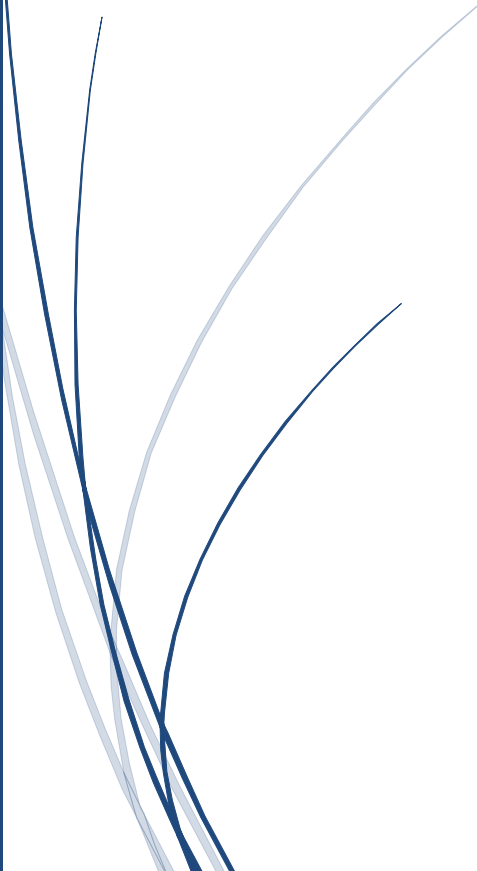




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Guide to Bias-Free Language Usage

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Acknowledgements

The *Guide to Bias-Free Language Usage* grew out of the Editorial Review for Bias of Excelsior College Examinations. That review, in turn, was the result of extensive readings in the subject of bias in language and literature. The model has been expanded and generalized to guide the faculty and staff of Excelsior College in the use of bias-free language.

Four primary sources were essential to the compilation of this guide. References to these sources are noted throughout the guide:

Herbst, Philip A. *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1997. References to *The Color of Words* in the thesaurus section of this guide will be indicated by [Herbst].

Maggio, Rosalie. *Talking About People: A Guide to Fair and Accurate Language*. Phoenix: The Oryx Press, 1997. References to *Talking About People* in the thesaurus section of this guide will be indicated by [Maggio].

McGraw-Hill Book Company. *Guidelines for Bias-Free Publishing*. Hightstown, NJ: McGraw-Hill Book Company, n.d. References to McGraw-Hill's *Guidelines* in the thesaurus section of this guide will be indicated by [McGraw].

Schwartz, Marilyn, and the Task Force on Bias-Free Language of the Association of American University Presses. *Guidelines for Bias-Free Writing*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995. References to the AAUP *Guidelines* in the thesaurus section of this guide will be indicated by [AAUP].

For anyone who is interested in exploring the topic of bias in language, Rosalie Maggio's works (*Talking About People: A Guide to Fair and Accurate Language* and its predecessors *The Bias-Free Word Finder: A Dictionary of Nondiscriminatory Language* and *The Nonsexist Word Finder: A Dictionary of Gender-Free Usage*) are indispensable.

Introduction

The *Guide to Bias-Free Language Usage* was compiled to assist individuals in the use of accurate, clear, and sensitive language. The guidelines are intended to inform and to help us develop sensitive and healthy language usage habits.

Language is a complex living system complete with shape, texture, formal rules, style, and mannerisms. As a living system, language is evolutionary by nature. The words, names, meanings, style, and naming conventions change. Our individual understandings of these changes will vary. Our understandings will, in effect, be diverse.

Our collective understanding of the need for these changes must be based upon the articulated mission statement of Excelsior College:

Excelsior College exists to increase access to a quality education with excellence and economy, particularly for those historically underserved by higher education. The College seeks to meet the needs of a pluralistic society that is increasingly dependent upon an informed and educated citizenry.

The elimination of potentially biased language in our written and oral communications is an essential component of this commitment to meet the needs of a pluralistic society. The use of bias-free language is in accordance with the stated Diversity Values and Policy of Excelsior College:

We acknowledge that diversity involves a recognition and respect of the richness of ethnic and cultural traditions, and of different perspectives related to gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, family status, and more...Excelsior College will integrate the concept of diversity into all aspects of the life of the College,...[and] encourage practices that contribute to the support of diversity in the workplace.

Our collective understanding of bias-free language usage must also be based upon an awareness that:

Power belongs to those who do the naming, which is why naming is one of the most critical issues for fairness and accuracy in language....One of the most basic ways of showing respect for others is to refer to them by the names with which they have chosen to identify themselves and to avoid using names that that they consider offensive= (*American Heritage Book of English Usage*). The correct names for individuals and groups are always those they have chosen for themselves. [Maggio p. 16]

The *Guide to Bias-Free Language Usage* should be consulted with an awareness of:

...the impossibility of being truly comprehensive or up-to-date in such a publication, when new terms and topics constantly demand recognition, and advice in areas of rapidly changing and hotly contested usage may quickly be superseded. [AAUP, ix]

This guide is a work-in-progress toward creating awareness of the ways in which language, if not carefully chosen, presents a question of accessibility, especially in educational content. As a work-in-progress, it will be reviewed and updated periodically. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and can be submitted to the Assessment Editor, Center for Educational Measurement (CEM), Excelsior College, 7 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203-5159.

Conventions

OVERVIEW

The conventions and thesaurus included in the *Guide to Bias-Free Language Usage* have been adopted and compiled to deal with the most common questions and issues encountered in bias-free language usage.

We can eliminate many of the issues and problems that arise in language if, before speaking or writing, we ask the following question:

Is it necessary to make reference to a person's age, ancestry, disability, ethnicity, nationality, physical appearance, religion, sex, sexuality?

The answer to this question will frequently be no, the reference is not necessary. In that case, we can eliminate the reference entirely. If the answer is yes, the reference is necessary, then we should make every effort to ensure that we express the reference in as bias-free a manner as possible and that we avoid the stereotyping that often accompanies labeling. Neutralize content whenever possible.

An individual's membership in a group should not define who that individual is or can be, or what that individual can or cannot do. We should make reference to groups or to a person's membership in a group with the awareness and understanding that groups are collections of complex, multifaceted individuals. Groups are neither monolithic nor unidimensional in nature.

One common-sense rule to follow in the pursuit of bias-free language usage is that if you think a word, term, or phrase might be biased, chances are it is. When in doubt, do not use the term. There is always another way to express the idea or thought in a manner that is more exact and precise.

The *Guide to Bias-Free Language Usage* consists of a thesaurus and selected bibliography. The thesaurus contained in this guide is intended to serve as an introduction to alternate language and ways of expressing thoughts. The thesaurus is not comprehensive. The Selected Bibliography cites dictionaries and listings that are comprehensive.

Review for Bias

Review all written text, spoken text, audiotapes, videotapes, photographs, and multimedia materials for:

- potentially biased language;
- a listing and frequency (number) of references to females and males, ethnicity/race, individuals with disabilities, and other distinct groups;
- the characteristics and activities (active/passive, traditional/nontraditional, stereotyped/nonstereotyped) that have been assigned to the individuals/groups

identified in the material.

We should not render individuals or groups invisible by excluding them from the material, nor should we marginalize their inclusion in print or illustrations. Ideally, if we must refer to an individual's ancestry, disability, ethnicity/race, or sex, then the number of references should be in proportions that reflect the makeup of the general population. There will be occasional exceptions to this convention if the academic content area of the materials necessitates a higher frequency of references to a group (for example, a Maternal & Child Nursing Examination will include more references to women than to men because of the maternity content.)

Generic terms are words used to relate to or characterize a whole group (for example, human beings, firefighters, police officers). False generic (pseudogeneric) terms are words which although they intend to signify or represent the whole, are terms that, in effect, exclude individuals or groups from the whole (for example, mankind, firemen, policemen). Avoid the use of false generics.

We should avoid terms that define individuals or groups by what they are "not." "Nonwhite" presumes that "white" is the norm. Carefully examine terms with the prefix "non-" when they are used to describe or define human beings.

If we must describe or include ideas, research findings, or materials that are biased in nature, the source or author of the material should be clearly cited:

According to research conducted by...

The necessity of including such materials must be clearly defensible. Review historical and literary materials to determine:

...whether these publications contain sexist or other offensive language that will undermine their value and usefulness...Scholars normally do not sanction tampering with the wording of original documents. In such special cases a publisher or academic editor should include a disclaimer in the foreword, preface, or introduction that provides a context for the dated language. [AAUP, p. 42]

Once again, the necessity of including such materials must be clearly defensible (for example, the inclusion of a pro-slavery speech in a discussion of the United States Civil War.) We must understand that published disclaimers are suspect since we made the decision to include the materials and must ultimately be held accountable for that decision.

We must carefully examine the context in which potentially biased terms appear. Avoid changing official titles, organizational names, and titled legislation that contain biased terms.

General Guidelines

Bias exists in many forms. Some forms of bias are obvious, while others are quite subtle. An awareness of and sensitivity toward the following forms is the first step toward bias-free

language usage.

Age

Ageism is defined as prejudice or discrimination against a particular age-group. We should examine carefully the context in which we make age references. Reference to an individual's age is often unnecessary at best, and discriminatory at worst. As with all groups, membership in an age group should not define who an individual is or can be, or what an individual can or cannot do.

Avoid referring to age unless it is necessary to your material...If you need to refer to an age, use a specific age ("a 78-year-old man") or age group ("those between 65 and 74") instead of imprecise terms like "the aged."
[Maggio, p. 40]

Disabilities

The portrayal of persons with disabilities should be guided by an understanding that the individual is not the disability, the disorder, or the condition. We should refer to a disability only when it is necessary. The disability, disorder, or condition should not define the individual (for example, the disabled, a diabetic.) We should follow the convention of placing the person first:

Individuals with disabilities...
A person with diabetes...

The term *handicap* should not be used to describe people:

The difference between a "disability" and a "handicap" is crucial: a disability is a condition; a handicap is an obstacle. Someone with multiple sclerosis has a disability; the two flights leading to a classroom present a handicap to that person. [Maggio, p. 180]

Ethnicity/Race

Although individuals often associate their identity closely with their ethnic, racial, and cultural heritage, we should refer to ethnicity/race only when it is necessary. In all other cases, neutralize such references, where it is not relevant to the content. An individual's heritage should not be the whole definition of who that individual is or can be, or what that person can or cannot do. We should take care in the selection of racial and ethnic terms:

The correct names for individuals and groups are always those by which they refer to themselves...the only rule we have in this area says we call people what they want to be called. [Maggio, p. 11]

For decisions on how to refer to race, refer to the textbook or official sources. For example, in criminal justice exams, the use of *Black* and *non-White* may be appropriate usage in the same item, depending upon the relations being set up, to cover all groups in the term.

According to the American Psychological Association (2019 manual), *race* is differentiated from *ethnicity* in the following way:

"*Race* refers to physical differences that groups and cultures consider socially significant. For example, people might identify their race as Aboriginal, African American or Black, Asian, European American or White, Native American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Māori, or some other race. *Ethnicity* refers to shared cultural characteristics such as language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs. For example, people might identify as Latino or another ethnicity. Be clear about whether you are referring to a racial group or to an ethnic group. Race is a social construct that is not universal, so one must be careful not to impose racial labels on ethnic groups. Whenever possible, use the racial and/or ethnic terms that your participants themselves use. Be sure that the racial and ethnic categories you use are as clear and specific as possible. For example, instead of categorizing participants as Asian American or Hispanic American, you could use more specific labels that identify their nation or region of origin, such as Japanese American or Cuban American. Use commonly accepted designations (e.g., census categories) while being sensitive to participants' preferred designation."

Gender, Sex

Although this is an oversimplification, in general, sex may be thought of as a physical, physiological, biological attribute...Gender is cultural: a society's notions of masculine are based on how it expects men to behave, and its notions of feminine are based on how it expects women to behave...The difference between sex and gender is important because most sexist language arises from cultural determinations of what a female or male 'ought' to be. [Maggio, p. 5]

We should avoid using the pronoun "he" to collectively refer to men and women (for example, *Everyone is responsible for his own luggage*. Use of the masculine generic ("his") excludes women. Although gender-inclusive, the use of he/she, s/he, he (she), (s)he can be awkward and difficult to read (for example, "Everyone is responsible for her/his own luggage."). Avoid the use of gender pronouns whenever possible. The specific pronouns "her," "his," or "her/his" should be avoided. Now that it is generally accepted, "they" may be used, even when the antecedent is singular. However, neutralize to avoid awkwardness. For example, "The patient has no feeling in their foot" is awkward, technically incorrect, and should be revised to include the neutral article or the use of "his" or "her," since no stereotyping is in play. (*The patient has no feeling in the foot...; The patient has no feeling in her foot...*). Since it is becoming appropriate to use general plural nouns as a way to avoid the use of gender pronouns, for example, it is acceptable to write, "Nurses should check their own readings of vital signs..." or even "Each nurse should check their own reading of vital signs..." Both are acceptable style. If the pronoun cannot be eliminated altogether (for example, "Owners are responsible for luggage."), use of the singular "they" is recommended ("Everyone is responsible for their own luggage." [AAUP, p. 17]) Or the subject can be changed to: "You," "I," or "One."

Gender-marked terms are terms which are a diminutive form of a common-gender term. Examples are the addition of the suffixes *ette*, *ess*, and *ix*. A common-gender or gender-neutral term includes both females and males. Avoid gender-marked terms such as: actress, authoress, aviatrix, executrix, majorette, poetess, sculptress. These terms are diminutives. The common-gender form of the label should be used for both sexes: actor, author, aviator, executor, major, poet, sculptor, etc.

In the interest of equity, when paired terms are used, such as "he or she," "her or his," "men and women," "females and males," the order of the appearance of terms in the pair should be alphabetic. It is an easy convention to remember, to provide a balanced presentation.

THESAURUS

A

able-bodied – avoid the use of this term. If reference to the physical abilities of individuals is necessary, specify the abilities.

abnormal – examine carefully the context in which the term *abnormal* appears. There is little consensus as to what is "normal" in this world. To ensure that the usage is bias-free, examine who established the norm.

aborigine, aboriginal – use when referring to the first, the original inhabitants of a region. Use Aboriginal peoples or Aboriginals when referring to the native peoples of Australia.

actress – use actor. If you must refer to an individual's sex, use female actor, male actor.

A.D. – use C.E. (for the Common Era).

addict – use individual with a drug addiction or individual who is addicted to (indicate specific substance).

adolescent – preferred term instead of teenager.

affectional orientation – preferred over “sexual orientation” (Devito, 117-118).

afflict – avoid terms such as "afflicted with," "suffering from," "victim of" when referring to an individual with a disability, disease, disorder, or condition. The recommended usage is: an individual with (name of the specific disease/disorder/condition) or an individual who has (name of the specific disease/disorder/condition.)

African American – African American and Black are the capitalized, preferred generic terms for many, but not necessarily all groups of dark-skinned people in the United States who are of African ancestry, if reference to ethnicity or ancestry must be made. [*Manual of Style*, p. 247] See also "Ethnicity/Race" in this document.

Afro American – use African American or Black, if reference to ethnicity, or ancestry must be made. This is a dated term. Do not use.

aged (noun) – use older persons, older adults, older people, if reference to an individual's age must be made.

AIDS – acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. Avoid the term AIDS victim, use: an individual with AIDS, an individual who has AIDS, an individual living with AIDS, or an individual who is HIV seropositive.

Alaska Natives – preferred term for the Inuit, Aleuts, and Athabaskans peoples of Alaska in the aggregate. [Maggio p. 134]

alcoholic – use individual with alcoholism, or individual who is addicted to alcohol.

Aleut – use for the people of the western Alaskan Peninsula, the Pribilof Islands, and the Aleutian Island chain.

allow natural death (AND) – *proposed* replacement for the physician-written “do-not-resuscitate” (DNR) order, which elicits negative reactions from some stakeholders and which may decrease appropriate end-of-life care.

alumna, alumnae, alumni, alumnus – use graduate, graduates, member(s) of the class of _ _ . If Latin is required, use alumna/us (singular) or alumnae/i (plural).

American – the use of the word American as a synonym for the United States, its citizenry, institutions, or products is inexact. If the reference is specifically to the United States, it is best to cite the United States. If the reference is to the continent of North America or South America, it is best to use North America or South America.

American Indian (United States) – American Indian (or Amerindian), Native American, Indian people, First Nations People, or Indian Nations people are the preferred generic terms, if reference to an individual's ethnicity or ancestry must be made. "Whenever possible use the name of a specific people...there are over 500 Indian nations." [Maggio p. 206]

anchorman, anchorwoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use anchor, news anchor, newscaster.

Anglo American – refers to peoples in the United States of English ancestry. Western European or White are the preferred generic terms for the groups of light-skinned people in the United States who are of European ancestry, if reference to an individual's ethnicity or ancestry must be made.

Arab – the term Arab is not interchangeable with Arab American or Muslim. Not all Arabs are Muslims and not all Muslims are Arabs. [Maggio p. 50]

Arab American – preferred generic term for peoples in the United States who are of Arabian Peninsula origins, if reference to an individual's ethnicity or ancestry must be made.

Asian American – Asian American is the preferred generic term for peoples in the United States who are of Asian ancestry, if reference to an individual's ethnicity or ancestry must be made. Whenever possible specify the nation of origin (for example, China, Japan, Vietnam.) See also "Ethnicity/Race" in this document.

Asiatic – avoid the use of this term. Use Asian, Asian American, or specify the nation of origin (for example, Chinese American, Japanese American) if reference to an individual's ethnicity or

ancestry must be made.

assemblyman, assemblywoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use member of the assembly, representative. [Maggio p. 52]

Athabascans – preferred term for the Indian peoples native to Cook Inlet and the interior regions of Alaska.

authoress – use author.

autistic – use individual with autism.

average man – use average person, people in general.

B

bachelor – use single man, single woman, if reference to marital status is necessary.

bachelor's degree – use Baccalaureate, BA, BS, college degree, four-year degree.

bag lady, bag man – use *woman who is homeless, man who is homeless*. If gender is irrelevant, use *person who is homeless*.

B.C. – use B.C.E. (Before the Common Era); also see common era (C.E.)

benefactress – use benefactor.

bias – use to describe a preference or inclination, especially one that inhibits impartial judgment. Bias isolates or stereotypes some aspect of an individual's nature or the nature of a group of individuals. Bias is an uninformed or unintentional inclination that may operate for or against someone or something.

birth defect – use congenital anomaly, congenital disability. If possible, cite the specific disability.

Black – Terms used in reference to the various groups of dark-skinned people in the United States who are of African ancestry have a long, complex history. Organizers of the early civil rights movement insisted on using Negro over “colored,” for example. In the later 1960s, Black became the preferred term among these groups and, in the late 1980s, African American. Black and African American are the capitalized, preferred generic terms for many but not necessarily all groups of dark-skinned people in the United States who are of African ancestry, if reference to an individual's ethnicity/race or ancestry must be made [*Chicago Manual of Style*, p. 247]. Do not assume that one size fits all. Africans, for example, are not necessarily African Americans. Whenever possible, use reference to a specific ancestry if one must be made, for example, Black-Caribbean American, Somali American. See also "Ethnicity/Race" in this document.

black and white, black or white (adjective) – avoid the use of this phrase. If describing absolutes, use either-or, all good or all bad, one extreme or the other, day and night.

blind – use individual or person who is blind. Blindness should only be used to refer to the total loss of vision. Not appropriate to use for describing partial vision or visual impairments. [*Guidelines for Reporting and Writing about People with Disabilities*]

blue collar – avoid use of this term, specify the occupation or job.

Boricua – the preferred, generalized ethnic term for individuals of national Puerto Rican descent who identify with Taino (vs. Spanish) ancestry.

boys – use for males up to 13 years old.

brethren – use brothers and sisters, family, assembly, believers, congregation, people.

British – use to refer to someone from the island of Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales). It is not synonymous with English and is not used to refer to someone from Northern Ireland.

brotherhood of man - use humanity, human community, humankind.

Bushman, Bushmen - use San.

businessman, businesswoman - if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use business professional, member of the business community, or cite the individual's specific occupation. [Maggio p. 81]

C

cameraman, camerawoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use photographer, cinematographer, camera operator.

cancer patient – use patient with cancer.

Caucasian – although Caucasian still appears in U.S. Census Bureau demographic data, it is a dated and inexact term. White and European American are the preferred generic terms for the groups of light-skinned people in the United States who are of western European ancestry, if reference to an individual's ethnicity/race or ancestry must be made. [AAUP, p. 57] If referring to the residents of the region between the Black and Caspian Seas, use people in or from the Caucasus. [Maggio p. 86]

chairman, chairwoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use chair, moderator, coordinator, presider, officiator.

Chicana, Chicano – use only if an individual of Mexican ancestry born in the United States requests to be identified by this term. [Maggio p. 65]

Chinese – use when referring to China, its peoples, languages, and cultures. Use Chinese American when referring to people in the United States of Chinese ancestry, if reference to ethnicity or ancestry must be made. [Maggio p. 95]

city fathers – use city leaders, officials, administrators, founders.

cisgender – a gender description for when a person’s sex assigned at birth and gender identity correspond in the expected way (e.g., someone who was assigned male sex at birth, and who also identifies as a man). A simple way to think about it is if a person is not transgender, they are cisgender. The word cisgender can also be shortened to “cis.”

clergyman, clergywoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use clergy, member of the clergy, spiritual leader, religious leader, or cite the specific religious title of the individual (for example, minister, priest, rabbi).

combat stress reaction – in the past commonly known as “shell shock” or “battle fatigue.” The term should be weighed against the use of *posttraumatic stress disorder*, which is a general, clinically-approved diagnosis that results from a wide variety of traumas.

coed (noun) – use student.

common era (C.E.) – preferred term to A.D., because it doesn't assume the reader is Christian.

common man – “The common man’ translates well to ordinary people.” [Maggio p. 101] Use ordinary people.

confined to a wheelchair – use uses a wheelchair.

congenital disability – use to describe a disability that has existed in an individual since birth.

congressman, congresswoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use member of Congress, member of the United States House of Representatives, representative, congressional representative.

councilman, councilwoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use councilor, council member.

countryman, countrywoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use citizen, inhabitant, native, resident.

craftsman, craftswoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use artisan, crafter, craftsworker, or specifically identify the art form (for example, carver, knitter, potter, weaver, woodworker).

craftsmanship – use artisanship, artistry, craft, expertise, quality.

crack babies – use babies addicted to crack, newborns or infants who are addicted to crack.

crewman – use crew member, member of the crew, crew worker, employee, worker.

crippled – avoid the use of this term in any form.

culture – use to signify the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, the arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population. In the US there is some perception that there is one culture when in fact there are many. Beware of assumptions of what is specific to US culture. [Maggio p. 109]

D

deaf – use deaf as an adjective (deaf persons) not as a noun (the deaf). Deafness should only be used to describe a total hearing loss. Use hard-of-hearing to describe a partial hearing loss or hearing impairment. [Maggio p. 114]

deformed, deformity – use physical disability or if necessary, cite the specific disability.

deliveryman – use delivery driver, deliverer, carrier, courier, delivery person.

deprived – avoid the use of this inexact, potentially classist term. Identify what an individual has been deprived of, or the context of the deprivation (for example, economic, cultural, educational).

developmental disability – use to describe any mental or physical disability incurred before adulthood. The term includes autism, cerebral palsy, congenital disabilities, mental retardation, sensory impairments. Preferred usage is person with a developmental disability. [*Guidelines for Reporting and Writing about People with Disabilities*]

diabetic – use individual with diabetes.

disabled – use people with disabilities. Use neutral language when describing a disability. Avoid suffers from, afflicted with, stricken with, victim of as well as euphemistic terms, such as differently abled or physically challenged. The inclusive term to use when referring to everyone is: individuals with and without disabilities. [Maggio p. 118]

disadvantaged – avoid the use of this inexact, potentially classist term. Define the resources or rights (for example, economic, educational, medical, civil rights) that are absent in an individual's or group's life circumstances. Use *exploited* if it more accurately describes the cause

or reason for the life circumstances.

discovery of America – “only from the most Eurocentric of perspectives can a continent inhabited by millions of people be discovered. Use arrival, colonization, encounter. [Maggio p. 119]

divorcé, divorcée – use divorced person, person who is divorced, or formerly married, if reference to an individual's marital status is necessary at all.

domestic partner – use for someone of either sex in a committed relationship with someone of the opposite or same sex. [Maggio p. 122]

domestic partner violence – use intimate partner violence (IPV). From Clark, 2008: “...any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship.”

draft dodger – use conscientious objector, nonregistrant, pacifist.

draftsman, draftswoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use drafter, designer.

dwarf – there is no agreement about whether this term is offensive or not. Consider the context and use as a compromise term. The German noun *Zwerg* (m); *Zwergin* (f) or, with proper research, "little people" may also be considered for use.

E

effeminate – avoid the use of this inexact and potentially sexist term. Identify the specific characteristics and traits.

elderly – use older adult, older person, cite the specific age, or omit reference to age entirely unless it is essential. If context seems appropriate, try elder or elders.

English – “English” and British are not synonymous. Use English for those living in England and for anyone of Anglo-Saxon descent living in Great Britain. Use British to refer to someone from the island of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales).

epileptic – use only when describing a seizure. For persons, use an individual with epilepsy, an individual with a seizure disorder.

Eskimo – use Inuk (singular) and Inuit (plural), if reference to an individual's ethnicity or ancestry must be made.

ethnic – avoid the use of ethnic as a noun (“an ethnic”, ethnics”). Use member(s) of an ethnic group, ethnic group member(s). The adjective ethnic can signify a religious, racial, national, linguistic, or cultural group.

ethnicity – refers to socially defined cultural characteristics shared by a group of people. An ethnic group may share a common origin, history, values, language, attitudes, and behavior. [Hapa Handbook] This term is often more appropriate than the imprecise and disputed *race*. [Maggio p. 135]

ethnocentric – “characterized or based on the attitude that one’s own group is superior” [Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition, 2003]

executrix – use executor, administrator.

Eurasian – refers to a person whose parents are from European and Asian ancestry.

F

family of man – use civilization, human race, humankind.

Far Eastern – use Asian, East Asian.

fellow – use if referring to a specific named academic scholarship/award. Otherwise use scholar, award recipient, postgraduate. For all other uses of fellow, there are a wealth of gender-neutral synonyms (for example, fellow workers: coworkers, comrades, associates; fellowship: community, camaraderie, companionship, partnership; fellow man/men: fellow is superfluous...Be specific: citizens, other people, you.) [Maggio p. 147]

feminine – examine carefully the context in which the term feminine appears. Identify and specify the traits and characteristics stereotypically assigned to females, instead of simply labeling an act or an individual as feminine.

feminine word endings – “suffixes like *-ess*, *ette*, and *-trix* (1) specify a person’s sex when it is irrelevant; (2) carry a demeaning sense of littleness or triviality; (3) perpetuate the notion that the male is the norm and the female is a subset, a deviation, a secondary classification. [Maggio p. 150]

feminism – refers to “The radical notion that women are people.” [Rainbow Associates]

Filipina and Filipino – preferred term when referring to a woman and man native to or residing in the Philippines. Since Filipina is female and Filipino is male, use the terms together in order to avoid gender bias, if reference to an individual’s ethnicity or ancestry must be made.

fireman – use firefighter.

first nations - term used in Canada for the people known in the US as Native Americans.

fisherman – use fisher, angler.

fishman, fishwife – use fish monger, fish vendor.

flagman – use signaler, flagger.

forefather – use ancestor, forebear, precursor, predecessor.

foreman – use supervisor, team/floor/work leader, line manager, superintendent. [Maggio p. 155]

foreman (jury) – use head juror, or foreman and forewoman if used in a parallel fashion.

founding fathers – use founders, colonists.

Fourth World - "a term used to recognize the native national [indigenous] groups residing in many so-called united states who, although often minorities, occupied the state's territory first and refuse to accept domination, seeking instead...to govern themselves or to create a new state for themselves by separating from existing states." [Kegley, p. 196]

fraternal order of – use order of, benevolent order of.

fraternal organization – use organization, society, group, association.

freshman – use first-year student, class of _ _, frosh [Maggio p. 158], incoming student.

freshman congressman – use first-term member of Congress.

frogman – use scuba diver, deep-sea diver, skin diver.

full-blooded – avoid the use of this potentially racist term.

fundamentalist – use this term for people and groups who self-identify as fundamentalist. “Otherwise, identify the characteristics you want to convey: evangelical, conservative, militant, radical.” [Maggio p. 160]

G

gamesmanship – use expertise, skill, strategies.

gay and lesbian – language designating same-sex and bisexual orientation is undergoing rapid change. There is little agreement concerning clear, acceptable, nonderogatory terms. “Gay and lesbian is preferred to homosexual because the latter emphasizes sexual practice, whereas gay refers not just to sexual orientation but also to the cultural and social aspects of homosexuality.”

[AAUP p. 82] Note the distinction between gay (men) and lesbian (women): when gay appears alone you may assume it refers to only men, although not necessarily. Examine the need to mention a person's sexual orientation; it is often gratuitous. [Maggio p. 237] To avoid bias, use the preferred term, LGBT.

gay lifestyle – avoid the use of this phrase since “Most lesbians and gay men have as much or more in common with heterosexuals than they do with each other...There is no monolithic lifestyle.” [Maggio p. 113]

Gay Rights Movement – “‘Gay rights’ are the same rights presently enjoyed by other citizens of the United States particularly the right to live free from discrimination in employment, housing, education, etc.” [Maggio p. 163]

gender – use gender to designate culturally defined feminine and masculine characteristics and roles; and sex to designate the biological definition of females and males. Avoid a level of abstraction that makes a situation hard to grasp. For example, *A 60-year-old, African American parent of two children arrives at the emergency room to get a boil lanced* contains too much extraneous information that is not important to the construct of the item. It is a fine balance between bias-free language usage and keeping the human in the content. When in doubt, neutralize gender. Include sex if it is germane to the content or if there is no other way around avoiding the use of the gender pronoun. Use “they” or “their” as needed.

In general, avoid the use of gender pronouns so the content is neutral and stereotyping is minimized. The specific pronouns “her,” “his,” or “her/his” should be used only in those cases where it is impossible to avoid doing so, because of agreement. Do not use a plural pronoun (“they”) when the antecedent is singular. For example, “The client has no feeling in their foot” is awkward and technically incorrect. It should be revised to include a gender pronoun, e.g., “The client has no feeling in *her* foot...” Nouns may be made general, and plural, as a way to avoid the use of gender pronouns. For example, the following two examples are acceptable, even the second one: “Nurses should check their own readings of vital signs...” or even “Each nurse should check their own reading of vital signs...”

gentleman's agreement – use informal agreement.

ghetto – avoid the use of this term. Examine the context in which the term ghetto appears and identify and specify the socioeconomic characteristics of a particular neighborhood, if necessary.

girls – use adolescent, adolescent girls, adolescent females. Consider context to determine age appropriateness of reference.

grandfather clause – use retroactive coverage, retroactive exemption, retroactive clause.

grantsmanship – use grant-writing skills, grant-getting skills.

Gypsy, Gypsies – avoid the use of these terms. Use *Rom* or *Romany* (singular) or *Roma* or *Romanies* if referring to the Romany groups.

H

handicap – use disability. The recommended usage is: an individual with (name of the specific disability, disease, or condition) or an individual who has (name of the specific disability, disease, or condition.) “The difference between a disability and a handicap is crucial: a disability is a condition; a handicap is an obstacle. Someone with multiple sclerosis has a disability; the two flights of stairs leading to a classroom present a handicap for that person.” [Maggio p. 180]

handyman – use handyperson, odd-job worker, repairer.

Hapa – term used by Native Hawaiians to describe a person of partial Asian ancestry. [Hapa Handbook]

Hawaiians – use Hawaiians, Native Hawaiians, or Hawaiian Natives when referring to the indigenous peoples of Hawaii.

Hebrew – use to refer to the Hebrew language.

heroine – use hero.

Hispanic – used as a collective designation in the United States for any person of Spanish-speaking background and/or who has a Spanish surname. “Language, not race, is the primary criterion for entry into this broad category. Alternatives to Latina/Latino and Hispanic are the many names based on country of origin, for example, Cuban American.” [Herbst p. 107].

Whenever possible, query subjects about their preferred usage and avoid the use of this term, if appropriate. See also *Latinx* and the general discussion of "Ethnicity/Race" in this document.

historically underrepresented group – use to refer to a group within a larger population that differs in certain respects from the rest of that population and is subject to different treatment because of those differences. [McGraw p. 30]

homeless – use individuals who are homeless, people who are homeless, persons without homes.

homosexual – refers to people attracted to members of the same sex. Gay refers to men who are homosexuals, and lesbian and gay women can refer to women who are homosexuals. Use “a woman who is homosexual” or “a man who is homosexual” when in doubt.

hostess – use host.

househusband, housewife – use *homemaker, one who works at home* [Maggio p. 198], stay-at-home parent.

human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) – laboratory test results are HIV positive; persons who are HIV seropositive.

hunchback – considered offensive, as is "dowager's hump." Use *person with kyphosis; angular*

kyphosis in clinical content; use *person with curvature of the upper spine* in non-nursing/medical content.

hyphenated Americans – avoid the use of this “pejorative term...but continue to use the specific ethnic designations themselves. When using Cuban American, German American, etc., use also European American rather than an unqualified American, which would imply a standard against which others are judged.” [Maggio p. 202]

hypochondriac – use person with hypochondriasis.

I

identity-first vs. people-first language – Guidelines are to consider the context and to acknowledge the preferences of the group. See <https://pwd.org.au/resources/disability-info/language-guide/identity-vs-person/> and <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/disability>

illegal alien – use undocumented worker, undocumented resident, undocumented immigrants. **A migrant is a person who moves from place to place (either within a country or across borders), usually for economic reasons such as seasonal work.**

illegitimate child – “No human being is illegitimate; except for narrow legal uses, avoid the use of this term. Question the need to mention the circumstances of a person's birth; they are most often irrelevant.” [Maggio p. 204]

Indian (India) – use when referring to the people of India. Burmese, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans are not Indians. Use Asian Indian Americans for people of Asian Indian descent in the United States. [Maggio p. 206]

inner city - "An undefined area with a wide range of economic and social problems, lying within a long established, generally large, urban area. The term may be applied to such an undefined area, usually in economic decline, lying between the commercial center of the city (central business district) and its suburbs. That is a zone usually characterized by aged, run-down housing in multiple occupation by people with low income (especially new immigrants), people who stay for a relative short period of time, and a dwindling number of aged 'local' people."

From Oxford University Press's *A Dictionary of Sociology* (1988): Defined by the Chicago urban sociologist Ernest Burgess as an urban area, between the central business district (CBD) and outer rings of working-class and middle-class residence, containing slum housing being displaced by CBD expansion. Inhabited by the poor, ethnic minorities, and socially deviant groups, the term is broadly synonymous with what is nowadays more commonly referred to as the 'inner city'. See also 'concentric zone circle'. The usually older, central part of a city, especially when characterized by crowded neighborhoods in which low-income, often minority groups predominate."

Inuit, Inuk – preferred generic term for the group of peoples of northern Canada, Greenland,

Alaska, and eastern Siberia if reference to an individual's ethnicity/race or ancestry must be made. [AAUP p. 62] The Inuit language is Inuktitut.

intimate partner violence – use instead of domestic partner violence [Clark, 5th edition].

Iranian – Iranian or Persian? “‘Persian’ is used more to refer to antiquity, to the pre-1920s era, or to ethnicity, where ‘Iranian’ is used to indicate nationality.” Iranians are not Arabs. [Maggio p. 210]

Islam – use to refer to the religious faith of Muslims. Islamic and Muslim are both accepted adjective forms. [AAUP p. 62]

Israeli – use to refer to a citizen of the State of Israel.

Irishman, Irishwoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use native of Ireland, inhabitants of Ireland, the Irish.

J

Japanese American – Japanese American is the preferred generic term for peoples in the United States who are of Japanese ancestry, if reference to an individual's ethnicity or ancestry must be made.

Jew – use to refer to a member of a people who trace descent from the biblical Israelites or an adherent of the religion of Judaism, if reference to an individual's religious or cultural background must be made. "Jewish" can refer to a nationality, an ancestry, and/or an ethnicity. *Judaism* is a religious term that encompasses Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative. In nursing items dealing with genetic type, use the terms Eastern European (Ashkenazi) Jewish ancestry or Western European (Sephardic) Jewish ancestry. It may be important to make this distinction, in those cases. In nursing items dealing with persons who follow *kashruth* (the dietary Jewish laws of keeping kosher), it MAY be acceptable to use "Orthodox Jewish" alone, although it can refer to Reform and Conservative Jews who also follow a kosher diet. When in doubt, seek clarification from a SME. See also "Ethnicity/Race" in this document.

journeyman – use certified artisan, certified crafter, or specify the occupation: carpenter, metalworker, plumber, etc.

junior executive – use executive trainee. [Maggio p. 152]

juvenile delinquent – use juvenile offender, youthful offender.

K

Koran – *al-Quran* is the preferred term for the sacred text of Islam. [Maggio p. 228]

Korean American – preferred term for peoples in the United States who are of Korean origin or ancestry, if reference to ethnicity or ancestry must be made.

L

labeling – use to describe the isolation or definition of individuals by one facet of their physical, emotional, or spiritual being.

ladies' room – use women's room; the parallel term is men's room.

lady – use woman.

landlady, landlord – use owner, proprietor, landowner, building owner.

Lapps/Lapland – use Sami/Saamiland.

last name – “because not all cultures follow the same order of names, in some situations family name, surname might be the more appropriate term.” [Maggio p. 233]

latch key children – use children who care for themselves after school.

Latinas and Latinos – refers to Spanish-speaking peoples in the Western Hemisphere. Since Latina is female and Latino is male, use the terms together in order to avoid gender bias, if reference to an individual's ethnicity/race or ancestry must be made. **Use these terms for those who prefer them over Hispanic or Latinx. The term Latino/Latina includes people from Brazil and excludes those who were born in or descended from Spain. Thus, Hispanic refers more to language, while Latino/Latina refers to culture. Whenever possible, query subjects about their preferred usage. Try to avoid the reference. Plural: Latinx.**

Latinx – is a gender-neutral term sometimes used in lieu of Latino or Latina (referring to Latin American cultural or racial identity). **The plural is Latinx. Merriam-Webster added “Latinx” in 2018 as a mainstream term and the Oxford English Dictionary followed in 2019. For many people, particularly in the United States (the OED entry includes the label “Chiefly U.S.”), “Latinx” serves as a gender-neutral alternative to “Latino” or “Latina” to refer to people of Latin American descent. A preference for “Latinx” (or one of the other alternative forms) should be respected. Whenever possible, query subjects about their preferred usage. Try to avoid the reference. See also *Hispanic* and the general explanation on “Ethnicity/Race” in this document.**

layman, laymen – use layperson, member of the laity, layworker.

layman's terms – use easy-to-understand, nontechnical, ordinary, plain, simple, or

uncomplicated language or terms.

leper – use individual with Hansen’s disease.

LGBT community – Use this term to refer collectively to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community (with the abbreviation) instead of using “gay community.”

lineman – use lineworker, line installer, line repairer.

looksism, lookism – use to refer to “the subtle (and sometimes not-so-subtle) disparagement of and discrimination against people who are not physically attractive according to unstated but entrenched cultural definitions.” [Maggio p. 165]

lowerclassman – use first- or second-year student, undergraduate.

M

maiden name – use birth name, original surname.

maiden voyage – use first voyage/trip, premier voyage/trip, or premiere voyage/trip,

mailman – use mail carrier, letter carrier, postal worker.

maintenance man – use maintenance worker, maintenance engineer, maintenance specialist, custodian.

man (noun) – use for adult male human being. Avoid use of “man” as a false generic for civilization, society, humanity, or the human race.

man (verb) – use cover, employ personnel, operate, staff.

manhandle – use abuse, mistreat, mishandle, handle roughly.

man-hours – use work-hours, staff time, staff-hours, worker time, hours of work, employee-hours, employee time, labor time.

mankind – use human beings, humanity, humankind, human race, men and women, people, we.

manlike, manliness, manly – avoid use of these cultural stereotypes. Use specific terms or descriptors to define the attributes or characteristics being identified as such.

manmade – use artificial, fabricated, manufactured, synthetic, human-made, of human origin. [McGraw p. 15]

manned – use staffed, covered, peopled, stationed.

manned space flight – use piloted, astronaut-controlled, with crew, with staff.

manpower – use workforce, workers, personnel, employees, staff, labor force.

man-sized – use big, large-sized, oversized, sizable.

man-to-man – use one-to-one, heart-to-heart, person-to-person.

masculine – examine carefully the context in which the term masculine appears. Identify and specify the traits, qualities, and characteristics stereotypically assigned to males, instead of simply labeling an act or an individual as masculine.

master (adj) – use expert, accomplished, proficient, skilled.

master (noun) – use expert, authority, artist, specialist, professional.

master (verb) – use excel in, be proficient in, be expert at, be adept at.

master copy – use primary copy.

mastermind (verb) – use oversee, direct, plan.

masterpiece – use work of art, work of genius, greatest work, consummate art, classic work, best work. [Maggio p. 264]

master plan – use comprehensive plan, overall plan, blueprint.

mastery – use proficiency, skill, expertise, understanding, knowledge, command, excellence.

maternal instinct – use nurturing instinct, parental instinct.

matrimony – use marriage, wedlock, union. [Maggio p. 266]

mediatress, mediatrix – use mediator.

mental disorder – comprehensive term used to describe any of the identified forms of mental illness, severe emotional disorders, or mental retardation. Use individual with a mental disorder. [*Guidelines for Reporting and Writing about People with Disabilities*] If possible, identify the specific diagnoses (for example, person with bipolar disorder.)

mentally retarded, mental retardation – use intellectually disabled, intellectual disability.

Mexican American – Mexican American is the preferred generic term for peoples in the United States who are of Mexican ancestry, if reference to an individual's ethnicity/race or ancestry must be made. See also *Latino-a*, *Latinx*, *Hispanic*, and the general explanation of "Ethnicity/Race" at the beginning of this document.

Mexican standoff – use deadlock, impasse, stalemate.

Middle East – it is preferable to identify which countries are being discussed when this term is used. The term *Middle East* is an inexact, geopolitical one for which there is no clear definition. Most definitions of the Middle East include references to Arabs and Arabic culture. It “includes the 19 Arab countries on the west part of the Asian continent and the northern part of the African continent (Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Qatar, Mauritania, Iraq, [Afghanistan] Libya, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates) and [parts of] the 3 non-Arab nations of Turkey, Armenia, and Iran.” [Maggio p. 271] Editor's note: Consider context when referring to the Middle East or Middle Eastern peoples, especially from the point of view of genetics, race, and classifications (as opposed to cultural).

minority – use historically underrepresented group or member of a historically underrepresented group. "The term *minority* often applied to an ethnic group or to people of color, should be used with caution...Writers should bear in mind that ethnic groups and people of color are not numerical minorities in many societies, and whites are a minority in the world population." [AAUP p. 44]

Miss – if social titles are to be used at all for women, avoid the use of this title except for women who indicate that they prefer "Miss." [Maggio p. 192]

Mother Earth – use earth.

Motherland – use homeland, native land, home country, country of origin.

mother lode – use principal source, principal supply, principal vein, main lode.

Mother Nature – use nature.

mother tongue – use native language, birth language, native tongue, first language.

Mrs. – if social titles are to be used at all for women, "some women prefer this title. Respect their wishes." [Maggio p. 197]

Ms. – if social titles are to be used at all for women, use this social title unless a woman has stated a preference for another title.

mulatta/o – avoid the use of this term. Use person of mixed ancestry, person of mixed descent, person with mixed-race ancestry, person of multiracial background if reference to an individual's racial or ethnic ancestry must be made.

Muslim – preferred term for an individual whose religion is Islam, if reference to an individual's religion must be made.

N

national – use to signify a political body, the citizens under one government.

nation/she – use *it* when referring to a nation/country.

native – use when referring to an individual born in a given location. “Native connotes permanence and suggests origins in a region.” [Herbst, p. 159]. If context indicates that “native” refers to the original inhabitants of an area later colonized, use “indigenous”.

Native American – American Indian or Native American are the preferred generic terms for the indigenous peoples of North and South America and their descendants, if reference to an individual's ethnicity or ancestry must be made. “Nation” is often preferred to “tribe” and it connotes sovereignty. [Herbst p. 118] Canada’s indigenous peoples are referred to as First Nation.

“natural” child/father/mother – use *biological* child/father/mother, birth parents if the reference needs to be made at all.

needy – avoid the use of this term. If it is necessary to identify an individual in need, define what the need is.

Negro – use African American, Black., except in established titles (for example, the United Negro College Fund) and other historical references. See also **Black** and **African American**.

newsboy – newspaper carrier, newspaper vendor.

newsman, newswoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use journalist, newscaster, reporter, correspondent.

New World – avoid this highly Eurocentric term that ignores the fact that the world in question was not new to the people who had lived there for centuries. [Maggio p. 287]

non-Western – avoid the use of this term; it assumes that the Eurocentric “West” is the norm. Specify the nation, region, culture, etc.

non-White – avoid the use of this term; it assumes that white is the norm. Specify the ethnic or racial group.

non-Western – use for geopolitical designations.

normal – examine carefully the context in which the term *normal* appears. There is little consensus as to what is normal in this world. To ensure that the usage is bias-free, examine who established the norm.

O

obese – use nonjudgmental terms in reference to “weight,” “excess weight,” or “body mass index (BMI).” In clinical settings, if necessary, use *person diagnosed with obesity*.

‘old wives’ tale – use legend, folklore, folktale, myth.

ombudsman – use ombud, ombuds.

one-upmanship – use one-upping, one-uppance, competition, competitive, competitiveness.

Orient, Oriental – avoid the use of this term. Use Asian; or *East, South, or Southeast Asian*, if you know the area the person comes from; or, if applicable, Asian American. [Herbst p. 178]

P

Pacific Islander – refers “to a person from any of the hundreds of Pacific Islands, which lie in the middle of the Pacific Ocean in a region traditionally known as Oceania. It is always preferable, however, to be as specific as possible (for example, New Caledonian, Fijian.)” Use Asian Pacific Americans to refer to persons in the United States with Pacific Island ancestry, if reference to ancestry is necessary. [Maggio p. 302]

paraplegic – use person with paraplegia.

patrolman – use patrol officer, police officer, law enforcement official.

patron, patroness – use benefactor, supporter, sponsor, donor.

patronize – use support, sponsor, promote; condescend to, discount, look down on; trade with, buy or purchase from.

Peck’s bad boy – use mischievous, enfant terrible, nonconforming.

penmanship – use handwriting, writing, script, cursive.

people/persons of color – use instead of non-white, although “because it overgeneralizes *color* is usually applied to any dark-skinned people, whatever their ethnic heritage this term may be regarded as unsuitable.” [Herbst p. 178] Whenever possible, specify the ethnic or racial ancestry if the reference to ethnicity/race is necessary.

physically challenged – avoid the use of this term. Use individual with a disability or cite the specific disability.

pink collar – avoid the use of this term, specify the occupation or job.

pluralism – “Generally a reference to the characteristics of a society in which different groups participate in the society yet maintain their cultural distinctness...As a general doctrine today, social or cultural pluralism, espouses mutual respect among diverse groups in a society.” [Herbst p. 180]

poetess – use poet. If the individual's sex must be identified, use female poet, male poet.

policeman, policewoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use police officer, law enforcement official.

politically correct (PC) – examine carefully the context in which the term politically correct, PC, appears. It is generally used to dismiss or discount an issue involving fairness or equity. “Many people can no longer even identify what specifically they are decrying. Your writing and arguments will be much clearer if you drop ‘political correctness’ altogether and state your objectives: it is ‘bias-free language’ or ‘multiculturalism’ or ‘hate speech codes’ or ‘affirmative action’ or ‘diversity—not all that PC stuff.’” [Maggio p. 315]

poor – in a socioeconomic context, use living in poverty, living below the poverty line, with income(s) below the poverty level, or cite the individual's specific income. Do not use as a noun “the poor.”

postman – use postal worker, mail carrier, letter carrier.

pow-wow – “The use of ‘pow-wow’ in other than American Indian contexts is usually disparaging and offensive. For alternatives consider talk, discussion, conversation, conference, meeting.” [Maggio p. 319]

primitive – avoid the use of this term. Examine carefully the context in which the term “primitive” appears and the criteria by which a culture, people, or society has been designated primitive. “Replacing ‘primitive’ will vary widely with context; some possible combinations include folk, traditional society, early society, indigenous.” [Maggio p. 321]

procuress – use procurer.

proprietress – use proprietor.

protectress – use protector.

protégé – use *protégé* for both sexes.

Puerto Rican – use for a resident, citizen, or descendant of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, if reference is necessary. See *Boricua*. [Herbst p. 187]

pygmy – “There are no peoples who call themselves ‘pygmy.’ Replace this ethnocentric, Eurocentric term with specific, authentic peoples’ names.” [Maggio p. 328]

Q

quadriplegic – use individual with quadriplegia, a person who has quadriplegia.

quota – examine carefully the context in which the term quota appears. It is often used to dismiss or discount individuals, issues, or programs concerned with inclusion, fairness, and equity.

R

race – in the United States, the concept of race as defined by the Census Bureau reflects self-identification by people according to the race with which they most closely identify socially. The Census Bureau's listing of ethnic and racial categories has changed to reflect the diversity of the population in the United States and the revisions in the names of specific populations. Reference to an individual's race and ethnicity should be made only when it is essential to the material being presented and the reference to race should be made very carefully.

real father/mother/parent – use “biological father/mother/parent, birth father/mother/parent. Describing biological or birth parents as real implies that adoptive relationships are artificial, tentative, less important, and less enduring.” [Maggio p. 337]

refugee – use to specifically refer to an individual "who has fled a foreign country or power to escape danger or persecution." [AAUP p. 68] **A person who seeks asylum is also seeking refuge for similar reasons, although their status has not yet been heard and determined by a U.S. court of law.**

repairman – use servicer, repairer.

retarded – avoid the use of this term. Use individual with mental retardation.

reverse discrimination – this term’s “use and real-life legitimacy is still debated. On the level of language, the ‘reversed’ is questioned: discrimination is discrimination; why is discrimination somehow different, needing a special label, if it is leveled against traditionally dominant groups?” [Maggio p. 340]

right-hand man – use invaluable asset, coworker, sidekick, aide.

S

salesgirl, saleslady, salesman, saleswoman – use salesperson, sales representative, sales associate, sales clerk, store employee.

salesmanship – use sales/selling ability, sales/selling expertise, sales/selling skills.

Scot – use to refer to an inhabitant of Scotland or person of Scottish descent, if reference to a person's ancestry must be made.

seamstress – use tailor, sewer, garment worker.

Semites, semitic – "Semitic" refers to languages that are a subfamily of Afroasiatic languages, including Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic, Ethiopic, Hebrew, and Phoenician. "Semites" is the word used to refer to the people who speak these languages. It has come to pertain specifically to Judaic people. However, strictly speaking, Arabs are also semites.

senile – use dementia, senile dementia of the Alzheimer's type.

senior citizen – use older adult, older person, or elder, or specify an age or age group, if reference to an individual's age is necessary.

serviceman (military) – parallel usage with servicewoman, or use service member, member of the service, member of the armed forces, sailor, soldier, marine, recruit.

serviceman (repair) – use servicer, repairer.

sex – do not confuse sex with gender. Sex is a biological construct. Gender is a socio-cultural construct. For guidelines on the use of sex and gender, see **gender**.

sexuality, sexual identity, sexual preference, sexual orientation – these terms are different. Sexuality refers to a person's sexual orientation. Sexual identity relates to masculinity and femininity. Sexual preference refers to an individual's sexual orientation.

sexual preference – use sexual orientation if reference to an individual's sexuality must be made. [AAUP p. 82]

showmanship – use stagecraft, performing skills, stage skills.

significant other – preferred usage is "domestic partner" or just partner.

slave – use *enslaved person/people*.

Southeast Asian American – "refers to ethnically, culturally, and geographically diverse peoples: the Vietnamese; the ethnic Lao, Mien, and Hmong of Laos; the Khmer of Cambodia, the Thai, and the various ethnic groups of Indonesia, Myanmar, Brunei, Singapore, and Malaysia. the majority of Southeast Asians in the US are Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian. Whenever possible (and the reference is necessary) use the more precise term." [Maggio p. 371]

Spaniard – use to refer to a person from Spain, if reference to a person's country of origin is necessary.

Spanish – “of or relating to Spain or its people, this term is not interchangeable with Mexican, Chicana/Chicano, Latina/Latino, Hispanic, Cuban American, Puerto Rican, Latin American, or any other peoples not specifically from Spain.” [Maggio p. 371]

special – “Describes that which is different or uncommon about *any* person. Except when citing laws or regulations, it is an not appropriate term for describing persons with disabilities in general.” [*Guidelines for Reporting and Writing about People with Disabilities*]

spokesman, spokeswoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use representative, speaker, spokesperson.

sportsman, sportswoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use athlete or specify the sport or game being played (for example, golfer, fisher, tennis player, etc.).

sportsmanlike, sportsmanship – use sporting, fair play, fairness.

statesman, stateswoman – if used in a parallel manner, otherwise use diplomat, government/political/world leader, public figure.

stay-at-home parent - neutralizes gender.

statesmanship – use diplomacy, government/political/world leadership.

stay-at-home parent – neutralizes gender issue.

stereotype – used to describe an unusually oversimplified concept, opinion, or belief; a person, group, event, or issue considered to conform to an unvarying pattern or manner, lacking any individuality.

steward, stewardess – use flight attendant.

suffragette – use suffragist.

T

taskmaster, taskmistress – use boss, director, supervisor.

Tatar – preferred term for a member of one of the historic Mongolian or Turkish peoples descended from the Volga Bulgars and used for some current Turkic-speaking people. [Herbst p. 215]

third world – avoid the use of this dated and inexact geopolitical term, which refers to the lack of so-called “Westernized” economic infrastructures, both material and financial. Specify the region or nation and the economic or political criteria which has led to a "third world" designation. Use ideas akin to "industrially-undeveloped or developing.”

to a man – use everyone, to a person, unanimously.

to each his own – use to each their own, it takes all kinds. [Maggio p. 388]

token – examine the context carefully in which the terms token or tokenism appear. They are often used to dismiss or discount individuals or issues of fairness and equity.

townsman, townsmen – use citizen, townspeople.

tradesman – use shopkeeper, storeowner, trades worker, skilled worker, or specify the person's occupation.

transgender – a person is *transgender*, not *transgendered*. Avoid "transgender person." See *cisgender*.

tribe – avoid the use of this ethnocentric term. Use nation, people, peoples, or specify the name of the group that has been labeled a tribe.

typical – examine carefully the context in which the term typical appears. Its appearance can be a warning that labeling and stereotyping will follow.

U

un-American – avoid the use of this term.

uncivilized – avoid the use of this term.

underclassman, underclassmen – use undergraduate, first-year student, second-year student, class of __.

undermanned – use understaffed.

undeveloped nation, underdeveloped nation – use developing nation, emerging nation. When developing nation or emerging nation is used, specify the criteria by which a country has been designated as developing or emerging (for example, economically, industrially.)

underprivileged – avoid the use of this term, specify the resources or advantages that are unavailable to a person (for example, education, finances, housing.)

unfeminine, ungentlemanly, unladylike, unmanly, unmasculine, unwomanly – avoid these inexact sexist terms. Use specific adjectives to describe the action, appearance, or behavior that is being labeled as such.

union man – use union member, member of a union.

United Kingdom – use when referring to Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales) and Northern Ireland.

unmanned – use unstaffed, without workers, without staff, without crew, crewless.

unmarried, unwed – use single, if reference to an individual's marital status must be made.

unsportsmanlike – use unsporting.

unstatesmanlike – use undiplomatic, impolitic.

upperclassman, upperclassmen - use third-year student, fourth-year student, class of _ _.

V

villainess – use villain.

visual-effects man – use visual-effects technician, visual-effects specialist.

visually impaired – use *person with visual impairment*. Visual impairment does not accurately describe blindness, which is the total loss of vision.

W

waiter – use for both sexes.

WASP – avoid the use of this acronym for White Anglo-Saxon Protestant that is “used when reference to religion might be considered intolerant or impolite; however, the term has taken on connotations beyond this....WASP has been used derogatorily in identifying someone as part of oppressive, White, Eurocentric society.” [Herbst p. 227]

watchman – use guard, patroller.

weathergirl, weatherman – use weathercaster, reporter, weather forecaster, meteorologist (if applicable.)

welfare – examine carefully the context in which the term welfare appears. “This term is overused in some cases, underused in others, misused most of the time, and often used in discriminatory ways...welfare includes government moneys that go to individuals and government moneys that go to corporations.” [Maggio p. 412]

welfare mother – use woman receiving welfare, woman receiving public assistance, if reference to an individual’s economic circumstances must be made.

welch (verb) – avoid the use of this term, which has disparaging roots in "Welsh."

wheelchair user – or someone who uses a wheelchair are the preferred terms. The phrases "wheelchair-bound" or "confined to a wheelchair" are to be avoided.

White – White and European American are the capitalized, preferred generic terms for many, but not necessarily all groups of light-skinned people in the United States who are of western European ancestry. If reference to an individual's ethnicity/race or ancestry must be made, use a more specific designation whenever possible, e.g., Italian American, German American. [*Chicago Manual of Style* p. 247]

white collar – specify the occupation or job.

White ethnic – a term sometimes used to characterize peoples of Northern European ancestry who are neither Anglo-Saxon nor Protestant (see WASP). Use a more specific designation referring to the individual's country of origin rather than this term, if it is necessary to characterize the person's ethnicity at all; e.g., Irish American.

widow, widower – use if sex-specific term is appropriate; otherwise, use widowed or surviving spouse if reference to an individual's marital status is relevant or necessary.

womanlike, womanliness, womanly – avoid use of these cultural stereotypes. Use specific terms or descriptors to define the attributes or characteristics being identified.

woman's intuition – use intuition, hunch.

women's lib, women's libber – use women's movement, feminist, supporter of the women's movement.

working mother – use woman working inside/outside of the home, mother working inside/outside of the home.

workman, workmen – use worker, employee, laborer, staff, or specify the occupation.

workmanship – use work, artistry, artisanship, handiwork.

workmen's compensation - use workers' compensation.

X

xenophobia – refers to “the fear or hatred of anything that is foreign or outside of one's own group, nation, or culture. Xenophobia is an overt form of prejudice and ethnocentrism that may contribute to feelings of nationalism.” [Herbst p. 235]

Y

yardman – use yard worker, yard laborer; gardener, landscaper.

yes man – use yea-sayer, sycophant.

yuppie/Yuppie – avoid the use of this stereotypic, negative label (a similar label is Nimby).

GLOSSARY OF BIAS REVIEW TERMS

Bias. A preference or inclination especially one that inhibits impartial judgement. Bias isolates or stereotypes one aspect of an individual's nature or the nature of a group of individuals. It is an un-informed or un-intentional inclination, often subconscious, that may operate for or against someone or something.

Culture. Totality of socially-transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a particular community or population.

Ethnic. A religious, racial, national, and/or cultural group.

Historically-underrepresented group. A group within a larger population that differs in certain respects from that population and is subject to special treatment because of those differences.

Labeling. Isolating or defining an individual or group of individuals by one aspect or facet of their physical, emotional, or spiritual being.

National. Signifies a political body. The citizens united under one independent government, without close regard for origins.

Racial. Signifies a group possessing traits that are transmitted by descent and sufficient enough to characterize the group as a distinct human type.

Roles: Active, Passive, Neutral

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