

# Terms to Know and Videos to Help: Gender-identity, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pronouns, Race, Intersectionality, Privilege, & Bias

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## ABSTRACT

The goal of the session is to help attendees who are committed to diversity and inclusion learn to talk about different dimensions of identity (e.g., race, class, gender, sex, sexuality, etc.). The landscape of terms is always changing and we want SIGCSE attendees to feel more comfortable using current language to talk about issues related to diversity and inclusion. This special session will include eight short videos, individual reflection, and a Q&A with presenters. This is an expansion of a special session held at the NCWIT Summit in 2019; it was well received and we hope to offer it to the larger SIGCSE audience. The format also lends itself to attendees sharing the videos and discussions with their colleagues after SIGCSE, which are available at <http://ncwit.org/intersectionality-videos>.

## CCS CONCEPTS

• **Social and professional topics** → **Computing education; Computer science education.**

## KEYWORDS

intersectionality; diversity; inclusion; equity

## 1 SUMMARY, AUDIENCE, AND TIMING

The objective of the session is to help SIGCSE attendees learn to talk about different dimensions of identity. The intended audience is SIGCSE attendees who are interested in expanding their understanding about dimensions of their students' identities and current terminology. While the facilitators will be there to answer questions, the core content of the session can be shared with colleagues because the information is presented through short videos.

Eight videos, each approximately three minutes, are divided into four topics (See Section 4). After playing the videos in each

topic (with closed captioning for accessibility), attendees will have 3 minutes for individual, silent reflection. During this time, our slides will show a countdown timer and questions that encourage attendees to reflect on and apply the information from the videos. During this time, attendees can also post questions and comments in a text channel to presenters. After these 3 minutes, presenters will address attendee question and comments on each section for approximately 7 minutes. The session will end with 10 minutes of discussion of how to share these resources with colleagues and addressing any remaining questions or concerns.

The flexible structure of a special session provides the opportunity to include videos and silent reflection. Section 2 identifies the topics covered, the reflection questions, and additional resources for learning. This format is particularly well-suited for use in a video conferencing format.

## 2 OUTLINE OF THE SESSION TOPICS

### 2.1 Gender-identity, Sex, Sexual Orientation & Pronouns

Videos [5, 9] and resources [2, 11, 19] address the learning goals:

- Define and distinguish current terminology.
- Explain the value of respecting people's identities/privacy.

After the videos attendees will view the following questions:

- (1) Define (a) gender identity, (b) gender expression, (c) biological sex, (d) sexual orientation, and (e) pronouns.
- (2) How might a student feel if a teacher uses their birth name rather than preferred name or are misgendered?
- (3) A student named Cameron uses the pronouns "they/them/their." Use their pronouns in a sentence and then only their name, which works when you don't know someone's pronouns.
- (4) How can binary gender categories cause harm?

### 2.2 Race & Intersectionality

Videos [12, 20] & resources [1, 8, 13, 18] address the learning goals:

- The idea of race was invented and does not represent a biological reality, but does shape how people are treated.

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- Intersectionality describes the ways in which people's experiences differ based upon the interactions of multiple forms of bias such as racism and sexism.

After the videos attendees will view the following questions:

- (1) Describe ways in which your identity is intersectional.
- (2) Although gender and race are socially constructed and defined, why should you look for patterns for women of color or other intersections of marginalized identities?
- (3) Have you noticed a tendency to avoid race labels and instead refer to individuals or groups as "diverse" or "ethnic" or "minority"? Why might this be problematic?

## 2.3 Privilege

Videos [14, 17] and resources [3, 10] address the learning goals:

- Privilege is an unearned, unasked for advantage.
- When a dimension of someone's identity is privileged, it often is not conscious because it is assumed to be the norm.

After the video, attendees will view the following questions:

- (1) Why might a White person identify as having a race?
- (2) How might recognizing dimensions of your privilege be important even if you have experienced hardship?

## 2.4 Bias

Videos [7, 15, 21] & resources [4, 6, 16] address the learning goals:

- Implicit bias is informed by stereotypes and acts unconsciously even when we think we are not biased.
- We can take proactive steps to mitigate our bias.

After the videos attendees will view the following questions:

- (1) Explain to your partner the importance of the dental hygiene paradigm of bias rather than the tonsils paradigm of bias?
- (2) What might you say to thank a student for telling you that your statements or actions have been biased or hurtful?
- (3) What assumptions might we make based upon someone's pronouns or skin color? How can we counteract this?

## 3 FACILITATORS

The facilitators have all taught about and researched equity.

Beth Quinn is a senior research scientist at NCWIT where she works on initiatives to broaden women's participation in computing education and research, including serving as Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Academic Alliance and as founding director of EngageCSEdu, a repository of peer-reviewed teaching materials for introductory CS. Dr. Quinn's research focuses on disputing processes in organizational contexts and the ways that gender and other social identities impact organizational experiences and advancement. She has a Ph.D. in Law and Society from UC Irvine.

Colleen Lewis is an Assistant Professor of CS at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has taught a class, Social Justice and Equity: STEM and Beyond. She researches equitable and efficient teaching practices (see CSTEachingTips.org).

Gretchen Achenbach is a research scientist in the Department of Engineering and Society at the University of Virginia and with NCWIT. Dr Achenbach works with NCWIT's Academic Alliance and Extension Services to assist academic departments in attracting

and retaining women in computing majors. She has a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Cynthia Lee is a Lecturer in the CS Department at Stanford. She specializes in team-based and question-based course design, and founded peerinstruction4cs.org to support educators in flipping their CS classrooms using peer instruction. Dr. Lee designed and teaches the course Race and Gender in Silicon Valley, and was awarded Stanford's Dinkelspiel Award in 2019 for "her commitment to inclusive education." She has a PhD in CS from UC San Diego.

Kyla McMullen is an Assistant Professor in Computer & Information Science & Engineering at University of Florida. Dr McMullen's research is in headphone-based spatial (3D) audio rendering, perception, and applications. Dr. McMullen is senior personnel for NSF's Institute for African-American Mentoring in CS (iAAMCS) and co-hosts Modern Figures Podcast, elevating the voices of Black women in CS. She has a PhD in CS from University of Michigan.

Vidushi Ojha is a PhD student in CS at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign studying equitable practices for supporting undergraduate and graduate students in computing.

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