

# Inclusive Language

As a society or culture evolves, its language evolves to reflect those changes within that society. In modern America, word meanings are changing and assuming new meanings rapidly. Both genders are now entering those professions previously dominated by the opposite sex. Using terms that specify the gender of an individual in a particular occupation is no longer acceptable.

## Pronouns

The use of the pronoun “he” as a general referent is no longer acceptable as it excludes all females. As no gender neutral singular pronoun currently exists, the following are suggested solutions:

1. Pluralize the sentence to avoid a gender-specific singular pronoun.

Instead of this: *A student* living in the dorm is free to come and go as *he* chooses.

Use this: *Students* living in the dorm are free to come and go as *they* choose.

2. Rewrite the sentence without the pronoun

A student living in the dorm is free to come and go at any time.

3. Use the double pronoun construction.

A student living in the dorm is free to come and go as *he or she* chooses.

## Occupational Titles

It is important to be aware of occupational titles that traditionally indicated the gender of the individual. The following examples show the outdated and current forms of several of these titles:

### Gender Biased Form

Anchorman

Chairman

Fireman

Policeman

Foreman

Mailman

Stewardess

Waiter/waitress

Stay-at-home mom

### Inclusive Form

News anchor

Chair, chairperson

Firefighter

Police officer

Supervisor

Letter carrier, postal worker

Flight attendant

Server

Homemaker