Gender Inclusive Language

Using gender neutral language can help a writer avoid ambiguity and unfair gender stereotypes.

Instead of:	Use:
1) nouns or pronouns that include man or woman **ex.** businessman, cameraman, chairman, councilwoman, fireman, mankind	**1) gender-neutral nouns and pronouns** **ex.** business person, photographer, chairperson, councilmember, firefighter, humankind
2) gender-specific, third-person pronouns and forms of verbs *PRONOUN* **ex.** The student, who studies hard for her test, usually gets good grades. **ex.** Before a student attends college, it would be wise that he meet with his counselor first so that he takes the right classes. **ex.** The student has to stay until the end of class to get his homework assignment. *SINGLE GENDER SPECIFIC PRONOUN* *ex.* Every student will work at his desk. *POSSESSIVE PRONOUN* **ex.** After finishing his assignment, the student should go over it with an instructor.	**2) ungendered (first person, second person, plural) pronouns or verbs when referring to people** *PRONOUN* **ex.** Students, who study hard for their tests, usually get good grades. **ex.** Before students attend college, it is wise that they meet with their counselors first so that they take the right classes. *ex.* You have to stay until the end of class to get your homework assignment. *DOUBLE PRONOUN* **i.e. he or she, him and her (don't overuse)** **ex.** Every student will work at his or her desk. *ARTICLE* **ex.** After finishing the assignment, the student should go over it with an instructor.
3) referring to men and women as individuals **ex.** Mr. Senior and Julie are both English instructors at Allan Hancock College.	**3) parallel use if names and titles** **ex.** Mr. Senior and Ms. Knight are both English instructors at Allan Hancock College.
4) gender-specific titles when writing letters **ex.** Dear Sir, Gentlemen, Ladies	**4) gender-neutral titles of a company name, department, or job title of the person being addressed** **ex.** Dear Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P., Dear Personnel Department, Dear Director of Operations, Dear Colleague

5) using a woman's marriage status to define her
 	
    Ex. Do not use Mrs. or Miss
	5) the more neutral "Ms." in professional dialogue/writing unless the individual has directed you otherwise.
	    ** Ms. should not replace other earned titles (i.e., Dr.)

People-First Language

Introduce a person first followed by the disability/handicap/condition.

Instead of:	Use:
1) using an adjective to describe a person **ex.** The disabled patient arrived early to the seminar. **ex.** "the mentally retarded"	**1) a noun after the person to introduce the condition** **ex.** The patient with a disability arrived early to the seminar. **ex.** "people with mental retardation"

2) victimizing a person
 	
ex. "a victim of diabetes"
  • referring to a person as "wheelchair bound" or "confined to a wheelchair"
    ♦ a person who uses a wheelchair for mobility is not confined
  • referring to a person with a disability as "abnormal"
  "normal" is relative
	2) a person "with" a condition
	
	ex. "a person with diabetes"