Memo
From: Faculty Council
To: ESHCC Management Team, ESHCC Diversity Officer
Topic: Use of Gender Inclusive Language / Draft Policy
September 2021

Dear members of the ESHCC Management Team

Dear ESHCC Diversity Officer

During the last months, members of the ESHCC Faculty Council have been aware of the risk of misgendering and misidentifying students in the classroom. We have also seen an interest among both students and faculty to move towards a more gender-inclusive use of language. Since the FC wants to make sure that the ESHCC is a fair and safe place for all, we would like to ask you to pay special attention to these situations.

As a concrete action, attached to this memo you will find a toolkit for gender-inclusive language that we have compiled from different sources, and after talking with some students and colleagues that have been confronted with the question on how to make our spaces more inclusive. We wouldn´t want to talk about neutral language since language is never devoid of meaning, but exactly because of that we would like to suggest paying attention to this issue.

As the MT, you can also make a big impact on this by requesting that our systems, specifically Canvas, allow for the students to have more gender options (included in the system but currently not available are F, M and X) and by providing students the information on how to modify their name as it appears in the system, to avoid deadnames coming up while in the classroom. This information can also be part of the information that we ask at registration, so students don't have to repeat this every new class.

We would like to make the attached document, inspired by recommendations provided by different institutions, available to our colleagues and students as a toolbox. The FC will offer this document by itself, but we would also like you to be aware of it and endorse it if possible.

We look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

ESHCC Faculty Council

ESHCC wants to be a trailblazer in creating a safe space for the community. As a school of History, Culture and Communication, all our disciplines recognize the fundamental role of language in changing and shaping cultural attitudes. If we want to strive for a school that promotes equality, we can start fight against gender inequality and bias by paying special attention on how we use our language.

In response to that, the Faculty Council has compiled the following toolkit is a set of practical suggestions to help our colleagues and students recognize and protect diversity through language. Specifically, these recommendations will help you be aware of gender inclusivity, respecting the identities of colleagues and students. These recommendations can be used in any type of communication, oral or written, to all audiences. In the case of formal academic communication, be mindful of the requirements set by the journals. The APA is very active in updating their rules.

If you have further suggestions, please let the FC know: we are happy to provide as many suggestions as possible to help everyone feel included.

Before the start of class

- You can proactively ask your students/lecturers via message if you would like to be addressed with a different name or pronouns.
- In the case of an online meeting, ask students to always write their preferred name and pronouns (if they wish) on screen. If you want to do that also in the classroom, you can have placards during class.
- You can include your preferred pronouns also in your email signature.

In the classroom

- On the first day of classes, as a lecturer you can inform your students about your preferred pronouns as well as the honorific, nickname, or middle name that you would prefer. In doing so, you are creating a safer space for everyone to express their preferences.
- If a student asks you to change their name or pronouns, adapt to the request as soon as possible.
- Be mindful of not referring to your class as boys, guys or *jongens*. Words like "people", "students" or even "humans" can make everyone feel more included.

When writing

According to the recommendations for gender inclusive use of language of the United Nations, it is important to remember that English is a language with few gender markers – few nouns have grammatical gender forms and even fewer are specifically masculine or feminine. In this context, the biggest challenge that we have in gender-inclusive communication is using the masculine form by default. To avoid that anyone feels excluded by this, there are several best practices to keep in mind.

1. Use non-discriminatory language

2. Make gender visible in language only when it is relevant for the communication.

3. Prefer non-gendered or gender-neutral nouns[1].

Gendered noun	Gender-neutral noun
man	person, individual
mankind	people, human beings, humanity
freshman	first-year student
man-made	hand-made, machine-made, synthetic, artificial
the common man	the average person

4. In the use of pronouns, these suggestions can help
   a. Use they as a singular pronoun.
   b. Alternatively, you can use more than one pronoun as a default: he/she, she or he. *Be aware that this solution doesn´t include people that identify with other pronouns.*
   c. Use plural pronouns and adjectives as much as possible.
   d. Replace any his/her with "their".
   e. Use the pronoun *one* – "A student in ESHCC has more study hours than one in other schools".
   f. Use the relative pronoun *who* instead of *he* to make a generalization
   g. If you are referring to generics, use plurals to avoid gendered pronouns.
   h. Alternate genders and pronouns as an alternative.
   i. If you don't know the gender of a person, keep using their last name or a descriptive such as "the scholar" and not a masculine per default.

5. Consider that, even though writing in a passive voice is not preferred, it avoids gendered constructions.
   a. The student should have reliable evidence of the idea he is describing
   b. The student should have reliable evidence of the idea being described

Checklist for gender-related revisions

(Writing Center – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

As you review your writing, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Have you used "man" or "men" or words containing them to refer to people who may not be men?

2. Have you used "he," "him," "his," or "himself" to refer to people who may not be men?

3. If you have mentioned someone's sex or gender, was it necessary to do so?

4. Do you use any occupational (or other) stereotypes?

5. Do you provide the same kinds of information and descriptions when writing about people of different genders?

Sources
- American Psychological Association. 2010. Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- University of Chicago Press. 2017. The Chicago Manual of Style, 17th ed. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
- United Nations (Nd) Guidelines for a gender inclusive language in English. Available at https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml
- The Writing Center - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Nd) *Gender inclusive language* [handout]. Available at: https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/gender-inclusive-language/

[1] List taken from the Gender-Inclusive Language hand-out of the Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/gender-inclusive-language/