

Setting the Stage for Student Empowerment: Using Identity-first Language in Practice

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We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects...

Access and Inclusion

and

Civility and Respect

...this week and in all aspects of our organization.

Communication – January 19

- As AHEAD moves to promote concepts of disability informed by social justice, we are adopting identity-first language across all communication, information and materials.
- This is not a directive or a recommendation about how others should identify; it is one way to model new thinking on disability that we see reflected in disability studies and in the disability rights community.
- [AHEAD Statement on Language](#)

How did we get here?

- More than a year of discussion and research
- Small sub-committee of Board members drafted memo outlining proposed changes and Board approved in October 2020 meeting
- Subcommittee members:
Tammy Berberi, Amanda Kraus, Enjie Hall, Zebadiah Hall, Allen Sheffield, Melanie Thornton

Implications

People First

- I am a person with a disability.
- Separates person from disability

Identity First

- I am a disabled person.
- Reflects social model – disabled by
- Consistent with disability studies and many disabled leaders

Guidance

- Name disability explicitly
- Avoid euphemisms
 - Special
 - Physically/mentally challenged
 - Differently-abled

Resources

- Disability Language Style Guide, National Center on Disability and Journalism
- Guidelines: How to Write About People with Disabilities, University of Kansas, Research and Training Center on Independent Living
- PC Labels Do a Diservice: Inside Higher Ed, Stephen Stern
- Language and Disability: Explore Access, UA Partners for Inclusive Communities
- The Language of Disability Activity: Disability as Diversity Toolkit, Explore Access, UA Partners for Inclusive Communities

Resources cont'd

- Language Guide: Disability Cultural Center, Syracuse University
- Guidelines for Writing About People with Disabilities: ADA National Network
- Disabled: Just Say the Word: NPR
- Identity-First Language: Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)
- Disabled Person or Person with a Disability: Annie Elainey
- Disability as Diversity: Inside Higher Ed

(Links to resources in Resource Handout and on the [AHEAD Statement on Language](#) page)

Discussion

Session Evaluation

- Your feedback helps shape future programming.
- Thank you for attending!