

A Trans* and Queer Student Guide to University of Illinois at Chicago



By the Trans* & Queer Caucus, Graduate Employees Organization

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to UIC! We're glad you are here! UIC has an awesome community of active and engaged queer graduate employees/students, undergraduate, faculty, and staff. There are a growing number of resources available here to support queer and trans* grad students, but it can be confusing at first find what you need. This guide was put together by the Trans* & Queer Caucus of the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) to offer pointers and helpful suggestions on how to navigate all these systems and resources while you are a grad student here at UIC.

The GEO is the local chapter of the AFT-IFT that represents graduate employees at UIC. The T&Q Caucus is a working group of GEO members who meet regularly to address concerns of graduate students who are queer, transgender, and/or gender non-conforming.

Much of what you will find here is based on the personal experiences of current and former grad students who are using these resources or who have been a part of creating them. Additional information can be found at the UIC Gender & Sexuality Center website <http://genderandsexuality.uic.edu>. We have included information on how to access UIC's recently-developing services for "trans-inclusive" healthcare, LGBTQ professional and academic resources, and other diversity-related units.

This guide is a work in progress. We acknowledge that as soon as publish before school starts, things in this document might change. We hope to make updates throughout the academic school year to stay current and up to date.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the UIC Gender and Sexuality Center, Wellness Center, and the GEO for their openness and sharing of information and resources.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

UIC's Non-Discrimination Policy.....	4
Brief intro/history of Queer movement & Labor movement	4
Important Definitions & Concepts	5
Gender Inclusive Restrooms	8
Gender Inclusive Housing and Other Housing Options	9
Changing Your Name	9
Healthcare	10
CampusCare	
Physical health/wellness	
Trans healthcare	
Counseling	
Queer Academic & Employment-Related Resources at UIC	14
Faculty and academic courses	
Queer-friendly grad student-employee groups	
Research Forums	
Non-Academic Resources at UIC	15
Gender Affirming Peer Health Advocates (by GUS)	
Gender and Sexuality Center (GSC)	
Student organizations	
Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change	
Chancellors' Status Committees	
Community Resources Outside UIC	17
Mental health and holistic alternative healthcare	
Comprehensive, trans-related healthcare	
Grassroots, queer, non-hierarchical, abolitionist organizations	
Workplace protections	19
GEO contract language related to gender and sexuality, general workplace issues	
What to do about discrimination or mistreatment related to gender or sexuality	
Thoughts on how to talk to your advisors/PIs about gender ID	
GSC letter templates for introducing yourself to professors and clarifying language/preferences/needs	

GENERAL INFORMATION

University of Illinois Non-Discrimination Statement

For all the U of I campuses, this is the non-discrimination most recently revised June 2010.

The PDF can be found at <http://oe.uic.edu/docs/Nondiscrimination%20Statement%2006-10.pdf>.

Here is one of the main parts of the document.

The University of Illinois will not engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, genetic information, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran and will comply with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, orders and regulations. This nondiscrimination policy applies to admissions, employment, access to and treatment in the University programs and activities.

- From oae.uic.edu, para. 2

To Submit an Accessibility Complaint

If you find a door, classroom, or work building that has an accessibility issue, report it to

<https://uofi.uic.edu/fb/sec/7074059>. The submission goes to the director of the Disability Resource Center, Co-Chairs of the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of People with Disabilities, and a staff member at the Office of Access and Equity.

Labor Unions and the LGBTQ Community

Historically, there has been a close relationship between labor unions and those who identify as LGBTQ. In film, we have examples of this with *MILK* (2008), where Harvey Milk and his colleagues build solidarity among the labor unions and the LGBT folks to effectively ban Coors beer from the San Francisco Castro District due to the company's non-union and sexual orientation discriminatory practices. More recently, *Pride* (2014) is a historical fictional film based in England showing a group of gay and lesbians supporting the 1984 Whales coal strike. In text, there is Miriam Frank's *Out in the Union - a Labor History of Queer America* (Temple University, 2014) and an older publication, *Laboring for Rights: Unions and Sexual Diversity Across Nations* (Temple University, 1999) by Gerald Hunt. Lastly, *The Advocate* published an op-ed piece by Jerame Davis (2014) on the topic and can be found at <http://www.advocate.com/commentary/2014/09/22/op-ed-long-powerful-history-between-labor-and-lgbt-activists>.

Intersectionality & Identities

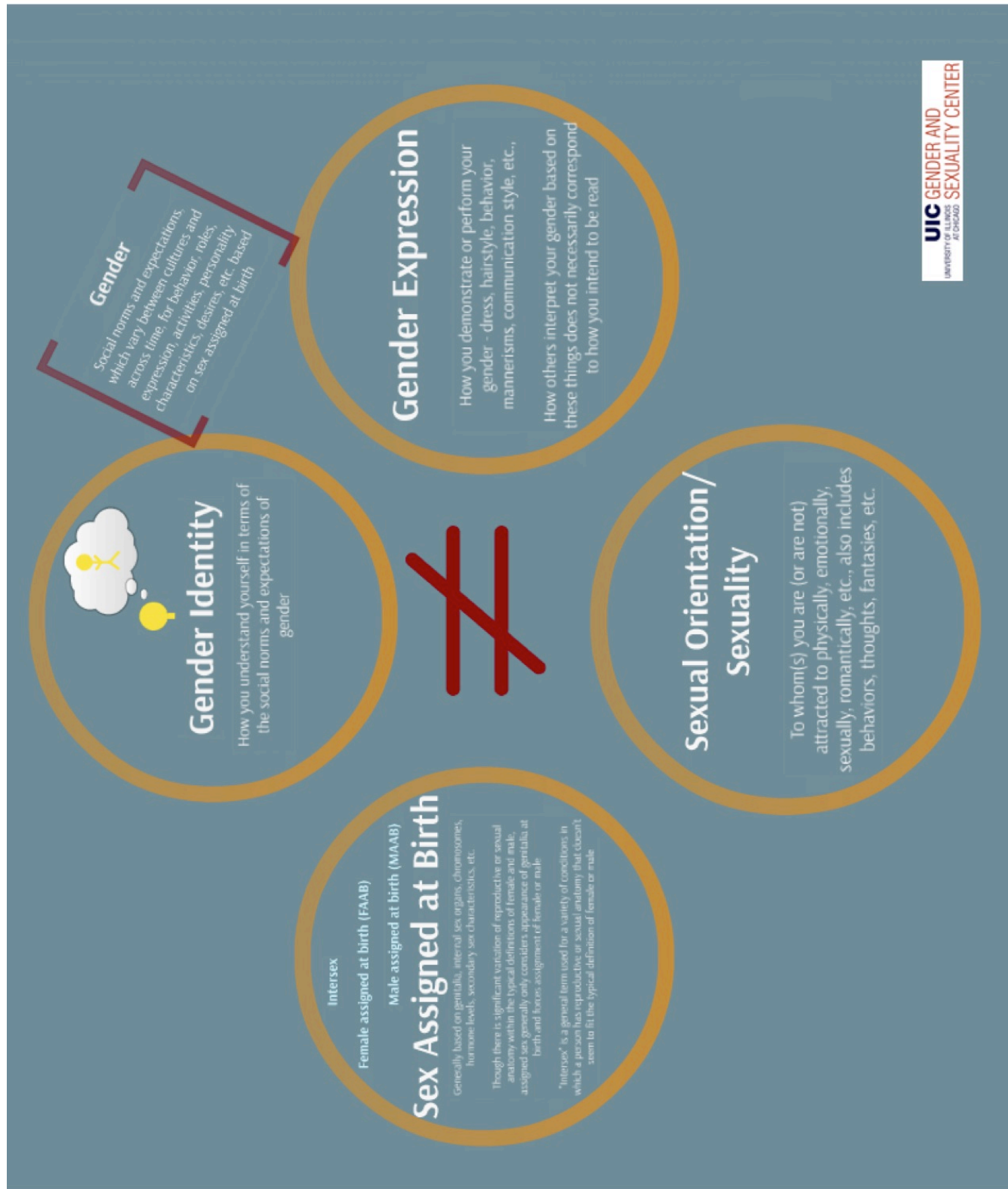
It is important to acknowledge and celebrate the queer community with an intersectional lens. Although as grad students we might find ourselves in a specific time and space where one of our identity surfaces higher than the others, we are still people that carry multiple identities. In addition to our sexual identity and gender identity, we may also have a strong identification with our race/ethnicity, class, disability, immigrant status, marital status, political affiliation, professional and academic area, nationality, education level, and veteran status. While these multiple and intersecting identities can be points of pride, they can also be areas of vulnerabilities. One might face multiple oppressions and micro-aggressions in the classroom and workplace not on the additive level, but in an exponential kind of way. The GEO affirms one's own self-identity and self-determination.

“When I can bring my full self and identities to the classroom and to work, I can then perform and succeed to the fullest.”
- GEO member

To clarify, we have used and will be using “trans*” and queer throughout the guide. We understand there is currently a discussion around using trans*. Some like it; some don't. At this time, the GEO members who have worked on the guide see trans* as inclusive and similar to transgender, an umbrella term. However, our use of it might change in the future. Additionally, we're using the word “queer.” We like this word because it can be used in the context of gender identity and sexual orientation. Besides the historically negative meaning, queer also has in its background Queer Studies and activism such as Queer Nation.

“When I began the graduate program in the Criminology, Law and Justice Department in the fall of 2013, I sought out the few instructors and colleagues who possessed the same mindset as I did. Wanting to feel more of a queer-friendly presence while earning my master's degree, I joined the Trans* and Queer Caucus. There, I was able to brainstorm with others to figure out how we could make UIC more of a queer competent and friendly environment across the board. It is my hope that UIC continues to grow and be a welcoming environment in every discipline and on every level, for everyone.”

- UIC Alumnus



A Beginning Guide to Pronouns

	Nominative (subject)	Oblique (object)	Possessive Determiner	Possessive Pronoun	Reflexive
Elverson (Ey, em, eir)	Ey ("A") Ey is awesome	Em ("M") I called em	Eir ("ear") Eir hat	Eirs ("ears") That is eirs	Eirself ("earself") Ey likes eirself
He	He He is awesome	Him I called him	His His hat	His That is his	Himself He likes himself
Humanist	Hu ("hue") Hu is awesome	Hum ("hum") I called hum	Hus ("hues") Hus hat	Hus ("hues") That is hus	Humself ("humself") Hu likes humself
Initial ex. S	(ex.) S S is awesome	(ex.) S I called S	(ex.) S's S's hat	(ex.) S's That is S's	-- --
Jee, jeir, jem	Jee ("gee") Jee is awesome	Jem ("gem") I called jem	Jeir ("jair") Jeir hat	Jeirs ("jairs") That is jeirs	Jemself ("gemself") Jee likes jemself
One	One One is awesome	One I called one	One's One's hat	-- --	Oneself One likes oneself
Per (from "person")	Per Per is awesome	Per I called per	Per Per hat	Pers This is pers	Perself Per likes perself
She	She She is awesome	Her I called her	Her Her hat	Hers That is hers	Herself She likes herself
Spivak (E, em, eir)	E ("E") E is awesome	Em ("M") I called em	Eir ("ear") Eir hat	Eirs ("ears") That is eirs	Emself ("M-self") E likes emself
They (singular) -plural verb form -singular verb form	They They are awesome They is awesome	Them I called them I called them	Their Their hat Their hat	Theirs That is theirs That is theirs	Themself/Themselves They like themself/themselves They likes themself
Thon	Thon Thon is awesome	Thon I called thon	Thons Thons hat	Thons That is thons	Thonself Thon likes thonself
Ve	Ve ("vee") Ve is awesome	Ver ("ver") I called ver	Vis ("viz") Vis hat	Vis ("viz") That is vis	Verself ("verself") Ve likes verself
Xe	Xe ("Z") Xe is awesome	Xem ("zem") I called xem	Xyr ("zere") Xyr hat	Xyrs ("zeres") That is xyrs	Xemself ("zemself") Xe likes xemself
Yo	Yo Yo awesome	Yo I called yo	-- --	-- --	-- --
Ze, hir	Ze ("Z") Ze is awesome	Hir ("here") I called hir	Hir ("here") Hir hat	Hirs ("heres") That is hirs	Hirself ("hereself") Ze likes hirself
Ze/zie/sie and zir	Ze/zie/sie ("Z") Ze/zie/sie is awesome	Zir ("zere") I called zir	Zir ("zere") Zir hat	Zirs ("zeres") That is zirs	Zirself ("zereself") Ze likes zirself
Ze, zim, zir	Ze ("Z") Ze is awesome	Zim ("zim") I called zim	Zir ("zere") Zir hat	Zirs ("zeres") That is zirs	Zirself ("zereself") Ze likes zirself

What else have you heard? What else do you use?

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Compiled by Shay Phillips, 2015, UIC Gender and Sexuality Center
Updated: 5/29/2015

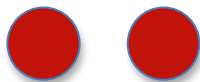


Here's one graduate student's personal experience regarding the need for pronouns.

Changing my name has changed me. The difference has been incredibly pronounced in school. Since starting grad school classes last year, I have been a completely different student. Not only do I talk in class, but I have been one of the most vocal participants in the vast majority of my classes. I am still quiet at times, and I value my ability to be an observer, but I have gained the ability to speak up and participate when I want to.

There are still times when this is limited, however. As soon as I learned about the possibility using gender-neutral pronouns, I knew that was how I wanted people to refer to me. But with that, it also took me years to be comfortable enough to tell anyone else. I have been incredibly fortunate that the majority of my professors have included pronouns as a part of the introductions we do at the beginning of the semester. Waiting to find out if they're going to do this, though, makes me incredibly nervous. Once I hear them mention pronouns, I am able to relax significantly. If they don't, I'm put in the position of making a decision to be the only person to include pronouns or to not let people know how they should refer to me.

... When I do share my pronouns, I feel incredibly uncomfortable while I'm saying it, but I am relieved afterward and able to engage in class more.



Gender Inclusive Restrooms

This is a list of single-occupancy, gender inclusive restrooms located on UIC's campus.

Also check out the web app <http://www.refugerestrooms.org> to locate restrooms off campus; if you have an iDevice, there is a mobile app available as well. Many others, including the caucus, are advocating for more gender inclusive restrooms in other main student buildings (ie., Daley Library, Student Center West, and Library Health Sciences) as well as alternative standard signage.

East Campus

*= Accessible

- Behavioral Sciences Building (BSB): 1st floor, west side near Lot 1A (south exit door), next to men's bathroom
- Douglas Hall (DH): 1st floor next to women's restroom
- Student Recreation Facility (SRF): 1st floor, across from women's locker room
- University Hall (UH): 4th floor, southwest corner near Room 428; 11th floor, southeast corner across Room 1131

- UIC Forum: 1st floor, southwest side next to women's bathroom; 2nd floor, west and northwest sides
- Women's Leadership Resource Center (WLRC) / Campus Advocacy Network (CAN): 2nd floor, Roosevelt Road Building, Parking Lot Entrance (via Halsted St. between Taylor St. & Roosevelt Rd.), Roosevelt Road Building
- Stevenson Hall
- Burnham Hall: Two located on 2nd Floor
- Student Center East: 8th Floor

West Campus

*= Accessible

- Applied Health Sciences Building (AHSB): 243*
 - College of Medicine East Tower (CMET): 1011, 1202, 1302, 1402
 - Disability, Health and Social Policy (DHSP) Building: 207* and Lactation Area, 407*, 507*, 707*
- **DHSP signs use words instead of images

Gender Inclusive On-Campus Housing

While this might not be relevant for graduate students, we wanted to share that come fall 2015, there will be the option of gender inclusive on-campus housing. For more information, visit

<https://www.housing.uic.edu/current/gender.php>

Changing Your Name

- A. Without Legal name change
 - a. Only able to change on Black Board and Student ID
 - b. For Blackboard- Contact Megan Carney (carneym@uic.edu) of the GSC and ask her to contact America from ACCC. State that you are working on a legal name change (even if you are not/not sure about a legal name change)
 - c. For student ID- Go to ID center and identify need for different displayed name. They may ask why. Ally identified named- Tamika
- B. With a legal name change court order-
 - a. Step 1- Go to the office of the registrar and give court order to person behind desk. They will make a copy of it in the system and this will change every electronic database where you exist. You should give it at least 2 weeks to populate. *Note- Your name will never change with Financial Aid. To avoid birth name/misgendering always sign in as a guest at financial aid, never swipe your UIC ID even if it is updated.

- b. Step 2-At this time you may change your UIC ID and Ventra Pass. You do not have to pay the \$50 Ventra card fee. You may also have your picture retaken at this time due to change in appearance/presentation/other reasons. You can do this in the ID center on the 2nd floor of the Student Service Building.
- c. Step 3- After 2 weeks, if you are a CampusCare member, call customer service and verify the name change has taken place. They operate with a different IT system so it can take longer if you don't pressure them.
- d. Step 4- If you are a CampusCare member or use UIC medical facilities- Go to medical registration at Family Medicine and give legal name change order to person at registration. Have them print your confirmation. They are not able to change your sex as it is listed in the computer. You may ask your primary care provider to do this.

Updating Your Educational Records

If you do a legal name change, don't forget to update your name with past institutions – think any institution where you earned a certificate or diploma. Additionally, remember about any alumni associations. This is important if future employers or other academic institutions would do a check.

HEALTHCARE INFORMATION

CampusCare

CampusCare is the student health plan that technically is not health insurance nor does it meet the requirements of the Affordable Care Act; actually at “press time” we have noticed that CampusCare now claims to meet the “minimal essential coverage” of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). We are skeptical since many trans students cannot get the appointments and/or referrals they need for basic care, a violation of the ACA's minimal essential coverage status. We encourage graduate employees to consider purchasing insurance on the open exchange, and we encourage queer and trans employees to consider using Howard Brown Health Center or other providers with better capacity and competencies.

CampusCare is what is known as a self-funded plan. Graduate employees have faced numerous challenges with CampusCare, and a disproportionate number of them have been trans and queer students. ***Please document and report any issues you have with CampusCare to GEO staff, officers, the Grievance Committee, and/or the Trans & Queer Caucus members and GEO can assist with filing claims, appeals, grievances, and soliciting external reviews. We cannot change the care delivery system if we do not have the evidence of harm, denied access, and/or discrimination.***

The CampusCare Medical Director, Samuel Grief, MD, is known for his questionable ethics and for denying claims and appeals of denied claims that, by law, should be covered. During his tenure as Medical Director, Grief has been officially reprimanded, fined (\$50,000), and temporarily suspended from practicing medicine by medical governing boards such as the New York Medical Board, the

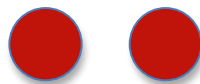
“For me, the staff and clinicians at Family Medicine have been fantastic. Campus Care, however, has consistently created major financial hurdles and made accessing my care very challenging. Do not hesitate to seek assistance from the Union or report any problems that feel discriminatory or like a violation of your rights as a patient to Illinois Department of Human Rights or the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Civil Rights.

“ - A Graduate Student Employee

Arizona Medical Board, and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. He remains on indefinite probation for a minimum of 5 years.

If you are now thinking to yourself, “How could this quack be charged with the coverage of my medical care?” so are we. In fact, so is this former patient who gave Sam Grief quite a scathing review on Vitals.com: “When I was a medical student this doctor performed a rectal exam on me in which he lifted me off the table with his finger in my anus. His explanation was that he was trying to “loosen things up”. Ten years later I still have problems with the fissures that developed.”

http://www.vitals.com/doctors/Dr_Samuel_N_Grief/reviews#ixzz3i4UqHHCr). Grief makes a lot of money denying us healthcare as the Medical Director of Campus Care--so much money that he lives in a McMansion in the suburbs, takes lots of beach vacations, and frequents Hawks and Bulls games while graduate employees scramble to find money to cover care denied them.



“I have been fortunate to have really positive interactions with all of my providers at UIC family medicine, pharmacists at Taylor Street, and other specialists. I have faced long wait periods and affordability barriers in accessing trans medical care though. I don't buy my hormones at UIC pharmacies because the cost is excessive. There also is lack of informed providers.

If you are a grad student trying to access trans-related health care, please know that there are students in the GEO T&Q caucus or GUS who could answer questions or make suggestions about this process. There are options for filing complaints and other strategies we are using to push toward improving healthcare for everyone. If you have problems or face barriers to accessing care, please do speak up about it if you feel comfortable doing so. You are not alone.”

- A Graduate Student Employee

Physical Health @ UIC Family Medicine

a. Identifying as queer and or trans* can pose a complication when addressing sexual health with your primary care physician (PCP) at UIC Family Medicine. There have been doctors whom have been identified as queer/trans* friendly- Dr. Hyderi, Dr. Figueroa, and Dr. Chico. Unfortunately, many trans and queer students are reporting that Family Medicine is telling these students that those docs are not taking new patients. If you have to see other docs, you may want to avoid Dr. Samuel Grief (see A, above), and some have reported that Dr. Albright and Dr. Tiemstra are definitely not queer or trans friendly and lack in other forms of cultural competency as well.

Also, talk to your doctor about what diagnosis they are assigning to you. If you are not seeing doctors for trans-related medical interventions, you do not need any diagnosis related to your gender identity. If you are, you may not feel that a “gender dysphoria” diagnosis is appropriate. You should be clear about what is going into your electronic health record, which gets shared across the UIC medical system and with CampusCare and other “covered entities.” You do not have to get your trans-related care at UIC if you are not comfortable with the diagnosis associated with your care.

b. When addressing physical health, your sexuality, gender or gender identity should not be the subject of the visit, especially if it is an urgent visit for a pressing physical health need and you may not be seeing your regular PCP. You have the right to be properly respected and treated. If the cause of your illness may be related to your sexual health, be sure to address that concern.

c. When it comes to trans and queer bodies, healthcare has quite a ways to go. You should feel comfortable discussing and talking about your sexual health with your PCP. In the event they do not understand your sexual activities as they pertain to your physical health, and details are needed and you are feeling comfortable/safe to disclose, you may disclose that which you wish. You have the right to be heard and understood, and not to be made felt ashamed for a non-heteronormative or cisgender sex life.

Hormones

- a. Hormones can be prescribed at Family Medicine. Based on feedback from various students, the general process is as follows: Your PCP will give you a referral for a mental health evaluation by either Adrienne Williams at UIC's Family Medicine Clinic or a couple of other outside providers who are covered for short-term consultation. Although you may have to wait indefinitely to see her, this step is required by CampusCare. One of our physicians has stated that the objective of this mental health evaluation is to ensure that the conditions for informed consent are met and that you are not experiencing mental health conditions that need to be addressed prior to treatment. You are not required to undergo long-term therapy unless you choose to. After the mental health evaluation, you will have a couple more visits with your PCP to get blood work completed and reviewed, after which point your PCP can prescribe and manage your ongoing HRT. UIC physicians claim to use an informed consent standard of care, which means that you should be able to make decisions about your treatment based on your own needs without being subject to unnecessary and cumbersome requirements (like seeing a mental health therapist) to 'prove' your eligibility. However, it should also be noted that there are other informed consent practices that do not require this additional mental health evaluation, such as HBHC. Some students choose to use a hybrid approach for hormone replacement therapy, using both UIC medical resources and other clinics.
- b. For FtM spectrum people on hormones, it is currently more affordable to purchase generic testosterone from other pharmacies, such as the HBHC Walgreens, than to purchase them through UIC's pharmacy using CampusCare. Via CampusCare, out of pocket 10mL vial will cost between \$80-120 depending upon which pharmacy (Maxwell St. has the cheaper generic version, but also a pharmacist who has been transphobic and privacy-violating; Taylor St. has brand-name testosterone that costs more). Some students opt to pay out of pocket for their hormones so that they can access more than one dose at a time (a possibly discriminatory prescribing practice that GEO is investigating). HBHC carries the generic 10mL that costs just under \$50 out of pocket.
- c. Our members' experience is that feminizing hormones are somewhat easier to obtain from UIC pharmacies than masculinizing hormones. However, all trans patients seeking hormones may experience difficulties accessing hormones from UIC pharmacies. Their poor communication systems and lack of training often surface when trying to fill gender-affirming prescriptions.

Gender-related/Gender-affirming Surgical Procedures

- a. If surgery is a part of your transition, your first step toward accessing it should be to seek out counseling/mental health services for the purpose of providing letters/documentation. There is a psychologist on staff at Family Medicine, Adrienne Williams, who will see patients in order to authorize surgical interventions; yes, it is outrageous that gatekeepers continue to intervene but that is part of the standard protocols, like WPATH's standards of care, for now. UIC Counseling Center as well as the UIC neuro-psychiatric institute (NPI) refuse to provide this documentation and have a history of not being trans friendly. NPI has no therapists that will authorize gender-related healthcare.
- b. After much prodding and formal complaints, UIC is working on contracting an in-network surgeon, Dr. Lauren Schechter, who does a range of surgical interventions. Once he is in place, do not feel obliged to use him if he or his work does not feel right for you. You can still go out of network but the percentage covered by CampusCare will be less. At the time of this writing, UIC and Dr. Schechter have not completed any gender-specific surgeries besides a hysterectomy performed by another UIC surgeon. To date this process has involved endless frustration for grad employees as they attempt, over long, drawn out periods of time and delays, to get authorized referrals from CampusCare to out-of-network surgeons.

Queer Academics, Research Opportunities

Faculty, who have been found to be queer-friendly and often teach queer-themed classes:

1. Jesus Ramirez-Valles, Department of Community Health Sciences
2. Laurie Schaffner, Sociology; Department of Gender & Women's Studies
3. Ronak Kapadia, Department of Gender & Women's Studies
4. Roderick Ferguson, Department African American Studies; Gender & Women's Studies
5. Jennifer Brier, Department of Gender & Women's Studies
6. Gayatri Reddy, Department of Anthropology; Gender & Women's Studies
7. Stacey Horn, Department of Educational Psychology
8. Curtis Winkle, Department of Urban Planning & Policy
9. Beth Richie, Department of Criminology, Law, and Justice
10. Anna Guevara, Department of Asian American Studies
11. Karen Su, Department of Asian American Studies; Director of AANAPISI grant
12. Carrie Sandahl, Department of Disability and Human Development
13. Brian Grossman, Department of Disability and Human Development

14. Mark Canual, Department of English

15. Therese Quinn, Department of Art and Art History

There are also many queer staff members around campus. They range from working in administration, to directors, facilities management, to service work.

Some graduate student-employee-academic groups that you may find queer-friendly or -themed:

1. Radical Public Health, Community Health Sciences
2. Graduate Employees Organization, Trans & Queer Caucus (or other GEO caucuses)

Student Research Forums

1. Throughout the academic year, the university hosts a number of student research forums and opportunities to practice showcasing your work for conferences beyond the university. Your own program, department and college may host one. The Office for Vice Chancellor on Research is a good resource and can be found at <http://research.uic.edu>.
2. On a larger level, there is the annual UIC Student Research Forum, which typically happens in April. At this forum, the Center for Research on Women and Gender holds a competition for those research projects dealing with related topics. For more information visit <http://research.uic.edu/srf>.
3. Additionally, there is an interdisciplinary, student photo competition with prizes called, “The Image of Research Exhibit” organized by the Graduate College. Selected images are exhibited in the spring at the Daley Library. For more information, visit <http://grad.uic.edu/image-research-exhibit>.

Diversity Travel Award

Through the Graduate College, there is the opportunity to apply for one of the Diversity Travel Awards if you are presenting at a conference that is around diversity – this include sexual orientation and gender identity.

Non-Academic Resources

Gender Affirming Peer Health Advocates: While the GEO supports its employees’ abilities to advocate for themselves, the peer health advocates program has singled out trans undergrads and trans grad employees to ensure their own access to care for themselves. The university claims to offer trans-inclusive healthcare, but the emergence of this program suggests otherwise. Trans peer-patient advocacy may place an undue and discriminatory burden upon transgender grad employees to do the work of CampusCare and Family Medicine. If you have time and interest to volunteer to help other

trans and queer students gain successful access to care that should be, legally, guaranteed to you by paid employees of CampusCare and Family Medicine, we encourage you to check it out!

Chancellor's Status Committee on the Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, People and Ally: This is an official UIC committee comprised of two Co-Chairs (one faculty and one staff member) and volunteers. The main goal is to provide advocacy for the LGBTQA community by advocating policy to the Chancellor. The committee meets once a month throughout the academic year. While there is an official list of members, everyone is invited to attend and participate at meetings. There is one undergraduate and graduate member. Lastly, the committee does get a small budget, and there is a funding process for programs and individual requests. There are additional identity-related Chancellors' Committees. They also can be approached for program and individual support visit <http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaa/diversity/csc.html>. As a union, some of us would caution that the Chancellors' Committees are arms of the very anti-union administration. Participate at your own risk and exploitation.

Gender and Sexuality Center: The Gender and Sexuality Center (GSC) at UIC creates a more inclusive campus and catalyzes positive social change by challenging heteronormativity and promoting deeply engaged and life affirming thinking, learning, and action. We serve students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members throughout Chicago of all gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations through cultural events, scholarly lectures, public dialogues and interactive trainings. We also connect students, faculty, and staff at UIC with resources, referrals and opportunities. For more information, visit <http://genderandsexuality.uic.edu>.

LGBTQ student organizations:

- PRIDE is a longstanding student organization that meets regularly and organizes programs from social – academic – activist depending on the group and the leadership.
- Gender Umbrella Society (GUS) is a student organization to foster a more supportive environment for trans* and genderqueer people on the UIC campus.
- BiQuest is a young student organization for those who identify as bisexual, queer, and/or along the diverse sexual spectrum. It aims to challenge biphobia and mono-sexism, while increasing bi and queer visibility.

Graduate Student Council: The Graduate Student Council is the governing Graduate Student body consisting of representatives from all degree-granting programs in the Graduate College. The Graduate Student Council has four primary goals:

- Supporting graduate students by hosting academic seminars and workshops.
- Encouraging graduate students to apply for conferences by supplying travel awards.
- Bringing graduate students together with various social events and project awards.
- Representing graduate in many different committees and meetings throughout the year.

There are three forms of student governance at UIC:

[The Undergraduate Student Government](#)

[The Health Professions Student Council](#)

[The Graduate Student Council](#)

<http://gradstudentcouncil.uic.edu/index.html>

These student governments allow students to directly affect decision-making policies through participation as elected representatives. Students sit on UIC's Board of Trustees as well as other major University committees. Graduate Student Council representatives are the liaisons and advocates for all graduate students here at UIC. The Graduate Student Council also has funds for Travel and Project Awards, which all graduate students can qualify for by having departmental representation at the general GSC meetings.

For more information about the Graduate Student Council, please visit their:

Website: <http://gradstudentcouncil.uic.edu/>

Blog: <https://uicgsc.wordpress.com/>

Facebook Page: GSC at UIC

Don't see a student org that fits your need? There are a few options for you. Within the GEO, the caucuses are formed by members' interest. Therefore, a new caucus can be created as needed. Any GEO member can start a caucus around an identity or interest. For more information about current GEO caucuses or how to start a new one, email geo@uic-geo.net.

For UIC registered student organizations, there is a procedure for new groups to register through the UIC campus Programs. While this is not entirely required, it is beneficial to be a registered student organization, because it allows the group to have access to funds and free meeting and event spaces.

Community Resources Outside UIC

Mental health and holistic healthcare resources that have been identified as trans affirming and accept people with no insurance on a sliding scale are:

- A. Live Oak Counseling Center- \$30 a session, typically 4 sessions for a letter. 773-880-1310
www.liveoakchicago.com
- B. Lorene Replogle- 60611 312.787.8425 <http://www.fourthchurch.org/lrcc/index.html> Sliding scale fees as low as \$1 but depends on case and financial situation, also accepts BCBS PPO, no wait.

- C. Center on Halsted 773.472.6469 EXT 460
<http://www.centeronhalsted.org/behavioralhealth.html> Services are provided on a sliding scale basis. Psychotherapy may be free of charge for individuals with low incomes.
- D. Center for Contextual Change: 821 W. Van Buren Chicago, IL 60607 847-676-4447 x304
<http://www.centerforcontextualchange.org/index.html> Reduced fee and sliding scale sessions with Clinical Interns and Externs
- E. Sage Community Health Collective 2514 W. Armitage Ste #205 312-582-4458
<http://sagecommunityhealth.org/> Sage is a wheelchair accessible, community health collective dedicated to healing justice. Sage honors clients' self-determination and offers harm reductionist, trauma-informed, body- and sex-positive services such as acupuncture and bodywork.

Affordable and comprehensive trans-related healthcare in the community

Due to CampusCare's barriers to accessing care as well as a lack of appropriately trained clinicians, UIC may not be an adequate care provider for queer and trans grad employees. If hormones are something you will need, you may want to seek them out at one of the following providers. They operate on an informed consent basis and, overall, have positive reputations for their work with the trans and queer communities. If you are dissatisfied for other reasons and would like more comprehensible care, these are all around good places.

- A. Howard Brown Health Center: 3000 N Halsted St, Chicago, IL, 60657, (773) 296-4343
- B. Broadway Youth Center (part of HBHC) : 615 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657, (773) 935-3151
- C. Chicago Women's Health Center: 1025 W Sunnyside Ave, Chicago, IL 60640, (773) 935-6126

Grassroots organizations in Chicago with a queer, non-hierarchical, abolitionist frameworks

- A. Black and Pink Chicago: <http://www.blackandpink.org/chapters/chicago/>
- B. Sex Workers Outreach Project: <https://redlightchicago.wordpress.com/>
- C. Transformative Justice Law Project: <http://tjlp.org/>
- D. Black Lives Matter: <http://blacklivesmatterchicago.tumblr.com/>
- E. Project Fierce: <http://projectfiercechicago.org/>
- F. Translifeline.org (Chicago-based, national hotline): <http://www.translifeline.org/>
 Trans Lifeline is a hotline staffed by transgender and gender non-conforming (GNC) people for trans and GNC people. Trans Lifeline volunteers receive training and then are ready to respond to a range support needs callers might have.

Workplace Protections for Graduate Student Employees

Current Contract Language

This section covers protections that already exist under the GEO contract. We are asking for increased protections in the new contract, which is covered in the next section.

i. Our contract includes a nondiscrimination clause which protects against discrimination based on (among other things) sex, and sexual orientation. The inclusion of these terms in the contract means that they are subject to the grievance procedure. This is covered in more detail in the “what to do if you have a problem” section below.

ii. Bereavement leave under our contract allows up to 3 days off for registered domestic partners, partners to a civil union, and household members.

iii. Under our contract, appointments and course assignments cannot be made in an arbitrary or capricious manner. So, if you do not get an offer or a particular assignment, there should be a reason. Similarly, evaluations should be made in a non-arbitrary manner. Thus, no one should be randomly singled out for evaluation.

Proposed Contract Language

Generally, when the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) wins protections in their contract it benefits more than the graduate students covered by the contract. It sets a standard to which other people, departments, students, and organizations can look to as guidance. Below are some of the protections that the GEO is aggressively pursuing in the new contract. The old contract expires on the 15th of August, 2015. These protections are proposed contract language; this means that while the GEO through the Bargaining committee and the members at caucus will fight hard to win these rights, none of them will be concrete until the final contract is negotiated.

i. Non-Discrimination

We are asking the university to include the phrase “actual or perceived” into the beginning of our non-discrimination clause. We do this with the understanding that a lot of discrimination happens based off an aggressor’s perception of their victim. Additionally, we are looking to change how our contract protects against sex, gender, and sexual orientation. The current contract languages states: “There will be no discrimination... with respect to any employee because of ... sex, sexual orientation including

gender identity”. The GEO, with help from the Trans and Queer Caucus, recognize that while this language is protective it is also problematic. Our proposed language states: “There will be no discrimination... with respect to any employee because of *actual or perceived*... sex, sexual orientation, *gender including gender identity and gender expression*,”. Unfortunately, the administration has been highly resistant to these changes which just highlights the need for the GEO and other organizations across campus to fight for these protections.

ii. Employee Rights

We are asking the university to include access to gender-neutral restrooms as an employee right. This is an instance where if we win this language in the contract, it will benefit trans* and queer university wide. There is also work being done by the Gender and Sexuality Center to provide gender-neutral signs on single user bathrooms across campus.

iii. Health Care

The proposed contract is asking for protections for medically necessary care at in-network rates even if that care has to be sought out of network. Our language defines medically necessary as “a service or supply that is necessary and appropriate for the diagnosis or treatment of an injury, illness, or condition based on generally accepted current medical practices.”

We are asking for protections against claims being incorrectly processed or denied. We are doing this by allowing employees covered by the new contract to file a grievance through GEO.

GEO is also seeking to create a patient navigator to help find clarity in the murky mess that is Campus Care. Specifically, we would like our patient navigator to assist target populations including people who are seeking gender-affirming surgeries.

iv. Bereavement Leave

In recognition that the nuclear family never has and still does not accurately cover all familial relationships, the GEO is requesting bereavement leave for an employee’s immediate or extended family member or committed friend. We have defined committed friend as “those individuals ... with whom the employee does not share kinship, but in whom the employee invests a perdurable commitment of love and responsibility, and who reciprocates the same feeling and responsibility to the employee”. We believe that this protection will cover all family structures, be they biological or chosen.

v. Health and Safety

The GEO is asking for the university to recognize that health and safety does not pertain to just the physical well being of employees but the physical and mental well being of employees.

Additionally, the GEO is seeking to protect against workplace violence. Once again, we are asking the university to recognize that workplace violence includes “intimidating, threatening or violent behavior”.

As this section is titled “Proposed Contract Language”, and as was mentioned before, none of these protections are guaranteed until the new contract is finalized. The rate at which negotiations with the university administration are progressing, the final contract probably will not be agreed upon until May 2016. Additionally, the administration has been very recalcitrant on agreeing to any of the above protections. In fact, one administrator can be quoted as saying that “If it were up to me, we would not even have a non-discrimination clause.” Hopefully this provides you with some incentive to show up to the bargaining meetings with the university.

Please note: This guide comes from direct personal experience of various graduate student employees. Often, we must learn from each other – as peer educators. Much of this information you will not find “officially” at UIC.