A Resource for Incorporating Trans and Gender Diverse Issues into Counseling Psychology Curricula

Prepared by the APA Division 17 Special Task Group
Making Room at the Table: Trans/Nonbinary Pipeline to Counseling Psychology

Image courtesy of The Gender Spectrum Collection.
Purpose
The goal of this resource is to aid counseling psychology educators and increase the accountability of counseling psychology programs in making their curricula more inclusive of TNG-specific concerns. Our hope is that this resource will help counseling psychology programs equip future generations of mental health professionals at both the doctoral and masters level work toward the necessary competencies in TNG identities and concerns as outlined by the American Psychological Association. Although this resource is by no means comprehensive of the diverse concerns pertaining to TNG populations, it provides an overview of TNG-affirming literature relevant to counseling psychology coursework.

Intended Audience
Leaders and educators in counseling psychology education and training, including department chairs, faculty, and other instructors.

A Note on Terminology
This introduction uses the term transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse (TNG) to refer to a wide range of gender minority identities. However, due to the rapidly evolving nature of terminology regarding TNG identities, many of the references included in this resource use different terminology to describe their populations of interest.

Introduction
Although many psychology graduate students and practicing psychologists report providing therapy services to transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse (TNG) clients, a much lower percentage of psychology professionals report feeling competent to provide clinical care to TNG individuals. Prior research has found that formal preparation regarding TNG clinical care is significantly and negatively related to self-reported anti-transgender prejudice and that early career professionals are more likely to report less perceived competency in working with TNG clients.

Training recommendations for increasing TNG competence include a commitment to ongoing education centered on the concerns of TNG people. Graduate student trainees have reported a desire for faculty to integrate TNG issues into counseling curriculum, as well as feeling underprepared to work with TNG people due to lack of formal training.

Given ongoing anti-TNG violence, particularly against transgender women of color, this resource can be an important and timely tool for counseling psychology programs in continuing to strengthen their support of diverse gender minority populations.

Giving Voice to TNG Authors
In adherence with best practice recommendations for conducting and distributing research regarding TNG populations, this guide has been intentionally curated to maximize the inclusion of literature written by TNG authors. According to self-report in response to email inquiry, over 35.0% (N = 43) of the references in this resource were written by at least one TNG-identified author, and the scholarship of at least 41 TNG-identified authors are included in this resource.

How to use this guide
The following resource is intended to be used as an annotated bibliography, including references regarding general recommendations for increasing TNG inclusivity in the classroom, as well as recommended readings regarding TNG concerns organized by specific course content. Although many of the readings included below may be relevant across a wide range of courses, for ease of use they have been organized into those content areas in which they are likely to be most relevant. The table of contents on the next page can be used to easily navigate this guide. We strongly encourage you to consider including a portion of the following literature in your future courses.

Sincerely,
APA Division 17 Special Task Group, Making Room at the Table: Trans/Nonbinary Pipeline to Counseling Psychology
September 2020

How to use this guide
Authors
This resource was compiled by the following members of the APA Division 17 Special Task Group, Making Room at the Table: Trans/Nonbinary Pipeline to Counseling Psychology:

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Special thanks to the entire APA Division 17 Special Task Group, Making Room at the Table: Trans/Nonbinary Pipeline to Counseling Psychology for their ongoing support in this project.

Additional Resources
For additional resources, including sample syllabi and further reading, please click here. If you have a resource or reference you would like to see included in our additional resources, please make suggestions by clicking here.

We Want to Hear from You
Have you found this guide helpful? Please let us know if you have used this resource in your classroom by filling out the form here.

Suggested Citation

Image courtesy of The Gender Spectrum Collection.
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Making Your Classroom a Safe Space


This paper presents an empathy-promoting in-class activity in which participants experienced being misgendered and engaged in personal reflections on the process.


This resource for graduate psychology educators and trainers contains information on creating an affirmative learning environment for trans and gender diverse trainees. The resource includes relevant terms and definitions, information on gender pronouns, and suggestions for creating inclusive conversations.


This article was written by five nonbinary psychology trainees. The article provides an overview of the specific challenges that nonbinary students face and concrete guidelines on what people within academic institutions can do to decrease these challenges and empower nonbinary trainees.


This article outlines challenges faced by gender-diverse face and identifies inclusive instructional approaches, as well as limitations of current instructional approaches.

Specific Content by Course Subject

Assessment


This book chapter reviews considerations in the psychological assessment of trans people including: an overview of the ways in which trans marginalization may affect mental/behavioral health; a review of existing assessment literature; the role of the assessor; and a case example.


This journal article discusses practical considerations for affirmative assessment with trans clients. This article presents the history of assessment with trans populations, distinguishing between mental health symptoms and gender dysphoria, effects of hormone therapy on mood/cognitions, and specific considerations for both neuropsychological and personality assessment.


This longitudinal quantitative study explored the effects of hormone treatment and psychotherapy on transmen’s MMPI clinical scores. This study was conducted in Japan meaning some aspects may not generalize to a US population and some terms used in the article may be different than those used in the US.


This journal article reviews eight modern assessment tools for assessing constructs related to gender identity with transgender and gender nonconforming adults in terms of their scope, validity, and strengths/limitations. This article also includes a brief history of gender identity-related diagnoses in the DSM.


This is a practical article that overviews potential clinical practices when working with adult trans clients in a neuropsych assessment setting. Topics include: a review of terms and standards of care, creating safety, test selection/norm use, relationships between hormones and brain functioning, report writing, client feedback, and supervision.

Career Counseling

Experiences in the Workplace


This qualitative study explores the experiences of transgender participants related to transitioning at work, including specific stressors and coping strategies.


This commentary discusses the state of anti-transgender discrimination in the workplace, including TNG narratives of navigating potential disclosures of their identities at work.


This chapter presents a systematic literature review of TNG experiences in the workplace, including pre-career concerns, issues related to seeking employment, general career concerns, and transitioning at work.
This qualitative study explored the experiences of transgender men in the workplace, with specific attention to their experiences of gendered and intersectional workplace inequalities throughout their transition.

Career Development


This qualitative analysis explored career decision making as well as the ways in which identity impacted the process of keeping/obtaining employment for transgender participants. This paper uses social cognitive career theory to explain how occupational barriers, occupational prospects, occupational aspirations, taking action, occupational gratification, and contextual influences are a part of trans people’s experience with careers.


This study explored the relationship between transition status and reported career decision self-efficacy for transgender people. Implications for practice are also discussed.


This qualitative study focused on how employment discrimination impacts career development trajectory.

Goldberg, A., Matsuno, E., Beemyn, G. (2020). “I want to be safe...and I also want a job”: Career considerations and decision-making among transgender adults pursuing post-graduate education. The Counseling Psychologist.

This thematic qualitative analysis provides information about how trans adults coming out of graduate school make decisions about next steps, how to decide about what future paths to take, the job application process, and the role of resources.


This article reviews career development concerns specific to transgender people as informed by the standards of care for working with transgender individuals, specifically as they pertain to mental health professionals.


This practical article discusses implications for career counselors and provides specific tools and resources, however some resources may be outdated.


This quantitative study indicated that workplace protections buffered the adverse effects of different types of trans discrimination when it comes to work choice and work outcomes.

Organizational Concerns


This chapter breaks down the concepts of diversity and inclusion and how miscommunication often occurs because organizations usually don’t know what these terms mean.


This chapter provides an analysis of the difference between prejudice and discrimination and how stereotyping leads to a work environment that includes many barriers.

Child and Adolescent Counseling

Affirming Practice with Children and Adolescents


This fact sheet reviews unique concerns regarding TNG youth, including prevalence, outcomes, and clinical practice.


This chapter reviews theoretical approaches to TNG youth across development, including current research and clinical practice.


This chapter provides an introduction to clinical practice and initiating therapy with TNG children and adolescents.


This chapter reviews specific clinical concerns regarding TNG adolescents.
Affirming Children’s Books

➔ This illustrated educational children’s book discusses gender diversity and how family and friends can best support TNG youth.


➔ This illustrated and affirming children’s book reflects the experiences of a gender diverse child.

Ethics
Ethics in Clinical Practice

➔ This article discusses the process of critically reflecting on ethical practice with trans and gender nonconforming clients, and presents a feminist approach to psychotherapy with trans clients. This article is older, so some outdated language is used by the authors.


➔ This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of research and practice concerns when working with transgender individuals, including a review of key terms, an overview of the history of transgender research in psychology, recommendations for ensuring that research practices are socially just and affirming, and recommendations for culturally sensitive clinical practices.


➔ This chapter highlights the unique psychological services relevant to the TNG population and provides examples of how mental health professionals can apply ethical standards to TNG-affirming guidelines for practice.

Training Ethics

➔ This literature review identifies a gap in the literature regarding clinical interventions for transgender individuals and explores obstacles to affirming care with LGBT clients such as the influences of religious and political affiliation, as well as institutional heterosexism. Recommendations for counselor training are provided, in addition to training scenarios regarding LGBT affirmative counseling.

Group Counseling
Affirming Group Practices

➔ This article proposes affirmative group therapy as an intervention to support transgender and gender nonconforming individuals in counteracting the effects of minority stress and anti-transgender stigma. This article includes recommendations for addressing stigma both within and outside the therapy group, including how to provide validation, make space for disclosure, promote resilience, and serve as an advocate for transgender and gender nonconforming clients.


➔ This article reviews the history of group work with transgender clients, provides recommendations from a social justice perspective, and includes specific information about the elements of groups.


➔ This article provides a review of the literature that is adjacent to group psychotherapy with trans clients. As data are scarce on this topic, the authors primarily provide recommendations based on best practice (including psychoeducation, affect regulation, cognitive coping, and problem-solving).


➔ This chapter provides an introduction to concerns regarding group work with transgender and gender-nonconforming clients, including gendered group dynamics.

Specific Group Modalities

➔ This paper presents results of a pilot study on the impact of somatic experiencing group therapy on depression, anxiety, somatic symptoms, coping with discrimination, and quality of life. Due to the pilot nature of the project, it is difficult to determine actual outcomes, but the feasibility of the project warrants further study.

Incorporating Trans and Gender Diverse Issues into Counseling Psychology Curricula
This article provides a description of an experiential/process psychotherapy group for transgender clients facilitated by psychology student trainees. This article includes a discussion of logistical concerns regarding group formation and functioning, as well as thematic content and training considerations.


This paper presents information about four psychology workshops, based on a narrative therapy approach, run for a group of people with learning disabilities who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Participants provided feedback that the groups were effective in letting them feel heard and understood.

Groups for Parents of TNG Children


This article discusses a group intervention for parents of transgender adolescents at an outpatient mental health program for gender diverse youth. Group format, goals, composition, and thematic content are discussed.

Health Psychology

Medical Transition Services


This qualitative study explored the structural, social, and personal factors that influence gender affirmation and body modification processes among transgender persons (assigned male at birth) in Bogotá, Colombia.


This systematic literature review provides an overview of safety concerns for transgender adults regarding hormone replacement therapy.


This systematic literature review addresses the relationship between hormone therapy and changes to psychological functioning and quality of life over time for transgender individuals accessing hormone therapy.

Other Health Concerns


This study examined relationships between social determinants of health and experiences of discrimination reported by transgender people.


This qualitative study explored weight and shape control behaviors among low-income, ethnically diverse young transgender women at high risk for HIV or living with HIV.


This study explored the prevalence of eating disorders across diverse gender identity groups in a transgender sample.


This study examined the relationship between stigma and chronic stress among HIV+ black and Latina transgender women.

Human Development

Affirming Developmental Frameworks


This paper presents the gender affirmative model and reviews the literature regarding facilitators of healthy psychosocial development in gender-nonconforming children.


This chapter extends Rochat’s (2009) theory to transgender self-concept development through social interactions that shape personality and gender expression.
This chapter provides developmental considerations for transgender young adults regarding tasks of emerging adulthood.


This chapter proposes an eco-developmental model for understanding transgender sexual identity development and transition experiences in a social context.


This article may be used as a case study on gender identity, socialization, and masculinity throughout the lifetime.

### Intersectionality

#### TNG-Centric Intersectional Frameworks


This paper proposes a feminist intersectional model that theoretically centers the experiences of transgender people of color as a tool to reflexively analyze both the position of the researcher as well as to explore the narratives of transgender people of color.


This paper provides an introduction to intersectional approaches as they relate to LGBT and racial/ethnic minority identities.

### Disability and TNG Identities


This paper proposes trans-disability affirmative therapy as an approach that places the intersectionality of a client’s experiences as both transgender and disabled at the center of the therapeutic process.


This grounded theory study explores how sexual and gender minority people living with disabilities navigate their career development trajectory.


This study utilizes an intersectional perspective to assess rates of discrimination in accessing social services faced by transgender and GNC people across different ability statuses.

### Race and TNG Identities


This paper discusses the unique clinical considerations when working with transgender and gender nonconforming clients of color as informed by the Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Clients (American Psychological Association, 2015).


This qualitative study explored resilience in transgender youth of color using a phenomenological approach and a feminist, intersectional framework, to examine daily lived experiences of resilience at the intersections of transprejudice and racism.


This phenomenological study utilized a feminist framework to explore of the resilience of transgender people of color who have experienced diverse traumatic life events.

### Multicultural Counseling

**Culturally Competent Clinical Practice**


This document outlines affirmative practice guidelines for psychologists working with transgender and gender nonconforming clients.

→ This book outlines the necessary knowledge and skills practitioners need to provide competent care for TNG clients. The text includes information on treating transgender and gender nonconforming clients, including clinically-relevant legal and ethical concerns. The authors also provide interventions reflective of developmental stages and cultural considerations.


→ This paper synthesizes literature on resilience strategies for transgender people within the framework of minority stress theory, and further introduces a model focusing on resilience factors among transgender people at the group level.

Developing Competencies


→ This paper presents key differences between cultural competence and cultural humility. The authors advocate for practitioners to move toward cultural humility, a framework in which practitioners are responsible for addressing the impact of institutional oppression on marginalized populations.


→ This qualitative study explored positive aspects of identifying as transgender.

Minority Stress, Microaggressions, and Stigma


→ This chapter provides an introduction to stigma and mental health concerns for transgender people, including protective factors.


→ This qualitative study explored the experiences of transgender men and women regarding different microaggressions, including implications for practice.


→ This qualitative study explored transgender experiences of “expecting rejection” as an internal stressor (i.e., proximal stressor) including prevalence and adaptive responses.


→ This paper outlined the validation study and analysis in developing a measure of minority stress and resilience for transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Legal and Policy Concerns


→ This book calls for a critical trans politics that questions current pushes towards civil rights centered advocacy and advocates for foundational transformative change in current legal and institutional structure.


→ This journal article discusses interactions between TNG populations and the criminal justice system. It then considers these issues within the framework of the APA Code of Ethics. Content warning for use of slurs and transphobic/racist violence in an example at the beginning of the article.

Neuropsychology


→ This study assessed diurnal cortisol functioning in relation to stigma-based transition-specific stressors experienced by transgender men during their transition from female to male.


→ This article reviews findings across neuroscience, behavioral neuroendocrinology, and psychology that challenge the gender binary and demonstrate support for gender mosaicism.


→ This chapter utilizes neuroscience to present an internalist theory of gender to further the understanding of how transgender and nonbinary people perceive their own genders.
This study compared MRI results across transgender and cisgender participants to assess the neural correlates of social exclusion, with implications for the development of mental health problems related to social marginalized for transgender people.

**Psychopathology**

**Gender Dysphoria**


This article provides an introduction to culturally competent psychiatric care for gender diverse clients, including assessment, diagnostic practices, and treatment.


This commentary reviews the history of the pathologization of diverse gender identities and expressions and problematizes the ongoing labeling of gender identities and expressions as disordered.


This chapter reviews the history of psychiatric institutions and practices to transgender populations from a critical feminist lens.

**Other Mental Health Concerns**


This study compared the prevalence rates of clinical anxiety in transgender people as compared to the general population, including the relationship between anxiety and self-esteem, interpersonal functioning, and hormone treatment.


This systematic literature review explores the reported prevalence rates of anxiety disorders and symptoms in transgender populations.


This study explored prevalence rates of mental disorders in LGBT youth compared to non-LGBT youth in a national sample, with implications suggesting that measurement practices may overestimate depression prevalence among this population.


This prospective study explored the relationship between physical and psychological gender abuse and major depression in transgender adults.

**Research Methods**


This review explores the challenges of transgender health, including standardization of lexicon, population definitions, sampling, and measurement, among others. Suggestions for future research are discussed.


This article reports the results of three studies that systematically validate the two-question method for assessing gender categories.


This article presents important considerations and tools for researchers working with trans populations. Guidelines for recruitment, study design, and distribution of results are discussed.

**Sport and Exercise**

**Trans Experiences in Sport**


This article presents consideration for transgender women competing in athletics in regards to hormone levels and genetic advantages.
This article discusses the discrimination of transgender students who are discouraged, excluded, and made to feel uncomfortable within athletic programs because of their gender identity.


This article focuses on body-self narratives within physical activity and athletic spaces while taking into consideration different stages of gender transition.


This article considers the experiences of transgender student athletes and their experiences within sport and physical activity.


This article focuses on the sacrifices that transgender athletes make in order to compete in the sport that they love and what systems can be put into place to help support them.

Education and Policy


This article considers the expansion of opportunities for transgender athletes within youth and collegiate athletics.


This article examines the growing inclusion and barriers that transgender student-athletes face within collegiate athletics. Suggested best-practices are included within this text.


This guide provides insight for high school and collegiate athletic departments about how to ensure transgender student-athletes’ access to school sports.


This document acts as a resource to provide guidance to NCAA athletic programs about how to ensure transgender student-athletes’ access to collegiate sports.


This article aims to address the gap in the literature surrounding sport participation and competitive sport policies in relation to transgender inclusion within athletic communities.


This article is aimed to help coaches and physical education educators better understand issues raised within popular news stories surrounding transgender and intersex athletes.


This article presents an interview with Dr. Pat Griffin, Professor Emerita in Social Justice Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Her work focuses on social justice and advocacy work for LGBTQ+ persons in sport.


This article explores where transgender individuals fit within the world of sex-segregated athletics and argues that transgender student-athletes should be allowed to participate in sports on the basis of their gender identity.

Sinisi, J. V. (2012). Gender non-conformity as a foundation for sex discrimination: Why Title IX may be an appropriate remedy for the NCAA’s transgender student-athletes. Villanova Sports & Entertainment Law Journal, 19, 343. [https://digitalcommons.law.villanova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&context=mslj]

This article examines the connection between Title IX and NCAA eligibility requirements for transgender collegiate athletes.


This article examines legal authority and policy surrounding transgender students’ participation in K-12 athletic competition.


This article considers the exclusive policies surrounding transgender athletic participation under Title IX regulations.
Incorporating Trans and Gender Diverse Issues into Counseling Psychology Curricula

**Substance Use Counseling**

**Adolescent Use**


- This article describes an exploratory study of the relationships between a variety of social risk and protective factors, and transgender youth substance use (cigarette, alcohol, and cannabis) in Canada.


- This article describes a study of substance use (illicit and non-illicit substances) disparities between Californian transgender youth and cisgender youth utilizing a population based sample.

**Alcohol**


- This article is a systemic review of alcohol-related research that includes transgender and other gender minority groups as a significant part of the sample. The article also includes a brief discussion of gender minority substance use research more generally.


- This article describes a longitudinal study that found a relationship between identity-based variables (enacted stigma, felt stigma, identity development) and risky drinking behaviors among their transgender sample.

**Diagnosis and Treatment**


- This article reviews literature on interventions for substance use among transgender persons, with only two studies meeting the criteria (both only focused on transwomen). This article includes themes for further research and clinical work addressing transgender substance use.


- This article describes a community-based study on the relationship between a number of variables (demographic, identity, mental health, and social factors) and substance use disorders (as well as recent substance use).

**Illicit Substances**


- This article describes an exploratory study of prescription drug misuse among transgender adults finding high prevalence rates of misuse, and a relationship between emotional distress and prescription drug misuse.


- This article identifies substance use disparities (cocaine and amphetamine particularly) for transgender persons in Ontario, with relationships to various social factors (transphobic assault, homelessness, sex work).

**Theories of Counseling**

**Cognitive Behavioral**


- This article adapts CBT into a trauma informed trans-affirmative version (TA-CBT) for providers to use with transgender and gendernonconforming clients.


- This article introduces a transender-affirming adaptation of a cognitive behavior therapy intervention (TA-CBT) for use with transgender individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, and/or suicidality. The authors use a historical analysis and also provide action-oriented interventions focused on trans populations.


- This article presents considerations for the use of CBT with sexual and gender minority clients, including cultural adaptations for improved CBT outcomes when working with gender diverse persons.
Gender-Affirmation

This article describes the theoretical approaches to trans and nonbinary youth across development, provides a brief overview of the current research, and offers providers a way to conceptualize and provide care that can be both supportive and scientifically driven (e.g., they focus on pubertal suppression conversations and social transition interventions).


This article uses minority stress theory to understand the unique stressors and mental health risks that nonbinary individuals face. It also describes a cultural competency framework to provide affirming practices, and ecological theory to contextualize how mental health providers can intervene and support nonbinary individuals. Interventions include: empowerment, how to externalize messages, clinician competence, navigating disclosure, and advocating for clients outside of the therapy session.

Humanistic

This article provides specific person-centered approaches for both interpersonal and intrapersonal work with transgender clients. Areas for future research and treatment are also discussed.

Interpersonal

This article presents a case example and offers four transgender-specific clinical intervention strategies from the interpersonal therapy (IPT) framework. The author argues that IPT is a particularly useful approach when working with trans or GNC clients whose presenting concerns are related to transitions.

Psychodynamic

This article presents an introductory, transpositive approach to doing depth psychotherapy with trans clients. This approach combines contemporary psychodynamic, Jungian, and gender identity theory.


This article presents new psychodynamic treatment options, which aim to empower (rather than pathologize) trans* and GNC clients.


This article identifies ways that activism and advocacy can be effective therapeutic interventions to promote clients’ agency, efficacy, resilience, and quality of life.

Trauma and Crisis Counseling

This paper presents a qualitative study utilizing constructivist grounded theory to explore transgender people’s experiences of gender-related trauma and proposes a theoretical model for clinical practice.


This article discusses the presence of trauma and nonsuicidal self-injury in transgender people, including prevalence, concerns across the lifespan, and special considerations for assessment and treatment.


This article presents a theory of acute and complex trauma experienced by transgender people over the lifespan and implications for clinical practice.


This article presents a feminist approach to trauma treatment for transgender and gender-non-conforming clients.