**Transgender Student Guide**

**Bowdoin College**

(Updated Fall 2019)

# Introduction

Bowdoin College is committed to the support of all students inclusive of their gender expression and/or gender identity. This guide was created by the Transgender Working Group, a collaboration of the Sexuality, Women and Gender Center (SWAG), Counseling Center, Student Health Services, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, the Office of Residential Life, the Department of Athletics, and the Office of Student Aid. The guide was created to assist students who identify as transgender, agender, genderqueer, gender non-binary and/or gender questioning. For the purpose of this guide, transgender will be used as “an umbrella term that encompasses any individual who does not conform to society’s expectations of what it means to be male or female, often an individual whose gender identity does not ‘match’ their sex [assigned at birth].”i

This guide is intended to be used by both current and prospective Bowdoin students, faculty, and staff. It is designed to be a fluid document that will change over time. The Transgender Working Group will continue to address ongoing issues of support. We are open to feedback from the Bowdoin community. The group will look to add more campus offices to this document over time.

Please note: while this guide includes a variety of offices listed as resources, there are many other lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning (LGBTIQ)-friendly staff and faculty on campus. “Safe Zone” stickers are an indication of allies who have been trained about sexual orientation and gender identity; however, there are other allies who have yet to attend the training. Additionally, any office can be an entry point for a student; there is no presumption that transgender students need to go to a specific office first. Often students will identify a support person to serve as a liaison to other offices on campus. Ours is a small residential community. We deeply respect all students as individuals and strive to personalize our support of individual students and their needs.

## Bowdoin College Non-Discrimination Policy

“Bowdoin College is specific and assertive in the protection of all community members: Respect for the rights of all and for the differences among us is essential for the Bowdoin community. Consistent with the bylaws of the College, Bowdoin is in conformity with all applicable federal and state statutes and regulations with respect to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination. Discrimination or harassment of others because of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, marital status, place of birth, veteran status or against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability has no place in an intellectual community.”ii

# Administrative Resources

## Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center (SWAG)

The Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center cultivates a campus environment in which women and queer people feel safe, valued and supported through academic, co-curricular, and personal development.  It engages the full community to build awareness surrounding issues of gender and sexuality existing on campus and in the world.

The values of the Center are:

* **Safety** for all students in their residential, academic, and social environments;
* **Support** for LGBTIQ staff and faculty, which allows people to assist LGBTIQ students, serve as community role models, and perform best in their jobs;
* **Acceptance** for people’s complete identities including sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality socioeconomic class, age and ability;
* **Confidential and non-judgmental** spaces to discuss sexuality and gender identity; and
* **Exploration** and **self-discovery** for all college students.

Students can connect directly with the director and associate director of the Center. The director and associate director are available to offer individual support, make connections with other campus departments, and provide campus and external resources.

Additionally, students may turn to another student for peer support, by contacting an OUTPeer or OUTAlly. OUTPeers/OUTAllies posters are available in most restrooms on campus, and each first-year dorm has an assigned team of OUTPeers. All OUTPeers and OUTAllies training includes information regarding gender identity and expression.

Contact: Kate Stern, director of the Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center, [kstern@bowdoin.edu](mailto:kstern@bowdoin.edu) or 207-798-4223

## Office of the Dean of Students

The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs supports transgender students in a variety of ways. Other offices on campus, and particularly faculty members, will likely look to a student’s dean for information and guidance. The student and dean should discuss what language the student is comfortable using, and the amount of detail that the student feels comfortable having the dean share with faculty or essential staff members on campus. Transgender students should know:

* All first-year students are assigned to the Dean of First-Year Students or the Assistant Dean of First-Year Students and in subsequent years to one of the two upper class deans based on last name. If a student would prefer to work with a different dean, who better fits their individual needs, a request can be made to the Dean of Students.
* The student’s dean can share relevant information with other campus offices if desired by the student. Additionally, the student’s dean can be a liaison to anyone within the campus community, for example, faculty, job supervisor, coach, proctor, or resident assistant (RA).
* Faculty members (and other campus departments) who have questions or concerns about any student often contact that student’s dean. For students who are coming out as transgender and/or transitioning, the dean will continue to be the primary contact with faculty, but can work together with another support person (e.g. director of the SWAG Center, coach, etc.) if that is desired by the student.

Contact: Your assigned dean or Dr. Kristina Bethea Odejimi, Dean of Students, [kodejimi@bowdoin.edu](mailto:kodejimi@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3490

## Residential Life

The Office of Residential Life is committed to supporting transgender students and providing a safe living environment for all students on campus. Transgender students should feel free to contact the Office of Residential Life at any time if they have concerns or questions about their residence hall, room assignment, or, more generally, the living and learning environment at Bowdoin College. Through annual and weekly training of the proctor, RA, and house proctor staff, Residential Life is also committed to raising community awareness of transgender issues and creating a supportive climate for students of all gender identities.

**Housing Assignments:**

Incoming first year students may include specific housing needs on their online Housing Preference form. They may also contact the Director of Residential and Housing Operations prior to June 1 of their entering year to discuss housing options for their first year. Upper class students who want help navigating the Housing Lottery process should contact the Director of Residential and Housing Operations before April 1 (prior to the start of the following year’s Housing Lottery process) to discuss housing for sophomore, junior, or senior year.

Contact: Lisa Rendall, Director of Residential and Housing Operations, [lrendall@bowdoin.edu](mailto:lrendall@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3589

## Student Health Services

Health Services is located at the Peter Buck Center for Health and Fitness. We are committed to

promoting the health and well-being of the Bowdoin College student population by providing quality primary care and educational outreach services. Health Services approaches student health care as a family medicine office away from home and emphasizes health promotion, disease prevention, and individual self-advocacy. Health Services’ mission is to foster wellness, in the broadest sense, within the College community as a whole. Staff members strive to create a welcoming environment for all LGBTIQ students.

Student Health Services provides transgender students access to a caring, supportive, nonjudgmental, and confidential clinical environment including:

* Supporting a student’s process of transition, including but not limited to providing or coordinating care;
* Administering of hormone injections and drawing necessary laboratory tests as prescribed by Health Services or a student’s off-campus health care provider;
* Assisting students in accessing all available health insurance benefits, including but not limited to the expanded benefits provided by the Bowdoin College Student Health Insurance Plan, which includes a $25,000 maximum benefit for gender confirmation surgery, as well coverage for hormone therapy. Please contact Health Services for details regarding the benefit; and
* Partnering with other resources at the student’s request.

Please note: It is often required that medical records use a student’s current legal name and birth sex. Should a student wish to be addressed by another name or gender, this can be accommodated in our office, but may not transmit onto medical records sent off campus.

Contact: Dr. Jeff Maher, Director of Health Services, [jmaher@bowdoin.edu](mailto:jmaher@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3178

## Counseling and Wellness Services

Counseling and Wellness Services is committed to providing a safe, confidential, advocacy-oriented, and nonjudgmental relationship to explore thoughts, reactions and feelings regarding gender and sexuality. The Counseling and Wellness Services staff regularly participates in trainings to remain current with transgender theory and practice, and several staff members have particular interest and experience counseling students around transgender issues and concerns. Specific services available to students include:

* Brief or long-term counseling as requested by the student;
* Psychiatric consultation, assessment, or psychotropic medication monitoring as needed with physicians who are LGBTIQ friendly; and
* Staff committed to advocating for sexual and gender equality concerns beyond the realm of one-to-one counseling whenever possible.

Counseling and Wellness Services welcomes feedback and constructive criticism if there are ways that our services can be more effective and helpful to transgender students on the Bowdoin campus. You can set up an appointment at CS by calling 207 725-3145 and speaking with the Receptionist. Or if you need to speak with a counselor afterhours regarding an urgent or emergency situation, please call the same number and press “1” after the voice message.

Contact: Dr. Bernie Hershberger, Director of Counseling and Wellness Services, [bhershbe@bowdoin.edu](mailto:bhershbe@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3069

## The Department of Athletics

Athletics is committed to supporting every student who wishes to participate in intercollegiate sports. If a student has any questions or feels uncomfortable with anything related to athletics, we strongly urge them to meet with the Director of Athletics or the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA), or the director of the Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center to discuss possible accommodations.

If a student is considering medically transitioning or is in the process of medically transitioning, it is important for them to discuss with the Director of Athletics or the SWA the rules put forward by the NCAA with which the College must comply.

As a guideline, a student transitioning from female to male and who is engaged in hormone treatments may play on a men’s team, but not a women’s team. A student transitioning from male to female may play on a women’s team after completing one calendar year of testosterone suppression. Whenever documentation is required, staff in Athletics will work Health Services to ensure confidentiality.

Contact: Tim Ryan, Director of Athletics, tryan@bowdoin.edu, 207-725-3247 or Nicky Pearson,

Senior Women’s Administrator, npearson@bowdoin.edu, 207-725-3329

## Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar maintains information related to students’ name and legal sex. Lived name, the name you go by, will be used in most College systems as the default name, except where the use of the legal name is required or necessary. Students can update their lived name at the start of each semester on the Enrollment Form. Alternatively, when the open period for the Enrollment Form has closed, students can complete the online Student Biographical Change Form for name and other contact changes. After January 2020, students will be able to share their pronouns through these forms. Access to legal sex is limited to those departments that need it, such as the Health Center.  For more information, including changing legal sex and legal name in our system, please check this link: [bowdoin.edu/registrar/students/credentials/lived-name.html](https://www.bowdoin.edu/registrar/students/credentials/lived-name.html) or contact Julie Bedard to make an appointment.

Contact: Julie Bedard, Associate Registrar, [jbedard@bowdoin.edu](mailto:jbedard@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3872

## Student Aid and Student Employment

While many policies governing financial aid are subject to federal regulations and oversight, staff in both the Student Aid and Student Employment offices will help transgender students navigate processes relevant to changes in name and/or listed sex.

Contact: Michael Bartini, Director of Student Aid, [mbartini@bowdoin.edu](mailto:mbartini@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3146

## Health Professions Advising

Students interested in exploring the health professions are encouraged to approach the Director of Health Professions Advising at any time in their Bowdoin career. The Office of Health Professions Advising provides help for students in course selection, and deciding which, or even if, the health professions are the student’s goal. The office maintains an informational mailing lists and programming throughout the academic year and summer, and supports students through the graduate school application process. This service is available throughout a student’s career at Bowdoin, and even after the student graduates. Often a student’s motivations for pursuing a career in the health professions derives from personal experiences, and so navigating applications may be challenging for transgender students in deciding what to disclose and when.

Contact: Dr. Seth Ramus, Director of Health Professions Advising, [sramus@bowdoin.edu](mailto:sramus@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3624

## International Programs and Off-Campus Study

Studying away for a semester or a year can be an important part of the undergraduate experience. Staff at the International Programs and Off-Campus Study office work individually with transgender students to identify study away programs and country destinations that best fit academic goals while providing the resources needed to have a successful study away experience both academically and personally. During program choice advising as well as predeparture and re-entry orientation, our staff will offer transgender students an open and welcoming environment to discuss their goals, hopes, and concerns about their off-campus study experience.

Contact: Christine Wintersteen, Director of Off-Campus Study and International Programs, [cwinter@bowdoin.edu](mailto:cwinter@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3562

## Student Fellowships and Research

The Office of Student Fellowships and Research strives to inform all Bowdoin students about undergraduate research opportunities, primarily at Bowdoin, but also at institutions across the country. Additionally, the staff works with students and alumni to identify and apply for nationally competitive fellowships and scholarships (e.g., Fulbright, Rhodes, Watson). Students who are interested in learning more are invited to make an appointment. Student Fellowships and Research staff are happy to help students determine which fellowship(s) might be a good fit and to guide students through the process of submitting the strongest possible application, which for a transgender student may mean having an open discussion about disclosure in the application process.

Contact: Janice Jaffe, Acting Director of Student Fellowships and Research, [jjaffe@bowdoin.edu](mailto:jjaffe@bowdoin.edu) or 207-798-4156

# Other Campus Resources

## BQSA

The Bowdoin Queer Straight Alliance is a supportive group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, and questioning students and their allies. The BQSA is committed to raising awareness and providing outreach at Bowdoin and the Brunswick community. BQSA welcomes people from all walks of life and does not discriminate based on real or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, race, religion, or class. BQSA sponsors speakers and campus-wide discussions, hosts parties and movie nights, and engages in other campus programming with the aim of educating the campus community and providing a safe and supportive atmosphere for LGBTIQ students and allies. Meetings take place weekly. Check Blink for time and location.

## OUTPeers

OUTPeers is a group of comfortably out gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and non-heterosexual students available to offer confidential support to all students interested in discussing issues of sexuality and gender. Look for OUTPeers posters on campus to connect with current OUTPeers.

## Q&A

Q&A (Queers and Allies) is the Bowdoin faculty/staff network dedicated to supporting LGBTIQ prospective and current staff/faculty and students. Q&A provides one-on-one mentoring as well as social programming for the campus-wide community.

# Off-campus Resources

## Maine Transnet

Maine Transgender Network, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides support and resources for the transgender community, families, and significant others, and raises awareness about the varied forms of gender identity and expression by providing training and consultation for mental health and social service professionals. MTN currently runs a support group on campus twice a month. [www.mainetransnet.org](http://www.mainetransnet.org/)

## Trans Respect/Etiquette/Support 101

A useful resource for people looking to educate themselves on how to be an ally to the transgender community. <http://transgender.livejournal.com/1103296.html>

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Law Association Fund [http://www.le](http://www.le-gal.org/)**[**-gal.org**](http://www.le-gal.org/)

**National Center for Transgender Equality** [**https://transequality.org/**](https://transequality.org/)

**Transgender Law Center** [**http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/**](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/)

**Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund** [**http://www.transgenderlegal.org**](http://www.transgenderlegal.org/)

# Gender Inclusive Bathrooms

There are currently many academic and administrative buildings and residence halls on campus with gender inclusive bathrooms. All are single stall, locking bathrooms. As renovations are undertaken or new buildings designed, an effort will be made to increase the number of gender inclusive bathrooms available on campus.

* Smith Union – 3rd floor
* Sargent Gym –1st floor
* Thorne Dining Hall – near Daggett
* Hawthorne-Longfellow Library – 2nd floor
* 24 College – 1st and 2nd floor
* 30 College – 1st floor
* Counseling Center
* Kanbar – Basement
* Searles - Basement
* Adams Hall – 1st, 2nd, and 3rd floors
* Sills Hall – 1st floor
* Massachusetts Hall
* Pickard Theater – Basement, 3rd, 6th floors
* Buck Fitness Center
* Dudley Coe
* Watson Arena (contact Athletic Director for card access)
* Hubbard Hall – 1st floor
* VAC – 3rd floor
* Banister Hall (McKeen Center, to right)
* Chapel (THRIVE Space)
* Russworm House (Af-Am) – 2nd floor
* Coles Tower – Basement and 16th floor
* Osher Hall – 1st floor
* Every College House, ground floor (Baxter, Burnett, Helmrich, Howell, Ladd, MacMillan, Quinby, Reed, Boody-Johnson)
* Edwards Center for Art and Dance
* Bowdoin Outing Club (Schwartz Outdoor Leadership Center)
* Whittier Field
* Roux Center, 1st floor

Available during business hours (8:30-5pm Monday-Friday)

* Moulton Union – Dean’s Office, 2nd Floor
* Jewett Hall, 1st floor
* Cram Alumni House (83 Federal Street), 1st floor
* Upward Bound (82 Federal Street)
* Hubbard, 2nd floor and back “mezzanine” floor (between the first and second floors, at rear)
* 85 Federal (Development Administration) – 1st floor, 2nd floor
* 216 Maine St. – 2nd floor, 3rd floor
* Ham House – 1st floor, 2nd floor
* Riley House (Education – 7 Bath Rd) – 1st and 2nd floor
* Pols House (Philosophy and Latin American Studies – 5 Bath Rd) – 2nd floor
* Copeland House

i [http://www.mainetransnet.org/spectra.html.](http://www.mainetransnet.org/spectra.html)

ii<https://www.bowdoin.edu/hr/handbook/02_general_policies/3733.shtml>