

Transgender Inclusion Policy

Introduction

RIT promotes and values diversity within its workforce and provides equal opportunity to all qualified individuals regardless of race, color, creed, age, marital status, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, veteran status, or disability.

This policy supports people who are gender non-conforming, a term used to describe people whose gender expression is different from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity. RIT is committed to providing the support and guidance necessary for individuals to make informed decisions about their participation that both comports with the current NCAA policies and is in the best interest of the student athlete. *(For a more complete list of definitions and terms related to transgender people, refer to Appendix A)*

This policy closely follows the guidelines offered in the 2010 report *On The Team: Equal Opportunity for Transgender Student Athletes*. Written by Pat Griffin and Helen J. Carroll, the report stems from the work of a think tank titled “Equal Opportunities for Transgender Student Athletes” that included “leaders from the NCAA and the National High School Federation, transgender student athletes, and an impressive array of experts on transgender issues from a range of disciplines—law, medicine, advocacy and athletics.”

The Think Tank identified ten principles:

1. Participation in interscholastic and intercollegiate athletics is a valuable part of the education experience for all students.
2. Transgender student athletes should have equal opportunity to participate in sports.
3. The integrity of women’s sports should be preserved.
4. Policies governing sports should be based on sound medical knowledge and scientific validity.
5. Policies governing sports should be objective, workable, and practicable; they should also be written, available and equitably enforced.
6. Policies governing the participation of transgender students in sports should be fair in light of the tremendous variation among [all] individuals in strength, size, musculature, and ability.
7. The legitimate privacy interests of all student athletes should be protected.
8. The medical privacy of transgender students should be preserved.
9. Athletic administrators, staff, parents of athletes, and student athletes should have access to sound and effective educational resources and training related to the participation of transgender and gender-variant students in athletics.
10. Policies governing the participation of transgender students in athletics should comply with state and federal laws protecting students from discrimination based on sex, disability, and gender identity and expression (pp.21-22).

Given both the enjoyment and the benefits that sports can provide, all students should have equal opportunity to participate in school sports, whether the students are transgender or cisgender—“**cisgender**” meaning people whose gender identities align with their bodies in ways traditionally recognized as normative. “**Transgender**” is a term used to describe a person whose gender identity does not match or does not fully match their birth-assigned sex.

Furthermore, RIT Athletics recognizes that in addition to transgender students, there are students who may identify as non-binary, agender, or gender fluid. In order to maintain consistency with the rest of the guidelines, these students can participate according to their sex assigned at birth.

NCAA Eligibility

(Taken, with minor modification, from the *NCAA Inclusion of Transgender Student Athletes* handbook 12-14, and *On The Team: Equal Opportunity for Transgender Student Athletes*)

RIT Athletics is committed to providing equal opportunities for trans student athletes to participate on intercollegiate athletic teams so long as that athlete’s use of hormones, if any, is consistent with the NCAA existing policies on banned medications. Specifically, a transgender student athlete should be allowed to participate on sex-separated intercollegiate sports teams under the following conditions:

A. Transgender student athletes who have been prescribed and are taking hormones

1. A male-to-female transgender student athlete (trans woman) who is taking medically prescribed hormones related to gender transition may participate on a men’s team at any time, but must complete one year of the medically prescribed hormones related to gender transition before competing on a women’s team.
2. A female-to-male transgender student athlete (trans man) who is taking medically prescribed testosterone related to gender transition may not participate on a women’s team after beginning hormone medication.
3. A female-to-male transgender student athlete who is taking medically prescribed testosterone for the purposes of gender transition may compete on a men’s team with an NCAA approved medical exception.
4. An individual who identifies as non-binary and is using feminizing hormones must complete one year of the medically prescribed hormones before competing on a women’s team. An individual who identifies as non-binary and is using masculinizing hormones may not participate on a women’s team after beginning hormone medication.
5. In any case where a student athlete is taking hormones related to gender transition, the use of an anabolic agent or peptide hormone must be approved by the NCAA before the student-athlete is allowed to participate in competition while taking these medications. The NCAA recognizes that some banned substances are used for legitimate medical purposes. Accordingly, the NCAA allows an exception to be made for those student-athletes with a documented medical history

demonstrating the need for regular use of such a drug. The University, through its Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, may request (of the NCAA) an exception for use of an anabolic agent or peptide hormone by submitting to the NCAA medical documentation from the prescribing physician.

B. Transgender student athletes who are NOT taking hormones

1. Any transgender student athlete who is not taking hormones related to gender transition may participate in sex-separated sports activities in accordance with his or her sex assigned at birth.
2. A female-to-male transgender student athlete who is not taking testosterone related to gender transition may participate on a men's or women's team.
3. A male-to-female transgender student athlete who is not taking hormones related to gender transition may not compete on a women's team.
4. An individual who identifies as non-binary and is not taking medically prescribed hormones may participate in sport activities that best suit their gender identity provided they are in compliance with the NCAA policy for transgender student athletes who are not taking hormones.
4. Intersex students may participate according to their gender identity.
*Intersex people, often women, have mostly always identified as women. Their testosterone level, whatever it is, is endogenous, meaning it is natural, not the result of taking testosterone medically. There is no scientific evidence that intersex women have a competitive advantage.

Recommendations

A. The coach's responsibility

1. The RIT Athletics Department will have a coach or coaches attend the NCAA LGBTQ One Team Training Program on an annual basis in order to provide training for staff and students.
2. Coaches will nominate 2-3 members of their team on an annual basis to be trained by the Q Center to be allies and leaders in Safe Zone Training for their individual teams.
3. Coaches will serve as an informed resource and advocate for any trans student athlete who wants to participate on their team and assist the athlete in taking the necessary steps to participate according to policy.

A. The student's responsibility

1. In order to avoid challenges to a transgender student's participation during a sport season, a student athlete who has completed, plans to initiate, or is in the process of taking hormones as part of a gender transition shall submit the request to participate on a sports team in writing to the Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics upon matriculation or when the decision to take medically prescribed hormones is made.
2. The student shall submit their request to the Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. The request shall include a letter from the student's physician documenting the student athlete's intention to transition or the student's transition status if the process has already been initiated.

B. Individual School and National Governing Body Responsibilities

1. The Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics shall meet with the student to review eligibility requirements and procedure for approval of transgender participation.
2. In the event a student athlete is denied participation or whose eligibility is under review, a support committee will facilitate the participation of transgender students in athletics and will be available for consultation to the student, the Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, and others. A final recommendation will be reported back to the Executive Director of Athletics. This committee should include:
 - The Q Center Staff to provide expertise and training about trans health care and anti-discrimination policies.
 - The RIT Medical Director
 - The Head Athletic Trainer
 - The Senior Woman Administrator
3. All discussions among involved parties and required written supporting documentation shall be kept confidential, unless the student athlete makes a specific request otherwise. All information about an individual student's transgender identity and medical information, including physician's information provided pursuant to this policy, shall be maintained confidentially.

Facilities, Support and Education

A. Locker Rooms

Anyone using athletic facilities on the RIT campus—whether RIT athletes, visiting athletes, or other participants and attendants—shall have access to the changing, shower, and toilet facilities that most closely match their gender identity. Private facilities will be made available if asked for but transgender people will not be required to use them.

B. Accommodations for Travel

When possible, RIT athletes traveling to other schools should be assigned accommodations based on their gender identity, with more privacy provided, if possible, when requested.

C. Names and Pronouns

Teammates, coaches, and other participants in sports shall refer to people by their affirmed name and pronouns.

D. Dress Codes and Uniforms

Dress codes should enable all athletes to dress in accord with their gender identity. For example, instead of requiring gendered forms of “dressy,” such as a skirt or dress, dress codes should require students to dress with appropriate formality in ways that suit their gender identity. Since both transgender and cisgender athletes may have preferred gender expressions that do not conform to traditional norms of dress—for instance, not all women feel comfortable in a skirt—this policy should be understood to apply to all athletes. Uniforms should not conflict with an athlete’s gender identity (approved uniform colors and other required uniform specifications are an exception).

E. Education

At RIT: Athletes, coaches, trainers, and other people involved in RIT Athletics should be educated about trans identities and the principles of transgender inclusion. They should be knowledgeable about how, in their particular roles, to support trans people, and prepared to put this knowledge to use. Under no circumstances will slurs, intentional outing, harassment or other forms of discriminatory behavior be tolerated, particularly purposely misgendering someone or refusing to use a person’s affirmed name.

At schools or venues where RIT athletes compete: Without naming or violating the privacy of transgender athletes or personnel in question, relevant authorities and personnel at those venues should be informed about expectations for the treatment of transgender athletes—including accommodation, pronoun, and name use—during and outside of play.

Appendix A

Definitions and Terminology: A Word About Words

(Taken, with minor modification, from the *NCAA Inclusion of Transgender Student Athletes* handbook)

Language has immense power to shape our perceptions of other people. Using accurate language can help to overcome many of the misperceptions associated with gender and transgender people. Although the vocabulary related to transgender people continues to evolve, here are some working definitions and examples of frequently used (and misused) terms.

Biological/Anatomical Sex – The physical characteristics typically used to assign a person’s gender at birth, such as chromosomes, hormones, internal and external genitalia and reproductive organs. Given the potential variation in all of these, biological sex must be seen as a spectrum or range of possibilities rather than a binary set of two options.

Gender – The complex relationship between physical traits and one’s internal sense of self as male, female, both or neither as well as one’s outward presentations and behaviors related to that perception. Biological sex and gender are different; gender is not inherently connected to one’s physical anatomy.

Gender Identity – one’s inner concept of self as male or female or both or neither. One’s gender identity can be the same or different than the gender assigned at birth. Most people become conscious of their gender identity between the ages of 18 months and 3 years. Most people have a gender identity that matches their assigned gender at birth. For some, however, their gender identity is different from their assigned gender. Some of these people choose to live socially as the other gender and may also hormonally and/or surgically change their bodies to more fully express their gender identity. All people have gender identity, not just transgender people.

Gender Expression – Refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, and other forms of presentation. Gender expression also works the other way as people assign gender to others based on their appearance, mannerisms, and other gendered characteristics. Many transgender people seek to make their external appearance – their gender expression – congruent with their internal gender identity through clothing, pronouns, names, and in some cases, hormones and surgical procedures. All people have gender expression, not just transgender people.

Transgender – Sometimes used as an ‘umbrella term’ to describe anyone whose identity or behavior falls outside of stereotypical gender norms. More narrowly defined, it refers to a person whose gender identity does not match their assigned birth gender. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation (attraction to people of a specific gender). Therefore, transgender people may additionally identify as straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Cisgender – A descriptor for those whose experiences of their own gender agree with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Agender – A term meaning “without gender”. It can be seen as either non-binary gender identity or as a statement of not having a gender identity.

Non-Binary – Describes any gender identity that does not fit within the binary of male or female.

Genderqueer – This term represents a blurring of the lines around gender identity and

sexual orientation. Genderqueer people typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity of gender identity and sexual orientation. This term is typically assigned to an adult identifier and not used in reference to preadolescent children.

Gender Nonconforming/Gender Variant – Refers to people whose behaviors and/or interests fall outside what is considered typical for their assigned gender at birth. Someone who identifies as “gender nonconforming” is not necessarily transgender. To the contrary, many people who are not transgender do not conform to gender stereotypes in their appearance, clothing, physical characteristics, interests, or activities.

Gender Fluidity – Gender fluidity convey a wider, more flexible range of gender expression, with interests and behaviors that may even change from day to day. Gender fluid individuals do not feel confined by restrictive boundaries of stereotypical expectations of boys or girls.

Intersex – An estimated one in 2,000 babies is born with an “intersex” condition or Disorders of Sexual Development (DSD). People with intersex conditions (DSD) are born with physically mixed or atypical bodies with respect to sexual characteristics, i.e. chromosomes, internal reproductive organs, and genitalia. These characteristics may not be visible and individuals may not be aware of the condition. Having an intersex condition does not necessarily affect a person’s gender identity.

FTM (female-to-male)/affirmed male/trans boy or man – A child or adult who was assigned to the female gender at birth but has a male gender identity.

MTF (male-to female)/affirmed female/trans girl or woman – A child or adult who was assigned to the male gender at birth but has a female gender identity.

Transition – The process by which a transgender person lives consistently with their gender identity, and which may (but does not necessarily) include changing the person’s body through hormones and/or surgical procedures. Transition can occur in three ways: social transition through the use of medicines such as hormone “blockers” or cross hormones to promote gender-based body changes; and/or surgical transition in which a person’s body is modified through the addition or removal of gender-related physical traits. Based on current medical knowledge and practice, genital reconstructive surgery is not required in order to transition. Most transgender people in the United States do not have genital reconstructive surgery.

Transsexual – A person whose gender identity does not match their sex at birth. This person usually desires to physically alter their bodies surgically and/or hormonally. This physical transition is a complicated, multi-step process that may take years and may include, but is not limited to, cross-gender hormone medication and a variety of surgical procedures.

Transphobia – Fear or hatred of transgender people. Transphobia is manifested in a number of ways, including violence, harassment and discrimination.

Outing – To expose (intentionally or unintentionally) someone’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender identity without their permission.

