



University Senate PROPOSAL FORM

Name:	Michael Anthony Goodman (<i>he, him, his</i>)
Date:	June 13, 2018
Title of Proposal:	A Recommendation to Evaluate Gendered Language
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Unit/Department/College:	Higher Education, Student Affairs, International Education Policy (College of Education)
Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):	Graduate Student
Description of issue/concern/policy in question:	<p>Over the past year, I have observed multiple places where gendered language has hindered the opportunity for inclusion of individuals who identify as non-binary or another category outside of the rigid “male/female” gender identifiers. For example, website content and Graduate Assistantship offer letters often contain “he/she” and “his/hers” language when referencing students (see Appendix A). Further, onboarding documents are often written directly to “he/she” or “male/female” expectations, as illustrated in the incident that occurred earlier this year with the Computer Science handbook.</p> <p>These are just a few examples, which initially led me to engage deeper with students and faculty on campus to understand if these were isolated incidents. Now knowing that they are not, I write this proposal to the University Senate to address a need for inclusion regarding how the University of Maryland perpetuates a gendered expectation in undergraduate, graduate, and faculty/staff capacities. This language sets a standard that students, faculty, staff, and alumni who do not identify as “male/female” or “his/hers” are not welcome or included in various university operations.</p> <p>After an initial email to The Graduate School, it was recommended that this concern be considered at a higher level, which has ultimately led to this University Senate proposal.</p>

<p>Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:</p>	<p>I would like to see the University Senate address this concern campus-wide, which will ideally lead to a campus-wide review of documents, websites, resources, and communication.</p> <p>First, it should be mandated that all colleges lead a review of their documents, websites, resources, and correspondence. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions advertisements and materials • Orientation materials • College, department, program handbooks • Job descriptions • Official Human Resources applications • Syllabi • Curriculum (PowerPoint presentations, handouts) • Website and online/social media content <p>Departments and Colleges should remove any language exclusively citing, “he/his,” or “she/her,” and replace that language with, “the student,” or, “their/theirs,” framing.</p>
<p>Suggestions for how your proposal could be put into practice:</p>	<p>To review and address the categories listed above, Deans of the Colleges should appoint a Task Force within each college to oversee and manage the Department and College review. Each Task Force should be inclusive of individuals who are committed to equity and justice work, and involve students, staff, and faculty. Ultimately, each Task Force will operate as the accountability body for each College.</p>
<p>Additional Information:</p>	<p>The Graduate Student Government has taken steps to address this concern within our own body, and we would like the University to follow suit. For example, during the Spring 2018 semester, we passed legislation to edit our Bylaws in full, and to be reflective of “they/them/theirs” pronouns, removing all gendered pronouns. Additionally, we passed a resolution urging The Graduate School to recommend correspondence to Departments to evaluate gendered language within GA/TA/RA offer letters, handbooks, and in-College onboarding websites and documents.</p>

Appendix A

Graduate Assistants are, first and foremost, graduate students pursuing an education. The opportunity to work closely with faculty, staff, and students in teaching, research, or administrative environments is an integral part of that education. The University and the Adele H. Stamp Student Union – Center For Campus Life are committed to ensuring that GA assignments are productive, enhance student qualifications, meet funding support and workload goals, and are consistent with the educational objectives of the student and **his or her** program.

The University of Maryland and the Adele H. Stamp Student Union – Center for Campus Life are academic and collegial communities. Regular and clear communication between Graduate Assistants and their advisors and supervisors is essential to maintaining an effective educational environment. Occasionally, problems may occur. A GA who experiences workload-related problems is encouraged to consult with **his or her** advisor or supervisor. Should the need arise, a Grievance Procedure is detailed in the Policies for Graduate Assistantships linked above.

The screenshot shows the website for The Graduate School at the University of Maryland. The header includes the school's name and the tagline "Advancing graduate education. Enhancing the student experience." The main navigation bar lists "Home", "Graduate Programs", "Courses", and "Faculty". A search bar is located in the top right corner. The left sidebar contains a list of navigation links: "Catalog Home", "General Policies", "Appointments", "Special Appeals Process", "Duties and Time Commitments", "Compensation", "Parental Accommodation Guidelines", "Conduct and Professional Behavior", "Equal Opportunity Statement", and "Grievance Procedure". The main content area is titled "Policies for Graduate Assistantships" and is divided into sections: "I. General Policies", "Categories", and "Administration".

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
Advancing graduate education. Enhancing the student experience.

The Graduate School Catalog 2017-18 Search

Home Graduate Programs Courses Faculty

Catalog Home / Policies / Assistantship Policies

Policies for Graduate Assistantships

I. General Policies

Graduate Assistants (GAs) are, first and foremost, graduate students pursuing an education. The opportunity to work closely with faculty members and undergraduate students in teaching, research, or administrative environments is an integral part of that education.

Graduate students who hold assistantships benefit educationally and professionally. They gain further expertise in their field; enhance their research skills and develop pedagogical skills; acquire experience in leadership, interpersonal effectiveness, and performance evaluation; acquire academic administrative experience; and enjoy collegial collaborations with advisors that may result in joint publications and other professional activities. Skills learned in assistantships prepare students not only for the academy, but also for corporate, government, and nonprofit organizations.

Assistantships also provide graduate students with the financial resources necessary to pursue their degrees. This financial support—stipend, tuition remission, and benefits—is part of the University's commitment to the success of our graduate students.

The University is committed to ensuring that graduate assistant assignments are productive, enhance student qualifications, meet funding support and workload goals, and are consistent with the educational objectives of the student and **his or her** program.

Categories

The official title of Graduate Assistant (GA) is used in all university documents, but, in general practice, Graduate Assistants are referred to either as Graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs), Graduate Research Assistants (RAs), or Graduate Administrative Assistants (AAs). Additionally, a small number of Graduate Assistants serve as resident life counselors. Qualified graduate students often move between these kinds of appointments during their graduate education.

Administration

Graduate Assistants at the University of Maryland, College Park are under the direct supervision of the department, program, or unit that offers the appointment. The department determines the GA's assignment, supervises his or her work, and recommends him or her for reappointment and promotion to various stipend or compensation levels. The department is the primary source of information for the details of the assistantship. Within the department, the GA's work assignment is determined by the Department Chair, the Director of Graduate Studies, any duly appointed executive committees and assistants to the chair, and/or the faculty member assigned to supervise the GA's particular course, laboratory session, or research project. Graduate Administrative Assistants

The screenshot shows a survey form titled "Exit Survey for Non-Teacher Certification Graduate Students". The "Demographics" section is highlighted with a red circle. It includes a question "1. Gender" with radio button options for "Male" (which is selected) and "Female". Below this is a "Race/Ethnicity" section with checkboxes for "American Indian" and "Caucasian".

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Exit Survey for Non-Teacher Certification Graduate Students

Demographics

1. Gender

Male

Female

Race/Ethnicity

American Indian Caucasian