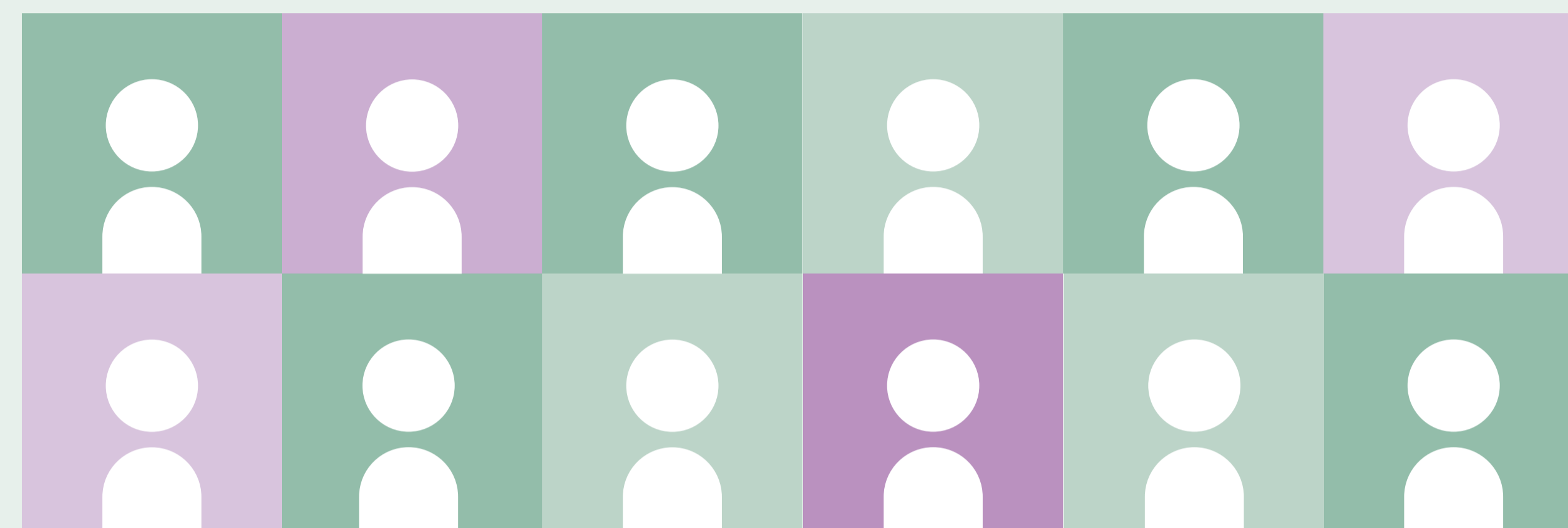


# Handout on Gender Sensitive Online Teaching

The acronym TIN is short for trans\*, inter\* and non-binary and acts as a collective term for people whose gender identity does not fit into our binary gender order. TIN encompasses a broad spectrum of gender identities and gender expressions, all of which suffer marginalization in our heteronormative society. Institutions of higher education also reproduce the marginalisation of TIN students, both on a structural and an interpersonal level. The current move towards digital and online learning has only reinforced such marginalisation. The path to changing their name and gender in the university records is long, exhausting and fraught with bureaucratic pitfalls. Only occasionally are students able to achieve having their names and gender identity changed in the system.

As a consequence, many TIN students are enrolled at their university under a name that does not reflect how they self-identify. Those affected either have to hide their identity or are constantly forced to communicate and explain the difference between their self-presentation and what is saved in the university records. Over and over they have to explain themselves and their existence. The university hence structurally forces its TIN students to out themselves to both lecturers and other students.

In the digital context of distance learning, these structural effects are even more pronounced, as many of the learning and teaching platforms used at Bielefeld University are linked to and make use of the data saved in students' university records, data which cannot be changed by the students – like, for example, how their name is displayed.



## Which teaching platforms are used/what specific issues does that lead to?

As of now only Zoom offers students the opportunity to easily change their names. Teachers cannot remedy the structural issue of the university not letting students autonomously change their eKVV information, which determines the displays of most teaching and learning platforms. It is thus all the more important that teachers deal with the issue in a sensitive and informed manner.

Options	Lernraum	LernraumPlus	Panopto	Zoom
Students can change their own name	no (centralised by eKVV)	no (centralised by eKVV)	no (centralised by eKVV)	yes
It is possible to display pronouns	no	no	no	yes (name display changeable)
Participant list is visible to all participants	no	yes	/	yes, meetings no, online seminars
Name is displayed in extended communication	yes (chat function, forum posts)	yes (chat function, forum posts)	/	yes (chat function)

Contact persons for queries, comments and cooperation:

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## Recommendations for a TIN-sensitive approach to digital teaching

- If you are using the participant list from eKVV, rather than calling roll, instead have students do a round of introductions. Ask participants to introduce themselves using their preferred pronouns. Use this information for the duration of the course. Do not put it into question. If there is a name you cannot find on your list, ask the student to give you their matriculation number privately. You can use this number when booking student achievements.

- We recommend you create a questionnaire for all participants to complete prior to the start of the course. In addition to fielding general information to help you design and implement your online course, you can also ask participants about their level of identification or dis/comfort with the name saved in the university system. Please see the example course survey attached.

- Zoom is a TIN-friendly platform. Let your students know they can change their names in Zoom, encourage them to use the names they feel most comfortable with, and invite students to also include their preferred pronouns. Set a good example by doing the same.

- Given that the university email address is linked to personal data entered during the university enrollment process and cannot be changed by students, please allow students to email you from external addresses unaffiliated with Bielefeld University.

- Make sure that you use gender-sensitive language in your communication. This also applies, for example, to email greetings. A further step towards normalizing the acceptance of the pronoun preference of others is to include your own pronoun preference in your email signature.

- Due to not being reliant on the university's master data, external platforms offer more protection from outing to students. However, the use of external platforms can lead to difficulties (e.g. contractual issues, licensing conditions, data protection, data security). Consult with other faculty and administration and make use of the platforms you have experience with.

**Structural conditions make it near impossible for you as a teacher to prevent outings from happening. What you can do, however, is create a learning environment that is open and safe for TIN students and work around existing marginalizing platforms as much as possible. We strongly encourage you to do so!**

# Previewing Questionnaire Distance Learning Accessibility

**\*in settings, select the option for students to respond anonymously to avoid forced outing; students have the chance to give more information in the open-answer field of question 7.**

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1 \* After watching the course [introduction](#) and familiarizing yourself with the requirements for obtaining credit points for course participation, can you confirm that you will regularly take part in this seminar?  
 Yes  No

2 \* Do you have a computer you can use during the scheduled course time: 10-11:30 am on Tuesdays?  
 Yes  No

3 \* Do you have access to a webcam for in-class discussion?  
 Yes  No

4 \* Do you have access to a microphone for in-class discussion?  
 Yes  No

5 \* Where you are set up 10-11:30 AM on Tuesdays, are you safe and do you feel comfortable discussing these course topics (queer and trans\* studies) via ...?  
1 = 100% safe and comfortable  
2 = Yes, no problem  
3 = I can find a way  
4 = This will be a challenge for me  
5 = I am not safe and comfortable; live formats are not possible for me

live teleconference platforms (e.g., zoom)

live chat (text)

	1	2	3	4	5
live teleconference platforms (e.g., zoom)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
live chat (text)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6 \* Please respond to the following statement (select all that apply):  
"It is comfortable for me to be addressed by the name saved in the university system and shown on Lernraum."

- Yes, this is the name I go by.
- I go by a shortened name, but the system name is ok, too.
- I use a different name, but it is ok if classmates see the name saved in the system.
- I go by a different name, and it is not comfortable for me for classmates to see the name saved in the system.
- I am not at all comfortable having the name in the system be seen by anyone (classmates, instructors, administrators)
- The name saved in the system misgenders me.

7 If there is anything else your instructor [redacted] should know related to your ability to participate in this course, please feel free to inform her here (or via email).

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