

**Proposed Joint Resolution Between the
Texas Tech University Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, and Staff Senate
to Eliminate Gendered Language at Texas Tech University**

WHEREAS one of the goals of Texas Tech University (TTU) is to promote an inclusive environment in which all current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and guests feel valued and supported; and

WHEREAS TTU educates, hosts, and employs individuals of all genders and gender expressions; and

WHEREAS eliminating gendered language will further TTU's institutional stance on non-discrimination by being comprehensive of students, staff, and faculty who may identify as transgender or gender non-conforming, and

WHEREAS the use of language such as 'chairman' or 'freshman' are antiquated terms from a period wherein it was not common for women or gender minorities to be present in higher education, and

WHEREAS gendered language perpetuates stereotypes and inequalities related to, and experienced by, women and non-binary individuals (Vainapel et al. 2015), and

WHEREAS the use of gender-inclusive language has a positive impact on female and non-binary individuals, and no negative impact on males (Moulton et al. 1978; McConnell and Fazio 1996; Kleinman 2002); and

WHEREAS many universities across the country, including Cornell, Amherst, Rochester Institute of Technology, University of Dayton, and Yale University, have adopted gender-inclusive language; and

WHEREAS this resolution is supported by the TTU Division of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Student Affairs; the President's Gender Equity Council; Women's and Gender Studies, and the Office of LGBTQIA;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the TTU Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, and Staff Senate recommend the discontinuance of gender-based terms such as 'freshman' and 'upperclassman' in university materials, communications, and processes in favor of the gender-inclusive terms 'first-year student' and 'upper-level student,' respectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the TTU Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, and Staff Senate support broader efforts for adoption of gender-inclusive language, such as 'Chair,' 'Spokesperson,' and 'Supervisor' (in place of 'foreman'), etc., in official communications; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to TTU President Lawrence Schovanec; Provost Michael Galyean; Division of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Student Affairs; the President's Gender Equity Council; the Office of LGBTQIA; the Office of the Registrar; the Division of Administration and Finance and the Department of Human Resources.

Literature Cited:

Kleinman, S. 2002. Why sexist language matters. *Qualitative Sociology*, 25: 299-304.

McConnell, A.R. and Fazio, R.H. 1996. Women as men and people: Effects of gender-marked language. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22: 1004-1013.

Moulton, J., Robinson, G.M. and Elias, C. 1978. Sex bias in language use: "Neutral" pronouns that aren't. *American Psychologist*, 33: 1032.

Vainapel, S., Shamir, O.Y., Tenenbaum, Y. and Gilam, G., 2015. The dark side of gendered language: The masculine-generic form as a cause for self-report bias. *Psychological assessment*, 27: 1513.