

**Trans\* and Gender Inclusion**

**Campus Policy**

**Russell Sage College**

**Effective July 28, 2023**

**Revised August 2024**

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## **Vision Statement**

Russell Sage College (RSC) embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion as essential components of a rich intellectual and cultural environment in which all members are given the opportunity to reach their full potential as active participants in our local and global society.

We realize that the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion is an evolution that moves us towards our aspirations of a culturally inclusive community. The understanding we gain, as we continually assess our institution, will create informed and intentional transformation.

RSC is committed to developing policies and programs to create a campus that supports an optimal learning and working environment for all students, alumnae/i, faculty, administrators, and staff.

With respect to admissions, RSC welcomes all academically qualified students to our campuses in pursuit of their chosen career paths, creative and intellectual development, and to explore life's curiosities. Our policy for Trans\* and Gender inclusive excellence stems from this vision, our anti-discrimination policy, New York State Human Rights Law, and federal Title IX guidelines, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, gender identity, and gender expression.

At RSC we deeply uphold diversity as a life practice. As a life practice, we believe that such inclusiveness and policy development exemplify a social justice issue imperative for addressing social equality, educational enrichment, and institutional progress. Social justice practice at RSC pivots around a quality of life that recognizes the human rights for all of our students and our quest for creating a learning environment that values humanity. Indeed, as a community we celebrate our collectivity as people without losing sight of our unique and dynamic differences.

We have two campuses in Albany and in Troy. We also have three Graduate Professional Schools (Education, Health Sciences and Management).

## **Policy**

RSC's **Trans\* and Gender Inclusive Policy** encompass three distinct areas: Admissions, Housing, and The Office of the Registrar. Although the procedures and policies of each area operate differently, they all work in tandem to accommodate the needs of all students, especially as these needs relate to a student's gender identity and expression.

### *Admissions*

- Upon admissions, a student has the option of sharing their gender identity and expression.
- We honor a student's expression of their gender identity and expression. When considering an applicant for admission we do not require legal, medical or any other documents to verify the applicant's gender expression or identity or to determine campus selection; and neither are these documents required for selecting an on campus residence hall.
  - However, federal guidelines for funding require that applicants report their legal sex. Only for accurate reporting are applicants required to disclose their legal sex<sup>1</sup>. FERPA protects information on an applicant or student's legal sex; and this information remains stored in Colleague, a college-wide system the stores demographic data for The Sage Colleges.

### *Housing*

#### General Policies

- When completing their housing preference form, all first year students are given the option of disclosing their gender identity and expression and request a specific room-type (single, for example) or roommate. Completing this information will guide roommate matching. You may read this form by clicking this link. <https://www.sage.edu/student-life/residence-life/forms/>
- While the Res-hall floors at the Sage College of Albany are all co-educational, rooms and on-campus apartments are not. Students are matched, however, with roommates according to their gender identity and expression.
- However, a first year student can request to share a room with a specific student – so long as they both complete the housing preference form (see link above).

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<sup>1</sup> By legal sex we mean the sex reported on legal documents such as your birth certificate or driver's license.



- To illustrate, here are a few examples of possible roommate matchings based on gender identities and expression:
  - Gender Queer + Trans Identities
  - Transwoman + Cisgender Woman
  - Transman + Cisgender Man
  - Non Gender Conforming + Trans Identities
  - Non Gender Conforming + Non Gender Conforming
  - Non Gender Conforming + Gender Queer
  - Non Gender Conforming + Cisgender Woman
  - Non Gender Conforming + Cisgender Man
- Information regarding a student's gender identity and expression is not ever disclosed to students or their (or their roommate's) parent or guardian.
- All students, including first year students, have the option of transferring to a different room or Res-Hall if they desire such change.

#### Trans and Gender Inclusion Policies

- If a student's gender identity and expression changes after enrolling at RSC, then they will be given the choice to relocate to a place which they feel better fits their residential needs.
- All students have access to gender-inclusive bathrooms; gender non-conforming students also have the right to utilize whichever bathroom aligns with their gender identity and expression.



## *Federal Protections, and Russell Sage College's Anti-Discrimination Policies*

- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 promises that no person experiences sex discrimination in federally funded education. This prohibition on sex discrimination prevents institutions of higher education from discriminating based on sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, and gender identity. To read more about RSC's Title IX Policy Prohibiting Sex Discrimination, please follow this link: [https://www.sage.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/RSC-Title-IX-Policy\\_Final\\_August\\_1\\_2024.docx.pdf](https://www.sage.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/RSC-Title-IX-Policy_Final_August_1_2024.docx.pdf)
- To read more about the U.S. Department of Education Title IX policy please follow this link: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/sexoverview.html>
- To read about RSC's Anti-Discrimination policy please follow this link: <https://www.sage.edu/about/offices-centers/public-safety/bias-crimes/>

### *Name Policy: Office of the Registrar*

At RSC we have a “Chosen Name Policy” and a “Legal Name Change Policy.” The latter, the “Legal Name Change Policy,” requires documentation, while the former does not.

#### Chosen Name Policy

Every student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity. Regardless of whether a cis, transgender or gender nonconforming student has legally changed their name or gender, RSC allows such students to use a chosen name that reflects their identity.

Students who don't have official documentation or are in transition<sup>2</sup> can submit a chosen campus name change form to the Registrar's Office; this name will be the first name used on campus for rosters. Legally, we cannot change the official first name. Legal birth names will be stored in the student information system for use on legal documents and archival purposes. Fill out the Chosen Name section on the Change of Name Form and submit it to the Registrar's Office <https://www.sage.edu/academics/academic-resources/registrar/change-name-gender/>

#### Legal Name Change Policy

All students currently enrolled are granted the opportunity to change their names on institutional records upon the production of legal evidence indicating their name change. Submit the Change of Name form along with the appropriate documentation directly to the Registrar's Office.

Once your name is changed it will be viewable on the student information system and consistent throughout RSC's information systems.

<sup>2</sup> At RSC we conceptualize “transition” to denote an expression of gender identity that not only translates as “man” or “woman” but also beyond these normative and/or traditional categories. We understand gender expression and identity as fluid and as existing on a continuum that exceeds the limits of mainstream language and widely used vocabularies attached to queer expression and sexual identity. To trans\* gender means to move in, out, between, and even beyond categories of identity and we respect and will honor the language you choose to articulate, define, and express your identity.

## Conclusion

At Russell Sage College, we aspire to create a collegiate environment that effectively protects members of our trans\* and genderqueer communities. We take a vested interest in providing safe and inclusive academic and social environments for all students. Moreover, our trans\* and gender inclusive policy guarantees our promise to you as a member of the community that you will be held to high standards of care and safety among your peers, faculty, and staff.

In sum, our policy includes information on your guaranteed rights on housing, your chosen campus name and pronouns, as well as your privacy. Your experiences at RSC should be based on rigorous academics as well as connecting with our rich and diverse community. As a student with these rights, we will always serve as an advocate for your rights and needs while you focus on what is most important here at Russell Sage College, to: ***Be. Know. Do More.***

## **Appendix A Frequently Asked Questions about Chosen Name and Legal Name Change Policies**

### **What type of document can be considered legal?**

-certified copy of marriage license, court order, or dissolution decree reflecting the name in full; or

-current passport or other government issued official proof of identity (Driver's License or State ID are acceptable)

### **Do I get a new email address when I change my name?**

No, your email address will not automatically change. If you are requesting to change your Sage email, you must contact the IT Help Desk directly at [helpdesk@sage.edu](mailto:helpdesk@sage.edu).

### **Do I get a new ID card when I change my name?**

No, your ID card will not automatically change. If you want a replacement ID card, College Services charges a \$15.00 replacement card fee. College Services will need notification from the Registrar's Office that you have officially changed your name.

### **How do you handle International Student Records?**

International students must use the same name on their records as on their documents from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and their passport.

The only exception is that any student can add a chosen campus name which will be the first name used on campus (specifically for course, grading and advising rosters). To request a campus chosen name, fill out the Chosen Name section on the Change of Name form and submit it to the Registrar's Office.

### **Can I change my name on all records if I don't have legal documentation?**

No. Formal name changes without supporting legal documentation will not be accepted. However, we do allow students to add a chosen campus name to use on campus for course, grading and advising rosters. A chosen campus name is not used for official academic record purposes. For example, a student who selects a chosen name will see it appear on class rosters; however, chosen name will not appear on the academic transcript, paychecks or financial aid documents.

### **How do you handle gender changes and the transition process?**

#### **Trans\*(gender/genderqueer) students?**

If a student wishes for their expressed gender and name change to appear on their official academic records, then they must provide RSC with either a certified copy of a court order or documentation from a health professional that supports their transitioning process. In other words, if a student finds themselves in the early stages of their transition and treatments and would like for their expressed gender and name change to appear on their academic records at the time of or after their transition then they would need to provide RSC with legal documentation to begin and finalize these changes.

#### **Do you update former student records?**

After a student graduates or separates from RSC the student's academic file is closed. College records are historical documents and are not altered retrospectively. Name changes, except in cases of adoption and legal gender change, are always applied from the time the change is made forward. RSC will accept requests from graduates for a change of name only if the student provides Sage with a certified copy of a court order that notes this name change.

#### **If I have graduated, can I get a new diploma with my new name?**

If your name change request is accepted (you have already submitted the Change of Name form along with your proper documentation to the Registrar's Office), then a diploma may be reissued for a graduate whose name has legally changed. You may also request a new diploma that reflects your chosen name.

Students should note that employers may request a copy of your diploma in the future and your diploma name may need to match your legal name. Your old diploma must be returned and there is a fee of \$50.00 to reprint a new diploma. The official signature(s) on and look of the diploma may not be the same as the signature(s) on and look of the original. Please be patient as the request will be sent to the printer and a new diploma may take up to a month to process. To request a diploma to be re-issued, please email the Office of the Registrar at [registrar@sage.edu](mailto:registrar@sage.edu)

## Appendix B LGBTQIA+ Community Resources

<p>Need based legal defense fund for name changes</p> <p><b>**They also help with cases of housing discrimination***</b></p>	<p>Transgender Legal Defense &amp; Education Fund, Inc.</p> <p>151 West 19th Street Suite 1103 New York, New York 10011</p> <p>t: 646.862.9396, x702 f: 914.920.4057 e: nlewis@transgenderlegal.org w: transgenderlegal.org</p>
<p>An organization that caters to LGBT people of color specifically in regards to victims of crime and domestic violence, but also by providing support and empowerment groups</p>	<p>In Our Own Voices 245 Lark Street Albany, NY 12210 info@inourownvoices.org www.inourownvoices.org</p>
<p>An organization that caters to the HIV+ community and those directly affected by HIV/AIDS. They offer support and prevention counseling, various therapies, information, resources for the community, social activities, etc.</p>	<p>The Albany Damien Center, Inc. 646 State St, Albany, NY 12203 Phone: (518) 449-7119 FAX: (518) 449-7881</p>
<p>A Community Center for the LGBT community. Offers a variety of services including trainings, college nights, HIV testing days, Youth programs, support groups, PFLAG groups, etc.</p> <p><b>*Side Note*</b> They also publish commUNITY Magazine, one of the oldest LGBT publications in NYS</p> <p><b>**Albany PRIDE parade and festival organizer</b></p>	<p>Pride Center of the Capital Region 332 Hudson Avenue Albany, NY 12210 Main: (518) 462-6138 Fax: (518) 462-2101</p>
<p>They are not specifically LGBT, but they are LGBT friendly. They have a Transitional Housing Program provides a supervised group residence and apartment living for homeless youth ages 16-21. They have a separate shelter for adults. They also offer chemical dependence counseling, domestic violence services, and mental health services.</p>	<p>Equinox 95 Central Avenue Albany, NY 12206 518.434.6135 (There are specific phone lines for different services)</p>
<p>They are generally knowledgeable about LGBT health issues.</p>	<p>Albany Planned Parenthood 855 Central Ave. Albany, NY 12206 p: 518.434.5678   f: 518.434.0732</p>
<p>Offers individual, group, family, and couples counseling. They are also available for sessions via phone. All of the staff members are specifically trained to deal with issues of sexual and gender identity, expression, and orientation.</p>	<p>Choices Counseling &amp; Consulting 523 Western Ave #2a, Albany, NY 12203 Phone: (518) 438-2222</p>

LGBT friendly family counselor	Michele A. Zinoman, LCSW 409 New Karner Road, Albany, NY 12205, Albany, NY 12205 Phone: (518) 456-1071
Endocrinologist who specializes in hormone therapy. She has a repertoire of surgeons she suggests for top surgery.	Susquehanna Family Practice: Wolf-Gould Carolyn MD 1 Foxcare Dr # 103, Oneonta, NY 13820 Phone: (607) 431-5757
Crisis intervention and suicide prevention service for LGBT youth	The Trevor Lifeline 866-488-7386  The Trevor Project PO Box 69232 West Hollywood, CA 90069 info@thetrevorproject.org
An organization that works to create more LGBT inclusive and supportive schools. *Side Note* There website will post the community breaking the silence event	GLSEN, Inc. 110 William Street, 30th Floor, New York, NY 10038 info@glsen.org // 212-727-0135
They create and publish reports on college's LGBT friendliness and also run Camp Pride. Camp Pride is an incredible resource to train LGBT youth leaders. They also run Lambda 10: a clearinghouse for LGBT issues in sorority and fraternity life.	Camp Pride PO Box 240473 Charlotte, NC 28224 (704) 277-6710