

# **Transgender Student Guide**

## **Bowdoin College**

(Updated Fall 2022)

### **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 and Wellness Services, Health Services, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of the Dean of Students, 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].”<sup>i</sup>

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. “Affirming@Bowdoin: All Genders All Sexualities” stickers and pins are an indication of allies who have gone through a workshop to learn about sexual orientation and gender identity; however, there are other allies who have yet to attend the workshop. 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 strives to provide a place of study and work free from unlawful harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, and gender-based violence of any kind. In compliance with the Maine Human Rights Act, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and other federal and state laws, Bowdoin College prohibits any member of the faculty, staff, administration, student body, or third party (including persons visiting campus, patrons, independent contractors, and vendors) from harassing or discriminating against any member of the Bowdoin College community based on a person’s race, color, ethnicity, ancestry or national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, marital status, place of birth, genetic predisposition, veteran status, or physical or mental disability, or any other legally protected status in connection with hiring or employment, admission or financial aid, or other aspects of its educational programs or activities.”<sup>iii</sup>

## 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 of the Center. The director is available to offer individual support, make connections with other campus departments, and provide campus and external resources.

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 Students 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 Senior Associate Dean of Students and Director of First Year Experience, and in subsequent years to one of the three class deans based on class standing.
- 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 207-725-3149

## **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

## **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;
- Writing letters of support for gender affirming surgeries, legal document name changes, and/or gender marker changes;
- Administering of hormone injections and drawing necessary laboratory tests as prescribed by Health Services or a student's off-campus health care provider;
- Injection training as needed for folks starting to inject their own hormones, so we can offer a fully supported injection experience as needed;
- 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: Sandra Hayes, Director of Health Services, [shayes@bowdoin.edu](mailto:shayes@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3178

## **Counseling and Wellness Services**

Counseling and Wellness Services (CWS) 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 CWS by calling 207 725-3145 and speaking with the Receptionist or by emailing CWS at [counseling@bowdoin.edu](mailto:counseling@bowdoin.edu). 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. Roland Mendiola, Director of Counseling and Wellness Services, [rmendiola@bowdoin.edu](mailto:rmendiola@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3634

## **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 LGBTIQ students 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, pursuant to NCAA rules, 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 and complying with NCAA Serum Testosterone Level threshold guidelines.

At its January 19, 2022 meeting, the NCAA Board of Governors [updated the transgender student-athlete participation policy](#) governing college sports.

The new policy aligns transgender student-athlete participation with the [Olympic Movement \(PDF\)](#). The resulting sport-by-sport approach is designed to preserve opportunities for transgender student-athletes while balancing fairness, inclusion and safety for all who compete.

Like the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the updated NCAA policy calls for transgender student-athlete participation for each sport to be determined by the policy for the national governing body of that sport. If there is no NGB policy for a sport, it would then be determined by the policy for that sport’s international federation. If there is no international federation policy, it would be determined by [policy criteria \(PDF\)](#) previously established by the International Olympic Committee. Sport-specific policies are subject to ongoing

review and recommendation by the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports to the Board of Governors.

The policy has three phases of implementation; the policy, along with a number of helpful resources, are available on the [NCAA Transgender Student-Athlete Participation Policy](#) website.

Whenever documentation is required, staff in Athletics will work Health Services to ensure confidentiality.

Contact: Tim Ryan, Director of Athletics, [tryan@bowdoin.edu](mailto:tryan@bowdoin.edu), 207-725-3247 or Alice Wiercinski, Senior Women's Administrator, [awiercin@bowdoin.edu](mailto:awiercin@bowdoin.edu), 207-798-4342

### **Office of the Registrar**

The Office of the Registrar maintains information related to students' legal and lived names, pronouns 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. 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](http://bowdoin.edu/registrar/students/credentials/lived-name.html) or contact Julie Grossi to make an appointment.

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

### **Student Aid**

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: Dr. Michael Albano, Assistant Vice President, Director of Student Aid, [malbano@bowdoin.edu](mailto:malbano@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3146

### **Student Employment**

The Student Employment Office (SEO) strives to help students find meaningful work opportunities on campus. SEO is committed to assisting transgender students interested in working on campus with finding a job. We will meet with students individually to learn about their work interests and will offer guidance through the application/interview process. For students employed by the College, the lived name, provided to the Registrar's Office, will be viewable in our system by managers. The legal name must be maintained for pay and tax documents, however it's not viewable to managers. If there is a legal name change that occurs while at Bowdoin, and the student is an employee of the College, they will meet with SEO to update the I-9 form with the new legal name.

Contact: Meredith Haralson, Sr. Associate Director of Student Employment, [mharalso@bowdoin.edu](mailto:mharalso@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3497

### **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 in the application process students share personal experiences. If students have questions about what to disclose and when, our staff welcomes students to openly discuss this with us.

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

## **Off-Campus Study**

Studying away for a semester or a year can be an important part of the undergraduate experience. Staff at the Office of Off-Campus Study 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, [cwinter@bowdoin.edu](mailto:cwinter@bowdoin.edu) or 207-899-1347

## **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: Cindy Stocks, Director of Student Fellowships and Research, [cstocks@bowdoin.edu](mailto:cstocks@bowdoin.edu) or 207-725-3607

## **Career Exploration and Development (CXD)**

We are committed to providing support for you in all stages of your career exploration and development, including thinking about how your identity might influence your work, career choices, and professional development. Our goal is to support you on your journey and share resources, perspectives, and suggestions about others who can be helpful to you at Bowdoin and beyond. We invite you to share your questions, thoughts, and ideas too.

We will listen and offer perspectives on critical questions that often come up in the internship and job search process, such as:

- How can I determine if the environment and culture of an organization is a good fit for me?
- Are there any programs and fellowships created to advance careers for those who share my identity(ies)?
- How do I navigate gender transition or presentation in the job search process?
- How to reinforce my identity during the interview/hiring process?
- How to navigate difficult conversations during your job search?

We can share resources with you such as the Human Rights Campaign (HRC)'s Corporate Equality Index, which is the national benchmarking tool on corporate policies and practices pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer employees. Job seekers can use this tool to find companies with LGBTQ+ inclusive practices.

Contact: Any CXD advisor is happy to support you with questions you may have (appointments available via Handshake). For advice about whom to see or how we can help, start with Kimberly Buonaiuto, [k.buonaiuto@bowdoin.edu](mailto:k.buonaiuto@bowdoin.edu), 120 Moulton, 207-725-3718.

## **Other Campus Resources**

### **QSA**

The Queer Students Alliance is a supportive group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, asexual, aromantic and questioning students and their allies. The QSA is committed to raising awareness and providing community and outreach at Bowdoin and beyond campus. QSA 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. QSA sponsors programs, hosts parties and movie nights, and engages in other campus events with the aim of providing a welcoming community for LGBTIQA students and allies. Check Campus Groups for more information.

### **Q&A**

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

### **Questions about pronouns?**

Check the [Pronoun FAQ page](#) from the Bowdoin Sexuality, Women, and Gender Center Off-campus

## **Resources**

### **MaineTransNet**

MaineTransNet is a community based organization led by transgender people for transgender people. They provide peer-to-peer support groups, social and community events, advocacy for the transgender community across Maine, and transgender cultural competency training for medical, mental health, and social service providers. They engage transgender people and our allies across Maine in the practice of community building and organizing for mutual liberation. They host online and in-person support groups, trainings, and provide support resources to trans folks of all experiences at [www.mainetransnet.org](http://www.mainetransnet.org).

### **Tips for Trans Allies**

A useful resource for people looking to educate themselves on [how to be an ally to the transgender community](#) from GLAAD.

### **National Center for Transgender Equality**

NCTE advocates to change policies and society to increase understanding and acceptance of transgender people. In the nation's capital and throughout the country, NCTE works to replace disrespect, discrimination, and violence with empathy, opportunity, and justice. Accessible at <https://transequality.org/>.

### **Transgender Law Center**

The largest trans-led organization advocating self-determination for all people. Accessible at <http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/>.

### **Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund**

TLDEF is committed to ending discrimination based upon gender identity and expression and to achieving equality for transgender people through public education, test-case litigation, direct legal services, and public policy efforts. This includes assistance with legal name changes, impact litigation, the Trans Health Project, and public education. Accessible at <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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- Sargent Gym – 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- Thorne Dining Hall – near Daggett
- Hawthorne-Longfellow Library – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- 24 College – 1st and 2nd floor
- 30 College – 1st floor
- Counseling and Wellness Services
- Health Center
- Kanbar – Basement
- Searles - Basement
- Adams Hall – 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors
- Sills Hall – 1st floor
- Massachusetts Hall
- Pickard Theater – Basement, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6th floors
- Buck Fitness Center
- Dudley Coe
- Watson Arena (contact Athletic Director for card access)
- Hubbard Hall – 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- VAC – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- Banister Hall (McKeen Center, to right)
- Chapel (THRIVE Space)
- Russwurm House (BSU) – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- Coles Tower – Basement and 16<sup>th</sup> floor
- Osher Hall – 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- Every College House, ground floor (Baxter, Burnett, Helmrich, Howell, MacMillan, Quinby, Reed, Boody-Johnson)
- Edwards Center for Art and Dance
- Bowdoin Outing Club (Schwartz Outdoor Leadership Center)
- Whittier Field
- Roux Center, 1<sup>st</sup> floor

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

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

Additionally, in all residential buildings with shared hallway bathrooms we use the “E-System”. The large E replaces the gendered signage and can be changed by individuals upon entering the bathroom. If it looks like an E everyone can use the bathroom regardless of gender. If the sign is rotated to look like a W, only women identifying students may use the bathroom. If rotated to look like an M, only men identifying students may use the bathroom. E-system use is taught to all first years to ensure that students know how to use them properly.

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.mainetransnet.org/spectra.html>.

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.bowdoin.edu/institutional-equity-compliance/index.html>