

## **Second-prize essay:**

“Respecting the pronoun choices of fellow students and staff members in pursuit of inclusivity and eradicating discrimination towards gender diverse members of the UP community.” As a student in the Faculty of Theology and Religion, I believe this should be included in moral and ethical considerations. Not just to student ministers, but the general public. According to what I've seen in many cases like this, we try to contextualize the bible, we bring up issues of religion, society, and so on.

This causes the majority of us to lose sight of humanity. As a result, I feel that the more we learn about transgender people, the better we will understand and embrace them. As a result, once we begin to comprehend and accept, it will be much easier to appreciate the decisions of others.

Section 5 of a guideline of trans protocol, states the Intentions and vision, saying that The paper adds to the University of Pretoria's anti-discrimination policy, promoting a more affirming and inclusive UP experience for anyone who is gender non-conforming or non-binary. In addition, the booklet includes practical strategies to support and assist UP students and workers who are transitioning their gender or need help with other associated difficulties. It contains measures that enable gender-changing to take place without the student or employee being mistreated in the process.

In my understanding is that regardless of their beliefs or worldview, every human being is precious. As a result, as individuals, we must learn to see everyone we meet through the lenses of love and then seek out opportunities to connect subconsciously and make a sincere effort to comprehend their viewpoint even if you never completely agree, at least you will learn something new and make them feel respected. Keep in mind that relationships are formed on mutual understanding. A relationship does not begin with an agreement, but respecting the other person and appreciating who they are.

Respect means that you accept somebody for who they are, even when they're different from you or you don't agree with them. Respect doesn't have to come naturally – it is something you learn. I believe TransAwareness@UP will help to transform positively.

## **Third-prize essay:**

It is revolutionary for a trans person to choose to be seen and visible in a world that tells us we should not exist.

The term "gender-diverse" is used to refer to persons whose gender identity, including their gender expression, is at odds with what is perceived as being the gender norm in a particular context at a particular point in time, including those who do not place themselves in the male/female binary; the more specific term "trans" is used to describe persons who identify with a different sex than the one assigned to them at birth. With

reference to daily life experiences gender diverse people or trans people around the world face levels of violence and discrimination that offend the human consciousness, this includes, the violent hate murders and assaults, the so-called conversion therapy, mass incarcerations. In this essay I will discuss the importance of respecting gender pronouns in pursuit of inclusivity and also make recommendations on what can be done to advance gender diversity at the University of Pretoria.

### **The importance of respecting gender pronouns in pursuit of inclusivity**

Pronouns are one of the ways we portray our identities. When someone asks you to use their pronouns, they are asking for you to respect their identity. When someone refers to another person using the wrong pronouns, especially on purpose, that can lead to that person feeling disrespected and can lead to dysphoria, exclusion, and alienation. Therefore, asking and correctly using someone's pronouns is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for their gender identity thereby not making them feel disrespected, invalidated, dismissed, alienated, or dysphoric.

### **Recommendations on what can be done to advance gender diversity at the University of Pretoria**

In my experience as a first-year student living in one of the male residence which is UP managed, I came to learn that even though Tuks Res has an inclusivity policy, it was poorly or not implemented by the respective residences. This issue was particularly evident during the orientation period where both male and female students were made to conform to the default gender roles and sexual identity.

This created a division among us and thus isolation to some since they are still struggling with coming to terms with their gender identities and or sexuality. As a result, it felt like a one-sided party, no regard for inclusivity and diversity, partnerships between Res Rag partners were with female residences and male residences cannot be partners, this extended to party lines, whereby residences host parties either off campus or on campus. In my conclusion I want to make, is to avoid segregating boys and girls into separate lines, this extends to separating boys from boys and girls from girls.

Explore gender concepts and roles from different communities. Acknowledge Differences, Offer Implicit Bias Training for Everyone. Provide Mentors that have knowledge and understand the importance of diversity and inclusivity. Encourage Personal Evaluation programs that assist in helping everyone understand the concept of gender diversity and sexual identities. Value all Diversity, meaning everyone's gender identity and sexual identity must be treated and respected.