Legal sex and gender on the Common App for transfer

Legal sex, gender, and terms of address in Common App

Terms and definitions

Legal sex refers to the current designation on a person's birth certificate, driver's license, and/or U.S. state identification. In Common App, legal sex is a required single-select question. Starting in the 2023-24 cycle, the options for legal sex will be "female", "male", and "X or another legal sex".

Gender references a person's sense of themselves as female, male, or another identity. In Common App, gender is an optional multi-select question. The options are:

- Female
- Male
- Nonbinary
- Add another gender

If a student selects "add another gender", they will have the ability to fill-in a custom response.

Pronouns refer to third-person pronouns that a student would like others to use when referring to them. In Common App, pronouns are an optional multi-select question. The options are:

- He/Him
- She/Her
- They/Them
- Add another pronoun set

If a student selects "add another pronoun set", they will have the ability to fill in a custom response.

Legal first name refers to the first name on a person's birth certificate, driver's license, and/or U.S. state identification. In Common App, legal first name is a required question.

"My name" references a different first name that a person uses in practice. Starting in the 2023-24 cycle, a student can answer the required "Would you like to share a different first name

that people call you?" question. If they respond "yes", the application will then prompt them to share their name.

How should my institution report sex and gender?

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) collects data on gender, not sex. Starting in the 2023-24 academic cycle, IPEDS will provide new fields that allow institutions to report statistics for students whose gender is something other than male or female.

IPEDS requires gender information to be reported in the aggregate (total number of students). For the Admissions component specifically, the information does not have to total 100%.

State reporting requirements may differ. We encourage our members to contact their state commission office(s) to confirm reporting requirements.

How does my college intake sex and gender data?

Technology vendors may vary in their ability to intake choice values other than male (M) or female (F). We encourage our members to contact their specific technology vendors to confirm configuration possibilities and mapping best practices.