The education that we are providing here in this allyship zine is intentional. It is done with care and the belief that we can shape and build better futures and pathways forward together. We are providing this as a starting place for our work as an ethics of care agreement, a lexicon of inclusive language, allyship training, and a brief introduction to ableism.

We are so glad that you are here right now, yes YOU! We can't wait to share this time and space with each and every one of you.

Remember:

The UIC School of Art & Art History makes room for everybody.

In love, solidarity, and community.
We ask that this community engage as active bystanders. Active bystanders are first preventionist and second disruptors of abuse. Here’s how we can make this space safer for all:

• By assessing and de-escalating situations before they become harmful.
• Addressing those who make personal attacks including racist, homophobic, transphobic behavior or other defamatory remarks and/or actions. This includes clothing such as MAGA paraphernalia and Confederate flags, which are symbols associated with hate.
• By calling in behaviors and actions that support rape culture. Including jokes about harassment, assault and rape.

We are here to do the work. By being here we intend to make this space, and the broader space of the UIC School of Art & Art History more inclusive, loving, moving, nourishing, and vital for everybody.

Say it together:

YES!
RESPECTING BOUNDARIES

Do not ask about a person’s body, their potential former names, their gender, why or how they know they are a certain gender, their sexual practices, or any other questions that are invasive unless the person invites you to ask.

GENDER PRONOUNS

Why are pronouns important?

The concept of gender is evolving, and therefore so are gender identities. Some people use nontraditional pronouns.

Pronouns may not seem like that big a deal, but they become a bigger deal when you try to live without them. And for some people, pronouns are a big deal because other folks don’t always use the correct pronouns to describe them.

It is very important to know that you cannot visually tell if someone is transgender, non-binary, gender-queer, gender non-conforming, gender-variant, etc. Asking for pronouns can prevent emotional distress from happening, and sets an example of respect. In some instances using the wrong pronoun can endanger the person.

How do I ask what pronouns to use?

Asking for pronouns can depend on the setting. Some polite ways to ask are:

- What pronouns do you use?
- What pronouns should I use for you in this space?
- My name is Dan, and my pronouns are he and him. What about you?

If you aren’t sure of someone’s name or pronouns but have already asked or met the person, it is okay to ask them again or later.

What do I do when someone uses pronouns that I don’t know?

As mentioned, gender and our understanding of it change. Many transgender, non-binary, gender-queer, and gender non-conforming people create their own pronouns or use pronouns that are not widely used. Many people will appreciate if you ask for clarification respectfully.

For example—“I'm sorry, did you say “ze/hir’ pronouns? How do I use those?”
5 Tips for Being a Proactive Ally
edited from the video transcript by Franchesca Ramsey

1. Understand your privilege

A lot of people get hung on the world privilege, so let me break it down for you nice and easy. Privilege does not mean that you are rich, that you’ve had an easy life, that everything’s been handed to you, and you’ve never had to struggle or work hard. All it means is that there are some things in life that you will not experience, or ever have to think about, just because of who you are.

It’s kind of like those horses that have those blinders on. They can see just fine. There’s just a whole bunch of stuff on the side that they don’t even know exists. For example, there are currently 29 states where you can legally be fired for being gay, and there are 34 states where you can legally be fired for being trans.

Now, as a straight, cis woman, those are things that I never have to ever think about if I don’t want to. I’m not going to be fired because I’m straight, and I’m not going to be fired because I’m cis, so it makes sense that before I can fight for the rights of others, I have to understand what rights I have and others don’t.

That’s privilege.

2. Listen and do your homework

It sounds like a no-brainer, but it’s not possible for you to learn if you aren’t willing to listen. So you’ve got to know when to zip up the lip.

But that’s something that’s cool about social media. There are so many people sharing their stories all around the world and connecting with people that they normally would never get a chance to without the power of the Internet.

So, do your homework. Start reading blogs, tweets, news articles, and stories, so that you can get caught up on the issues that are important to the communities that you want to support.

3. Speak up, but not over

If the fight for equality was a girl group, the ally wouldn’t be the lead singer or second lead singer. They’d be Michelle [from Destiny’s Child].

An ally’s job is to support. You want to make sure that you use your privilege and your voice to educate others, but make sure to do it in such a way that does not speak over the community members that you’re trying to support or take credit for things that they are already saying.

4. Realize that you’re going to make mistakes, and apologize when you do.

Nobody’s perfect. Unlearning problematic things take time and work, so you are bound to mess up, and trip and fall. But don’t worry, you can brush yourself off and get right back up.

Just remember that it’s not about your intent, it’s about your impact. So when you get called out, make sure to listen, apologize, commit to changing your behavior, and move forward.

5. Last, but certainly not least (actually the most important thing on this list), is to remember that “ally” is a verb

Saying you’re an ally is not enough.

YOU’VE GOT TO DO THE WORK

One through four, one through four.

1As of November 22, 2014, when this video was uploaded.
You cannot be an effective ally to any community without paying attention to space you personally take up. Hand in hand with avoiding any sense of entitlement is being aware of when you are taking up too much space, both physically and verbally. Coming from a place of privilege, you should always be willing to step back when someone who is affected by oppression is trying to have their voice heard.

This discussion of allyship is really about doing what you can to fight for the rights of your friends and comrades with the access you have to various spaces, the knowledge you possess, and the privileges you hold in various contexts. Equally important, if not more so, is to take a look at yourself and understand that you are not meant to act as the authority about a cause that affects others. You are meant to support their words, their feelings, and their authoritative voices.

When Criticized or Called out/In, Allies Listen, Apologize, Act Accountability, and Act Differently Going Forward

The single most important thing I’ve ever been told about being an ally came from a professor of Color who profoundly impacted my life:

“If you choose to do social justice work, you are going to screw up—a lot. Be prepared for that. And when you screw up, be prepared to listen to those who you hurt, apologize with honesty and integrity, work hard to be accountable to them, and make sure you act differently going forward.”

There are few lessons more important for “allies” to understand than this one. When you screw up and damage trust and hurt and anger those you have allied yourself to, listening is important, but it’s not enough.

Apologizing earnestly is important, but it’s not enough.

Working hard to make sure you are accountable to those you’ve wronged is important, but it’s not enough.

In addition to all of these, you have a responsibility to learn from the mistakes you’ve made and to do better going forward.
In the United States, a linguistic movement has taken hold. People-first language is considered by many to be the most respectful and appropriate way to refer to those who were once called disabled, handicapped, or even crippled. Instead of disabled person, we are urged to say person with disability. Instead of autistic person, we should say person with autism. I think you get the picture. The idea is to see the person first or see the person—not the disability!

**Don’t patronize**
Don’t assume someone’s intellectual capacity based on their physical capabilities of lack thereof.

**Don’t address disabled people through an able-bodied person.**
Because of physical impairments some disabled people are perceived socially as small children. Sometimes this results in the assumption that they are incapable of processing direct speech. It is also important not to equate verbal ability to the presence of comprehension. Plenty of my nonverbal friends communicate and process at the same rates as everyone else.

**Don’t ask what happened**
People with disabilities are often subjected to a barrage of questions. Namely, able-bodied people will often assume that disabled people’s existence represents some kind of mystery that they need to get to the bottom of.

**Avoid misguided comments like ‘I wish I had a chair!’**
Statements like the above inadvertently cherry pick the disabled experience and reduce it to the “luxury” of having an easy mode of transportation.

**Stop assuming we want to be able-bodied**
Enough of hypothetical “if you were normal” scenarios. What is normal anyway? The life trajectories of people with disabilities may be a little different, but that doesn’t mean they’re inherently miserable and inferior.

**Take the stairs**
If a person with a disability needs to use the elevator, this seems like a no brainer right? Apparently not! Often when waiting for an elevator with a disabled person a large group of able-bodied people will all squeeze on and leave the disabled person to wait for the next one. If you see a person with a disability in line behind you for the elevator, ask yourself, “Am I using this as a necessity or convenience? If it’s the latter, climb the stairs or give the person with disability priority.

**Don’t use accessible restrooms**
Yet another commonsense rule, accessible restrooms are adapted for a reason, not just for the luxury of added space or privacy.
Excerpted from *Ableism/Language* by Lydia X. Z. Brown

Language is inherently political. Both as individuals and as larger social and cultural groups, it is self-evident that the language we use to express all sorts of ideas, opinions, and emotions, as well as to describe ourselves and others, is simultaneously reflective of existing attitudes and influential to developing attitudes.

One important note: Many people who identify with particular disabilities or disability in general may use descriptors from this list in an act of reclaiming the language. You may well too! But if you do not identify with a particular disability/disabled identity, it is probably appropriate to use some of those terms. (Some examples are mad and crip.)

**Appropriate ways of speaking to and about disabled people:**

**For describing people with disabilities/disabled people in general:**
- Disabled
- Has a disability
- With a disability
- Has a chronic health condition
- With a chronic health condition
- Neurotypical
- Neurodivergent

**For describing people on the autism spectrum:**
- On the autism spectrum
- Autistic
- With autism (if preferred by individual)
- Aspie (if preferred by individual)

**For describing people with intellectual disabilities:**
- With an intellectual disability
- Has an intellectual disability
- With a cognitive disability
- Has a cognitive disability

**For describing people with sensory disabilities or impairments:**
- Blind
- Low vision
- Deaf
- Hard of hearing

**For describing people with physical or mobility disabilities:**
- With a physical disability
- With a mobility disability
- Uses a wheelchair
- In a wheelchair
- Uses crutches
- Uses a cane
- Uses a walker
- Has/With (specific condition here)
To quote writer, activist, and organizer adrienne maree brown:

“Language changes so quickly these days. The right way to speak about people, about identities, about gender, about geography—everything is in motion on a regular basis. I know that in writing this I am creating something instantly dated.”

We understand that to commit this lexicon to paper does not mean that this language, our relationship to it, or how we use it is fixed. What this lexicon signifies is our commitment to respecting, knowing, understanding, and valuing each other.

Even though language is a shifting landscape, this is about creating and maintaining respect for each other in the here and now, and together this week. The following lexicon* is a starting place. It is how we are currently using language to respect and make space for one another.

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**LEXICON**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ableism:</td>
<td>The pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who have mental, emotional and physical disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ageism:</td>
<td>Any attitude, action, or institutional structure, which subordinates a person or group because of age or any assignment of roles in society purely on the basis of age (Traxler, 1980, p.4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allyship:</td>
<td>The action of working to end oppression through support of, and as an advocate with and for, a group other than one’s own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Policing:</td>
<td>Any behavior which (indirectly or directly, intentionally or unintentionally) attempts to correct or control a person’s actions regarding their own physical body, frequently with regards to gender expression or size. (ASC Queer Theory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling in:</td>
<td>Communicating with the intent to change problematic behavior. Contrary to calling out, which has the possibility of being needlessly preformative, calling in is primarily patient and empathetic to those willing to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisgender:</td>
<td>A gender identity, or performance in a gender role, that society deems to match the person’s assigned sex at birth. The prefix cis- means “on this side of” or “not across.” A term used to call attention to the privilege of people who are not transgender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability/ (Dis)ability/ Dis/ability:</td>
<td>A social construct that identifies any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered “typical” for a human being given environments that are constructed for and by the dominant or “typical” person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The basis for this lexicon was adapted from the LGBTQIA resource center at UC Davis.
**Gender Expression:** How one expresses oneself, in terms of dress and/or behaviors. Society, and people that make up society characterize these expressions as “masculine,” “feminine,” or “androgynous.” Individuals may embody their gender in a multitude of ways and have terms beyond these to name their gender expression(s).

**Gender Identity:** A sense of one’s self as trans*, genderqueer, woman, man, or some other identity, which may or may not correspond with the sex and gender one is assigned at birth.

**Intersectionality:** A term coined by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980s to describe the way that multiple systems of oppression interact in the lives of those with multiple marginalized identities. Intersectionality looks at the relationships between multiple marginalized identities and allows us to analyze social problems more fully, shape more effective interventions, and promote more inclusive advocacy amongst communities.

**Latinx:** Pronounced “La-TEEN-ex” or “Latin-x”, is a non-gender specific way of referring to people of Latin American descent. Other commonly known ways of referring to people of Latin American descent are Latinos, Latina, Latin@, Latino. The “x” at the end replaces “o” and “a” which have been gendered suffixes, it moves beyond terms like Latino/a & Latin@, which still reinforce a gender binary.

**LGBT:** Abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. An umbrella term that is often used to refer to the community as a whole. Our center uses LGBTQIA to intentionally include and raise awareness of Queer, Intersex and Asexual as well as myriad other communities under our umbrella.

**LGBTQIA Allyship:** The practice of confronting heterosexism, sexism, genderism, allosexism, and monosexism in oneself and others out of self-interest and a concern for the well being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual people. Is founded on the belief and believes that dismantling heterosexism, monosexism, trans oppression/trans misogyny/cissexism and allosexism is a social justice issue.

**Micro-aggressions:** Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults about one's marginalized identity/identities. (D. W. Sue)

**Misgendering:** Attributing a gender to someone that is incorrect/does not align with their gender identity. Can occur when using pronouns, gendered language (i.e. “Hello ladies!” “Hey guys”), or assigning genders to people without knowing how they identify (i.e. “Well, since we’re all women in this room, we understand…”).

**Non-binary:** A gender identity and experience that embraces a full universe of expressions and ways of being that resonate for an individual. It may be an active resistance to binary gender expectations and/or an intentional creation of new unbounded ideas of self within the world. For some people who identify as non-binary there may be overlap with other concepts and identities like gender expansive and gender non-conforming.

**Privilege:** A set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group. The concept has roots in WEB DuBois' work on "psychological wage" and white people’s feelings of superiority over Black people. Peggy McIntosh wrote about privilege as a white woman and developed an inventory of unearned privileges that she experienced in daily life because of her whiteness.

**Pronouns:** Linguistic tools used to refer to someone in the third person. Some examples are: they/them/theirs, ze/hir/hirs, she/her/hers, and he/him/his. In English and other languages,
pronouns have been tied to gender and are a common site of misgendering (attributing a gender to someone that is incorrect.)

*Trans*: The asterisk placed after Trans has been used in many different ways. Some folks think of it as being more inclusive towards gender non-conforming and non-binary folks. But others have offered critique that it feels exclusionary towards GNC and non-binary folks for enforcing a binary expectation to “fill in the blank” for trans man or trans woman. There have also been discussions/critique regarding the origin of the asterisk.

*Transgender*: Adjective used most often as an umbrella term, and frequently abbreviated to “trans.” This adjective describes a wide range of identities and experiences of people whose gender identity and/or expression differs from conventional expectations based on their assigned sex at birth. Not all trans people undergo medical transition (surgery or hormones). Some commonly held definitions:

Someone whose determination of their sex and/or gender is not validated by dominant societal expectations; someone whose behavior or expression does not “match” their assigned sex according to society.

A gender outside of the man/woman binary.

Having no gender or multiple genders.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

African American Cultural Center
Addams Hall, 830 S. Halsted St., 2nd floor
http://aacc.uic.edu/

Arab American Cultural Center
111 Stevenson Hall, 701 S. Morgan St.
http://arabamcc.uic.edu/

Asian American Resource and Cultural Center
101 Taft Hall, 826 S. Halsted St.
http://aarcc.uic.edu/

Disability Cultural Center
235 Behavioral Science Building 1007 W. Harrison St.
http://dcc.uic.edu/

Gender and Sexuality Center
181–183 Behavioral Science Building, 1007 W. Harrison St.
http://gsc.uic.edu/

Rafael Cintrón Ortiz Latino Cultural Center
Lecture Center B2, 803 S. Morgan St.
http://latinocultural.uic.edu/

Women’s Leadership and Resource Center
1101 W. Taylor St., 3rd floor
http://wlrc.uic.edu/
The UIC SCHOOL OF ART & ART HISTORY is committed to the health and wellness of our students, faculty, and staff. We are working hard to create a stigma free environment that promotes a culture that ends stigma around mental health conditions and promotes support, awareness, and empathy.

Each semester the UIC SCHOOL OF ART & ART HISTORY will offer a series of interventions, workshops, and events that focus on what we are calling Critical Care.

THIS INITIATIVE encompasses addressing mental health community building, and creating and maintaining a balanced lifestyle. Holding the space in our creative practices to maintain our personal well-being, give into public exuberance, maintain relationships, face our emotions head on, and build community is what makes it possible for us to continue to do the important work of artists and scholars in the 21st century.