

The image features a decorative border composed of various rainbow and cloud motifs. The rainbows are drawn in a simple, stylized manner with multiple bands of color including red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Some rainbows are complete arches, while others are partial. The clouds are small, fluffy shapes in shades of green and blue. Scattered throughout the border are small, colorful dots in pink, orange, and blue. The background is a solid light gray.

The Gender Neutral Transition

Epsilon Kappa Tau



Terminology & Definitions

Transgender: Denoting or relating to a person whose gender identity does not correspond with the sex registered for them at birth.

Gender Identity: A person's innate sense of their gender (used in contexts where it is contrasted with the sex registered for them at birth.) Gender is a broad spectrum. A person may identify at any point within this spectrum or outside of it entirely.

Sex: Refers to the physical differences between people who are male, female, or intersex. A person typically has their sex assigned at birth based on physiological characteristics, including their genitalia and chromosome composition. This may or may not align with an individual's gender identity.

Cisgender: Denoting or relating to a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex registered for them at birth.



Terminology & Definitions

Gender Queer or Gender Non-Conforming: Denoting or relating to a person whose gender identity does not correspond to conventional binary gender distinctions.

LGBTQIA+: An inclusive term that includes people of all genders and sexualities (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, etc.)

Non-Binary: A person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may experience their gender identity and expression as outside, between, or a combination of the sex/gender binary.

Gender Binary: A classification system that divides gender into two distinct groups, masculine and feminine.



What does being a gender neutral sorority mean?

This transition means that Epsilon Kappa Tau is a sorority that accepts all individuals based on ideals, morals, and personality with gender identity not being a contributing factor for acceptance.

For EKT, this inclusion widened our horizons. We were already a very open-minded and accepting chapter and did not turn people down because they didn't identify as cisgendered women. Everyone has always had a home in this chapter.

Primarily, with this change we were targeting transgender, gender-queer, and nonbinary individuals. Essentially, Chad or Brad rushing Jonda were not also going to be rushing EKT. EKT has always been primarily female and I expect it to remain as such. But this change meant that we went a step further to ensure that this chapter was a safe space for all people regardless of pronouns or identity.



Common Misconception: We are NOT a Co-Ed chapter.

What is a Co-Ed Greek Organization?:

A lot of philanthropic or academic chapters run this way (like Kappa Kappa Psi, the music fraternity, Lambda Pi Eta, the Communications Honors Greek Chapter, etc.) These are primarily academic or service chapters. A co-ed fraternity is also known as a service fraternity because its sole purpose is promoting community service among its members. Because coed fraternities are classified as service organizations, they are legally required to accept both male and female members under Title IX, which is federal legislation that prohibits discrimination based on sex. This law makes female membership into these coed fraternities possible. This is different from us as a social sorority.

What did Transitioning to a Gender Neutral Sorority Change?

- Gender neutral terminology in all official documents (constitution, insurance, etc)
- Transitions to more open terminology in key words (sisters to siblings, sisterhood into siblinghood, etc)
 - Extending the terminology changes to songs and chants
- Opening up the recruitment process to individuals who didn't identify as cisgendered women

These transitions were ALREADY HAPPENING before we made the gender neutral change official. For years, we have been changing terminology in our documents and accepting others regardless of gender identity. This change began before I entered the chapter in 2019. The ONLY difference is that this year we made it official.

Nothing about our values, ideals, or daily actions changed. We are still the same chapter with the same motto, philanthropy, and the same values.



Terminology & Definitions: Gender Neutral VS Gender Inclusive

Gender Neutral refers to the opening of the chapter to individuals who do not identify as cisgendered women including: transgender, non-binary, and gender-queer or gender non-conforming individuals.

Gender Inclusive refers to the opening of the chapter to individuals of all genders including: women, men, and all gender non-conforming individuals. Gender Inclusive chapters are also known as Co-Ed, which I explain further in the following slide.

Motivations for this Change

- By putting this into official effect, our goal was to integrate this acceptance into the organization permanently. In doing so, we have ensured that this organization will have open-mindedness and acceptance integrated into its core.
- We have honored those who have been in this chapter and don't identify as cisgendered women.
 - Creating a safe space regardless of sexuality or gender identity.
- Creating a space where one never had to worry about not being accepted because they don't identify as a woman.
 - Working towards creating a world that accepts all and not some.



Campus Wide

There are currently three social greek chapters on campus who are also gender neutral including Tau Delta, Tau Epsilon Mu, and Epsilon Kappa Tau. There is one gender inclusive chapter, Sphinx. Kappa Kappa Psi is a service and academic chapter and are Co-Ed along with the various other academic greek organizations like Lambda Pi Eta.

This change is not just happening at Otterbein. Countless other chapters across the U.S are instilling this dedication to acceptance and inclusivity.



In Conclusion

The world is transitioning into a more loving, inclusive, and accepting place. We take pride in being able to contribute to the expansion of acceptance and love. There was once a time where individuals of the LGBTQ+ community were not welcome, and it is vital that we use our voices and strength as a group to help change the world into a place where everyone is safe and feels accepted. Sometimes change is not easy, like when our mascot changed from the pink panther to the fox, but change is inevitable. I promise, this change is in the best interest of our siblings and sisters.

In the end, we have all stood for love and honor to all. This change has just opened up our hearts a little more. We love and Honor all, not just some.



Contacts

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out. I understand this change can be confusing for some, and I am more than happy to explain further and to provide source material. I do ask that further questions and topics remain respectful, kind, and of professional demeanor.

Alexis Sheets:

Contact me by phone, email, or through facebook messenger.

Phone: (740)856-2501

Email: alexissheets2001@gmail.com