

FAQ for Trans* Students

Is gender identity and expression a protected category by the University?

Yes. Vanderbilt University, as a whole, includes gender identity and expression in its policies against discrimination. The Divinity School also includes attention to gender identity and gender expression justice in its “Living the Commitments” document developed by students, faculty, and Deans or to the office of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services (EAD).

Does VDS have gender inclusive restrooms?

We currently have one gender inclusive lockable restroom on the first floor of the building and signs on all restrooms indicating the availability of the gender inclusive bathroom on that floor. The K.C. Potter Center also has two single stall lockable restrooms on the first floor and one on the second floor.

May I change to my preferred name in student academic records without having a legal “change- of-name” document?

Please see Asst. Dean Victor Judge for help with navigating student academic records. Initials and the last name can represent the first and middle names of the student, even before an official change-of- name is submitted to the University Registrar’s office. (For example, Mary Janelle Smith will be recorded as “M.J. Smith.”) Matt King in the University Registrar’s office can help students navigate the “undocumented name change form” that allows student’s preferred name to show up in class listings.

Additional resources for change of name at Vanderbilt may be found at:

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/wp-content/uploads/VU-Transgender-Name-Changes2.pdf>

Will the class roster be able to show my preferred name?

If the student wishes to be registered on a class roster by a preferred name, the University Registrar’s office can record a “preferred name” that represents the student’s identity and will ensure employment of the appropriate pronouns. Asst. Dean Judge (the Divinity registrar) can facilitate your connection with the University Registrar.

Do I have to provide medical documentation to change my preferred name and pronoun with the University or Divinity Registrar’s office?

These requests by the student will be honored without the student having to provide medical documentation.

May I change to my preferred name on my Vanderbilt Student ID?

The University’s card office currently can print the first and middle initials and last name on the official identification card; however, adoption of the “preferred name” is being discussed.

If I have trans*-associated medical needs, are there university resources available?

If a student wishes to receive medical care for associated transgender needs, they can contact Louise Hanson, MD or Jonna Whitman, MD with Student Health and/or Cathy Fuchs, MD with the Psychological & Counseling Center. For more general health concerns, they can contact Kristen Laurel Eckstrand, MD or Jesse Ehrenfeld, MD with the Program for

LGBTI Health at Vanderbilt Medical Center. The [KC Potter Center](#) also serves as an excellent resource for locating supportive communities and services throughout Vanderbilt/Nashville area.

Does Vanderbilt student health insurance cover hormone therapy and/or gender-confirming surgery?

The student health insurance plan does not currently cover surgery but it does cover therapy. The Student Health Center will also help manage and administer hormones. Vanderbilt has an on-site student health insurance representative, Kristy Miller, located in room SS4401 in the Zerfoss Student Health Center or reachable at (615)343-4688.

How should I answer questions about “sex” or “gender” on official university documentation?

- The student should answer how the student self-identifies their gender identity, i.e. if you self-identify as a Transwoman that would be your response on a Vanderbilt document (or you may choose not to answer at all.)
- The federal government does requires Vanderbilt to collect demographic information on a student’s “sex” at several points (e.g., on applications to programs) and requires an answer of either “male” or “female” for federal purposes. Please answer with the option that matches your current federal documents (e.g. passport, birth certificate, etc.).
- Federal financial aid for a transgender individual is also complicated because of the issue of Selective Service. A student born male (regardless of their current gender status) is required to register with the Selective Service within thirty days of their 18th birthday to be considered for government benefits. They are also required to register with their legal name AND any name change. Because the FAFSA is based on biologic sex from birth, that form needs to be filled out in accordance with federal laws. More information can be found at: <http://www.finaid.org/fafsa/lgbtfafsa.phtml>.