.

Cis, cisgender

Cisgender (cis: Latin for on this side) is the term used to describe people whose gender assigned at birth is the same as their gender identity. Being cis adheres to the dominant societal norm. This means that in our heteronormative society it is assumed that all people are cis.

Coming Out

In a heteronormative society, heterosexuality and being cisgender are assumed to be the norm for all people. This means that people who do not conform to this norm (e.g. lesbians or trans* people) have to declare their sexuality or gender identity. This process is called coming out.
Most people have an "internal coming out" to themselves when they become aware of their own sexuality or gender identity. The ability to come out to family, friends or in professional settings depends strongly on the expected acceptance by these groups. If a person's sexuality or gender identity is disclosed without their consent, this is called outing. For the concerned person outings are invasive, stressful and violating. In some contexts, they can also put the person's safety and life at risk.

Deadname

The term deadname describes the name a TIN* person was given at birth but which they have since discarded. It often has a gendered connotation which the TIN* person rejects by choosing their own name. The use of the (discarded) deadname is to be considered psychological violence, especially if it is continuous and intentional. Deadnaming is a form of misgendering. Not all TIN* people choose a new name and therefore have a deadname. Either way, it is always inappropriate to ask for or research it.

Diverse

Since 1 January 2019, diverse - in addition to female and male - is the third (positive) gender marker permitted in Germany. It primarily serves to ensure that inter* people do not have to be assigned to a binary gender or - as was already possible - have their gender marker remain blank (negative gender marker). The TSG also allows non-inter* people to claim a diverse gender marker for themselves. Apart from being a legal category, diverse is also a gender identity.

Dyadic

Dyadic or endosex is a term used to describe individuals whose anatomical gender markers conform as closely as possible to the medical norms of masculinity or femininity. It is the opposite of inter*.

Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity is a system of social order that sets heterosexuality as the social standard. This is linked to the idea of the normality of heterosexual desire, the binary of gender and the cohesion of anatomy and gender identity. The setting of norms creates power relations. Other sexualities and gender identities are hierarchically subordinated, excluded and socially sanctioned.

Inter*, intersex

Inter* (lat. between) people can neither be clearly assigned to the normative idea of masculinity nor femininity. This can be hormonal, chromosomal or due to the formation of internal or external genitalia. Being inter* says nothing about a person's gender identity. An inter* person can describe themselves as inter*, but also, for example, as a woman or non-binary, etc.

Gender identity

Gender identity refers to a person's self-designation and -assignment to a gender. This may correspond with the gender assigned by others at birth (→ cisgender) or, as in the case of trans* people, it may not.

Misgendering

Misgendering is the assignment of a gender (e.g. through pronouns, forms of address, gendered terms) that does not correspond with the gender of the person being referred to. Misgendering can happen intentionally or unintentionally. Intentional misgendering is a form of psychological violence towards the misgendered person. Using the birth name that a person has given up is called deadnaming and is also a form of misgendering.

Neopronouns

German does not have a grammatically third, non-binary gender. The German "es" is used for objects, while the plural "sie" is alike the feminine singular pronoun. Some non-binary people's solution is therefore to create new pronouns that work for their gender identity. No neopronoun has established prominence or dominance yet; the choices are highly individual. Examples for neopronouns are "xier", "dey" or "hen". In English "they" is widely used as a pronoun by non-binary people.

Non-binary

Non-binary refers to a gender identity or gender identities that do not fit into the binary idea of gender. Non-binary does not describe a specific mixture of characteristics, but is a self-designation.

Trans*, transgender

Trans* (lat. across, beyond) is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not correspond with the gender ascribed to them at birth.

Resources

Internal Uni resources for TIN* people
- General Information: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/uni/profil/gleichstellung/fuer-alle/studentinnen/tin/
- (ger) Display Name Change for Students: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/bits/services/aus/account/anleitung/rufname/
- (ger) UniCard: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/unicard/beantragung/
- (ger) E-Mail-Address and Display Name Change: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/ bits/services/kuz/e-mail-und-kalender/anleitung/aenderung-anzeigename-und-adresse/

Further Internal Resources
- Accessibility Services: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/zab/studierende/
- Diversity portal: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/diversitaet/
- Support in cases of sexualised harassment: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/hilfe-notfall/begleitung-beratung-bei-belaestigung/

Genderinclusive Language & Glossaries
- (ger) Uni Bielefeld: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/refkom/gendern/
- Genderinclusive Language: https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/gender-inclusive-language/
- (ger) Tips for Genderinclusive Language: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/fakultaeten/sportwissenschaft/studium-und-lehre/gender-in-der-lehre/_doc/2020-11-26_Sportwissenschaft_Plakat_digital.pdf
- (ger) Gender Glossary Faculty of Sporty Science: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/fakultaeten/sportwissenschaft/studium-und-lehre/gender-in-der-lehre/glossar/
- Glossary Human Rights Campaign: https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms
- (ger) Glossary Rainbowportal BMFSFJ: https://www.regenbogenportal.de/glossar

Titles and Neopronouns
- Explanation of Neopronouns: https://www.hrc.org/resources/understanding-neopronouns
- (ger) Article about Neopronouns in Germany: https://fm4.orf.at/stories/3025024/
- (ger) Digital Collection of Neopronouns (Made by Users):

  https://de.pronouns.page/pronomen

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