

NAME NOT SHAME: EMPATHY AND RESPECT IN STEMM INTERDISCIPLINARY UNITS TOWARDS DIVERSE COHORTS - THE TRANSGENDER STUDENT VOICE.

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As availability of interdisciplinary units increases across Australian universities, we need to recognize that significant shifts will occur in the composition of the student cohort. If these units are to harness and promote the synergistic effects of diversity to solve global problems, so too must we incorporate strategies that are truly inclusive and accommodate the diversity of students they wish to attract

LGBTIQ students select mainly Arts (31%) and then Science (19%) programs (Dau and Strauss 2016). We can, therefore, expect a demographic shift in STEMM interdisciplinary units. Much maligned are transgender students. Transgender students often reject Birth Names (referred to as “Dead Names”) and adopt names that affirm their gender and separate their past from present identities. However, transgender students remain to be recognized in many university online systems. These systems (and their users) induce substantial trauma by using dead names and unintentionally “outing” students. Here, we listen to and act upon the Student Voice. A fundamental human right is to be referred to by names that affirm one’s identity. Education that, as a premise, seeks out diversity must be inclusive and show respect and empathy: the least we can do is name, not shame.

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