

University of Alberta Students' Union

# Gender Inclusive Washroom Proposal

Prepared by the Gender Inclusive Washroom Committee



University of Victoria Gender Inclusive Washroom Sign

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13-03-18

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# GENDER INCLUSIVE WASHROOM PROPOSAL

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PREPARED BY THE GENDER INCLUSIVE WASHROOM COMMITTEE  
A COMMITTEE OF THE GENDER BASED PREVENTION PROJECT

## Objective

Enhance students' feelings of school connectedness and overall wellness by creating accessible gender-inclusive washrooms

The University of Alberta must strive to create a climate in which campus community members are physically, academically, and emotionally safe. This Gender Inclusive Washroom Proposal is part of an ongoing effort of the Gender Based Violence Prevention Project, the University Safe Spaces Initiative, and other stakeholders to foster a safe and supportive climate for all University of Alberta students, faculty, staff and community members.

Creating universally accessible washrooms that address the needs of multiple users is the ultimate goal of this proposal. Using a washroom safely and with dignity is a basic right of all people. However, transgender (gender-minority) individuals are frequently subjected to overt and covert emotional abuse and physical harassment when they enter or exit gender-segregated washrooms (Equity and Human Rights Services, Western University, n.d.).<sup>1</sup>

Inaccessible washrooms directly impact individuals' feelings of safety, well-being and security. The gender inclusive washrooms referred to in this proposal address an important gap in washroom accessibility and universal access. Washroom users whose campus experience will be enhanced by accessible, gender inclusive washrooms include:

- Gender variant individuals (including transgender individuals)
- Parents with children of different gender
- People with disabilities who have a personal care attendant (PCA)
- People with chronic illness
- People requiring added privacy for a variety of reasons

*"I am writing concerning the importance of gender inclusive washrooms. I am a post secondary educational facilitator currently supporting a student with developmental disabilities. My student uses a wheelchair and requires my assistance to use the washroom."*

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<sup>1</sup> Equity and Human Rights Services, Western University (n.d.). *Gender neutral washrooms*. Retrieved from <http://www.uwo.ca/equity/index.htm>

*I am female and my student is male. This dynamic creates a difficult situation when trying to find washrooms that “allow” both males and females. While a lot of public buildings have wheelchair accessible washrooms that are single stalled and have a lock on the door, they are typically still designated male or female. Having to make the decision of whose dignity will be compromised by entering a washroom of the “wrong” sex, provides just one more barrier to inclusion and true accessibility, especially when the hallway is full of staring students. Even out in the community, “family washrooms” are few and far between and in most places non---existent. People should not have to search high and low just to use the washroom.*

*It is finally becoming more common to see people with disabilities accessing post---secondary institutions and entering the workforce. Often they will have a support person with them and if that support person is of the opposite sex, gender inclusive washrooms would be appropriate, dignified and inclusive of all people’s unique situations.*

*My student and I are both in support of gender inclusive washrooms and hope to see this important step taken to ensure inclusion and accessibility for all people.”*

**- Renee Laporte, Educational Facilitator**

The University of Alberta Students’ Union prides itself on being a “proactive organization that is sensitive to the needs of individuals and the student body as a whole” and is “committed to ensuring that [students’] education is affordable and of the highest quality, and that [students’] experience is a very positive one” <sup>2</sup>. Supporting the creation gender inclusive washrooms is a concrete way for the Students’ Union to adhere to this commitment. With the upcoming SUB 2013-2014 renovations, this is a perfect opportunity for the Students’ Union to follow through on being proactive and increase building accessibility through the renovations.

Through a visible commitment to creating gender inclusive washrooms, The Students’ Union is in a unique and privileged position of becoming leaders in student inclusivity and accessibility. Similarly, the Student’s Union will:

- Enhance student experience
- Increase overall student wellness
- Increase students’ feelings of school connectedness

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.su.ualberta.ca/about/whoweare/>

52% of trans youth reported feeling unsafe in school washrooms\*

*“Gender minority (GM) or transgender and gender-nonconforming students represent a particularly vulnerable need group in educational institutions. The **Chief Public Health Officer’s 2012 report—Influencing Health: The Importance of Sex and Gender**—states that these youth comprise a largely ignored population. In educational settings, GM youth frequently experience ignorance of their gender identities, the unresponsiveness of instructors, the lack of mentors, the lack of library and other resources, discrimination and alienation, unchecked harassment and violence, and a lack of supports. There are inadequate or no policies to accommodate their affirmed genders re: washroom use, locker room use, sports participation, and other gender-based aspects of a holistic education.*

*In keeping with Section 15 of the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms**, the University of Alberta, like all public Canadian institutions, has an obligation to protect the rights and freedoms of GM individuals and to make certain they are not subject to discrimination. This starts with policymaking as protection for this vulnerable population and its implementation in even the most basic ways such as ensuring the right to privacy and safety when using the washroom. No student should experience stress or anxiety when it comes to having personal physical and safety needs met. In this regard, I unequivocally endorse the key initiative of the campus gender- based violence prevention project to have a gender- neutral multiuser washroom in the Students’ Union Building. This would be a good first step in accommodating basic needs of GM students. The goal could then be expanded to include other campus sites. Since there are a large number of washrooms that could be similarly designated already in existence on campus, it is a just a matter of having signage and a campus map available online so students are aware that the University is addressing this pressing need.”*

43% of LGBTQ students identified their school washroom as being unsafe\*

Gender variant students listed gender-segregated spaces as most unsafe \*

**- André P. Grace, PhD Director, Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services**

Potential University of Alberta students will actively seek a campus that proactively supports them in all aspects of their life. Gender inclusive washrooms in the Students’ Union Building send a strong signal that the daily needs of gender variant students will be met by the Students’ Union.

\* From: Taylor, C., Peter, T., McMin, T.L., Elliott, T., Beldom, S., Ferry, A., Gross, Z., Paquin, S., & Schachter, K. (2011). *Every class in every school: The first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools. Final report.* Toronto, ON: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust. Retrieved from: <http://egale.ca/every-class/>

## Rationale

### Gender-segregated washrooms negatively impact trans and gender variant students' University of Alberta experience

*"My experience as a transgender person at the University of Alberta would have been different if gender inclusive washrooms had been available. During my time at the U of A, I was socially transitioning. My outward appearance did not match with what most would perceive as male, nor did I look feminine. I would have to make alternate arrangements to change for the gym and plan out where I'd feel safest to use the washroom. By having gender inclusive bathroom facilities, the U of A would be sending a message of acceptance and awareness of those who do not fit within the gender binary."*

**- Mason Jenkins, UAlberta Alum, Faculty of Education**

Every student on campus has a right to learn and work in an environment that is safe and inclusive. Gender-segregated washrooms "impact the safety of people who do not identify as either male or female or who are viewed as transgressing society's view of how men and women should appear" (Taillefer & DeVito, 2006, p. iii)<sup>3</sup>. People who do not easily read as male or female can experience gendered washrooms as hostile or inhospitable. The safety of trans and gender variant individuals is compromised when they are perceived by others to be in the "wrong" gendered space. Dugan, Kusel and Simounet (2010)<sup>4</sup> state gender-minority students "reported more frequent encounters with harassment and discrimination as well as a significantly lower overall sense of belonging within the campus community" (p. 18). Trans and gender variant individuals often face various forms of discrimination within multi-stalled, gender-segregated washrooms ranging from looks of disgust and whispered comments to violent physical assaults.

The University of Alberta Safe Spaces Climate Survey<sup>5</sup> completed by the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services provide the following statistics for our campus:

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<sup>3</sup> Taillefer, C. & DeVito, R. (2006). *Answering Nature's Call: An Accessibility Audit of Single-stall Washroom Facilities at the University of British Columbia - Point Grey Campus*. Vancouver, BC. 85 pp.

<sup>4</sup> Dugan, J. P., Kusel, M. L., & Simounet, D. (2010). Transgender college students. An exploratory

<sup>5</sup> Kinkartz, L., Wells, K., Hillyard, A., & Grace, A. P. (2013). University of Alberta safe spaces campus climate survey report. Edmonton, AB: Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services.

**Selected preliminary stats from the safe Spaces Initiative (iSMSS) Campus Climate Survey**

- 37 Question Survey
- Sample size of 10 000 random undergraduate students, 2046 students completed all of the survey.
- Students of all sexual and gender identities were encouraged to take the survey.

**Sexual Orientation<sup>6</sup>:**

Asexual: 7.48 %  
Bisexual: 6.06 %  
Gay: 3.23 %  
Heterosexual: 83.33 %  
Lesbian: 0.98 %  
Pansexual: 1.42 %  
Queer: 1.47 %  
Questioning: 2.1 %  
Two-spirit: 0.64 %  
Other: 1.32 %  
Prefer not to say 1.08 %

**Gender Identity:**

Female: 63.1 %  
Male: 33.97 %  
Female to male: 1.37 %  
Male to female: 1.56 %  
Genderqueer: 0.34 %  
Questioning: 0.44 %  
Transgender: 0.15 %  
Transsexual: 0.05 %  
Two-spirit: 0.59 %  
Other: 0.24 %  
Prefer not to say: 0.49 %

**Sexual minority students said regarding concerns with being open on campus** (People could pick more than one option to describe themselves):

47%: Unfair assumptions/stereotyping  
31%: Derogatory Comments (e.g. "that's so gay")  
27%: Verbal discrimination  
26%: Exclusion/isolation  
23%: Future career implications

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<sup>6</sup> Note the respondent percentages are greater than 100%. This is due to the fact that students were able to select multiple responses.



## **Gender minority students said regarding concerns with being open on campus:**

36%: Unfair assumptions/stereotyping  
23%: Derogatory Comments (e.g. “that’s so gay”)  
23%: Verbal discrimination  
19%: Exclusion/isolation  
18%: Future career implications

The survey also found that the lack of gender inclusive washrooms (along with other issues such as gender normative university forms, gender segregated classroom practices, and the difficulty in officially changing gender markers on student records) was a primary barrier to campus inclusivity and acceptance for trans and gender variant students. Similarly, trans and gender variant students surveyed listed ‘unfair assumptions and stereotyping’ as their top concern with being identified as a trans and gender variant on campus. Gender inclusive washrooms will help to alleviate these concerns and increase access to spaces that do not ‘police’ their gender identities and/or expressions.

Without safe access to public washrooms, trans and gender variant students are denied full participation in their educational institution (Transgender Law Centre, 2005).<sup>7</sup> Washroom inaccessibility contributes to poor University experience and students’ feelings of disconnectedness to the University (Rankin & Beemyn, 2012). A lack of gender inclusive washrooms directly impacts students’ mental and physical health through an increase of physical, academic, and mental health risks, including:

- High levels of stress and anxiety around having to choose a ‘safe’ washroom (University of Minnesota Transgender Commission, n.d.)<sup>8</sup>
- Increased isolation due to the institution’s adherence to a strict male/female gender binary (Rankin & Beemyn, 2012; University of Minnesota Transgender Commission, n.d.)<sup>9</sup>
- Physical and verbal assault (University of Minnesota Transgender Commission, n.d.; Transgender Law Centre, 2005; Dugan, Kusel & Simounet, 2010).
- Health problems and bodily damage due to ‘holding it’ (University of Minnesota Transgender Commission, n.d.; Taillefer & DeVtio, 2006)

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<sup>7</sup> Transgender Law Center (2005). *Peeing in Peace: A resource Guide for Transgender Activists and Allies*. San Francisco, CA. 43 pp.

<sup>8</sup> University of Minnesota Transgender Commission (n.d.). *Understanding gender neutral Restrooms*. Retrieved from: [glbta.umn.edu/trans](http://glbta.umn.edu/trans).

<sup>9</sup> Rankin, S. & Beemyn, G. (2012). Beyond a binary: The lives of gender-nonconforming youth. *About Campus*, 17(4), 1-10. DOI: 10.1002/abc.21086

*“As a transgender person, using the men's washrooms on campus is often an anxiety provoking experience. I am concerned about drawing attention to myself and for the potential problems that might arise from this. I don't often feel safe in men's public washrooms, and very rarely, if ever, enter them when others are present. Gender inclusive washrooms would provide individuals, including myself, with a safe place. They would eliminate the need to hunt for the most deserted washrooms in remote corners of the campus, and they would allow people on campus to concern themselves with more important things like schoolwork, instead of worrying about where they could use the washroom”.*

**- UAlberta 3<sup>rd</sup> year Undergraduate Student, 22**

Rankin and Beemyn (2012) explain that “even those colleges and universities that have implemented transgender-supportive policies and practices still remain firmly entrenched in a binary gender system that largely privileges gender conforming students” (p. 9). Misinformation can lead to assumptions and fears about what gender inclusive washrooms would mean for the larger student population, and primarily for women’s safety. It is important to remember the cause of sexual and physical violence is a person deciding to hurt another individual. The gendered washroom system as it currently stands does not provide a barrier for those seeking to harm others (University of Minnesota Transgender Commission, n.d.). Sexual or physical violence can occur in any space, including gender segregated or gender inclusive washrooms. Relating gender inclusive washrooms to issues of women’s safety falsely assumes that trans and gender variant individuals and women cannot be safe in the same washroom.

“The U of A Sexual Assault Centre believes that all people **deserve to learn and work in a campus environment where they feel physically and emotionally safe**. Although many people feel comfortable using gender segregated washrooms, there are many others who do not. In fact, gendered washrooms can be one of the most feared locations on campus for students and staff who are gender queer, as these are often the sites where harassment and assault take place.

“Although some opponents of gender inclusive washrooms believe this will increase the instances of sexual assault on our campus, this belief only perpetuates the myth that sexual assault is committed by strangers. The reality is that **95% of students and staff who receive support from our service were sexually assaulted by someone they knew and trusted** - and in spaces most people see as 'safe'. The reality is that 'spaces' do not 'cause' violence to happen - people who choose to be violent do so in all spaces. In a world where we have thankfully moved away from segregated spaces to inclusive spaces, it's important to not lose sight of the positive impacts adding gender neutral washrooms can bring. As a campus community that promotes the importance of inclusivity - adding gender inclusive washrooms would increase the understanding that gender is fluid... not a binary system, and **all**

**people, regardless of gender, deserve the right to feel safe, respected and accepted.”**

**- Leanne Wruck, Team Leader, U of A Sexual Assault Centre**

Similarly, gender inclusive washrooms increase washroom options for students as opposed to limit them. People who feel uncomfortable using these new facilities in SUB will always have the option of using the gendered washrooms that are located very conveniently in the west part of SUB on the same floor.

Indeed, the discrimination and exclusion that trans and gender variant students experience at the University of Alberta is very real and quite often normalized within our male/female binary privileging University system, and spread through the propagation of myths, fears, and stereotypes. It is the responsibility for organizations that are committed to improving student experience to combat this stigma and work for change within the University.

Importantly, a number of Canadian post-secondary institutions have already started to address the issue of washroom accessibility on their campuses by creating single and multi-stall gender inclusive washrooms on their campuses (see Appendix A.) and Students' Unions buildings. Importantly, these campuses have not reported an increase in physical or sexual violence as a result of their gender inclusive washrooms.

## Proposal

Increase washroom accessibility by creating a multi-stall gender inclusive washroom in the Students' Union Building and converting all single user washrooms to universally accessible washrooms.

In order to address the issues listed above and to increase washroom accessibility, the gender Inclusive Washroom Committee proposes a multi-stall, gender inclusive (all genders) washroom be created by the East entrance of the Students' Union building during the 2013-2014 building renovations:

- Choice 1: Connect the male and female washrooms located at the east entrance of SUB by knocking down the wall and create one large gender inclusive (all-gender washroom).
- Choice 2: Transform the male and female washrooms into gender inclusive (all-gender washrooms).

The gender inclusive washroom(s) would include the following features:

- Floor to ceiling lockable doors on all stalls and urinals; (See Figure 3.)

- A placard at the entrance explaining that the washroom is open to people of all genders, that using a washroom safely and with dignity is a basic right of all people, and to be respectful of the space; and
- Signage that says 'washrooms' along with a symbol of a toilet and a wheelchair to indicate the washrooms are physical accessible.

There is a great advantage to having the washrooms on the main level of SUB because it is a floor that has a large gendered washrooms facility in the west part of the building. These washrooms are gendered, wheelchair accessible, and have many stalls. It is ideal to have gendered and gender inclusive washrooms in close proximity so everyone is access to multiple washroom choices.

In addition to the creations of multi stalled gender inclusive washrooms, we propose converting all single user washrooms in SUB to universally accessible washrooms. We would convert them by changing the signage to the sign in Figure 2. Current signage on the unisex washrooms still adheres to a gender binary of male/female and therefore is exclusive.

The creation of these washrooms being aligned with the SUB 2013-2014 renovations provides an excellent opportunity for the Students' Union to have the resources available to complete this project. It can be very costly and inefficient to retroactive renovate washrooms. Including these washrooms in the SUB renovation project is a perfect way for the building to improve accessibility and reduce the cost that would be normally associated with an isolated renovation project.

According to the Taillefer and DeVtio (2006), "washrooms should be located in well-lit, medium traffic areas, within close proximity to other washroom facilities, but not in areas that are made gender-specific by the presence of only one male- or female-designated washroom, or without any other physically accessible washrooms nearby" (p. iii). For safety and visibility, "single-stall accessible washrooms should be located in or near medium traffic, well-lit areas" (p. 57). It is also advisable to make "all washrooms, including accessible single-stall washrooms...in close proximity to one another. If gendered washrooms are present near an accessible gender-inclusive washroom, both male and female facilities should be provided so as not to imply or indicate that the space has a specific gender" (p. 57). These recommendations align with the proposal outlined above.

Gender inclusive washroom(s) at the East entrance of SUB will set a high standard of access for the University. As stated above, trans and gender variant students and staff experience a reality of violence, harassment, and intimidation within gender-segregated washrooms. The Students' Union Building is one of the busiest buildings on campus where students and community members study, eat, socialize and access SU services and businesses. Therefore this building should reflect the diversity of our community through the facilities that we make available. Though there are some gender-inclusive washrooms in SUB already, they are not in high traffic areas. Having a multi-stalled gender inclusive washroom in a high traffic area in such an important building on campus will demonstrate the Students' Union's commitment to universal access for all people on campus.

**Figure 1: Students' Union Building Washroom Locations**



**Figure 2: Sign Options\***



**Figure 3: Dalhousie Floor to Ceiling Gender Inclusive Washroom/Showers**



\*These signs are subject to consultation with stakeholders and through consultation/focus groups with the campus population

With the creation of these washrooms, the Gender Based Violence Prevention Project will create and run an education and awareness campaign about the gender inclusive washrooms. It is very important to educate the campus population about the washrooms and make individuals aware that they exist. In the References and Resources section are documents that not only contain information about gender inclusive washrooms but also advice on awareness campaigns. See Appendix C for a gender inclusive washroom FAQ awareness handout. The Gender Based Violence Prevention Project will be responsible for running an education and awareness campaign to increase the success of these washrooms.

## Conclusion



Given the rationale and reasoning stated in this proposal, it is our hope that the SU Executive will increase the accessibility of our washrooms in SUB and create space for individuals on our campus who traditionally are excluded. This is an incredible opportunity for the University of Alberta Students' Union to join so many other Students' Union nationwide who have made gender inclusive washrooms a standard in inclusivity.



## Gender Inclusive Washroom Proposal

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**Outside University of Victoria Gender Inclusive Washroom**

**Inside University of Victoria Gender Inclusive Washrooms**

Any questions regarding this proposal should be directed to:

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## References and Resources

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- Dugan, J. P., Kusel, M. L., & Simounet, D. (2010). *Transgender college students. An exploratory*
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- Transgender Law Center (2005). *Peeing in Peace: A resource Guide for Transgender Activists and Allies*. San Francisco, CA. 43 pp.
- University of Minnesota Transgender Commission (n.d.). *Understanding gender neutral Restrooms*. Retrieved from: [glbta.umn.edu/trans](http://glbta.umn.edu/trans).
- University of Victoria Pride Student Group - available for consultation*
- University of Regina Pride Student Group – available for consultations*



## Terminology

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**Gender Inclusive or All-Gender Washroom:** A washroom open to persons of all genders; a washroom absent of gendered labels/signs.

**Gendered or Gender-Segregated Washroom:** A washroom intended for and labeled/signed for people who identify as 'male' or 'female'.

**Gender Variant:** An umbrella term for people who identify or express a gender outside the dominant gender categories of male and female. Transgender, genderqueer, and androgynous individuals fall within the gender variant/non-conforming umbrella.

**Multi-Stall Washroom:** A washroom with multiple toilets and/or urinals.

**Single-Stall Washroom:** A washroom with only one urinal and/or toilet to be used by only one person at a time (unless that person is being accompanied by a parent, family member, and/or attendant).

**Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression differs from the gender they were assigned at birth or from what is culturally validated.

**Universal Access:** Available to an individual regardless of age, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, race, class, (dis)ability, or parental status.

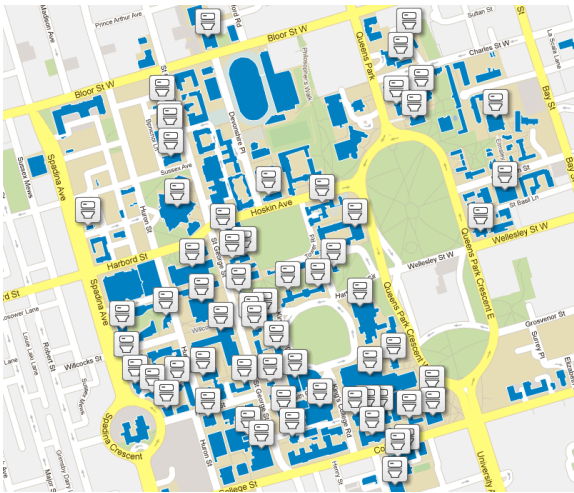
**Violence** is any practice or behaviour that causes harm (including emotional, physical, or mental harm) because of an imbalance of power based on gender, gender expression, sexual behaviour and sexual orientation. It includes:

- sexism and gender discrimination
- offensive or inappropriate depictions of gender or displays of sexual content
- biphobia, transphobia, homophobia, and heterosexism
- sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual abuse and stalking
- intimate partner violence, emotional and psychological abuse
- forced prostitution, and sexual exploitation

## Appendix A: List of Universities with Gender Inclusive Washrooms/ Signage and Map Examples

### University of Toronto

[<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/washrooms/Locations.htm>]



### Single Stall Gender Inclusive Washroom Map at U of T

### University of British Columbia

[<https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&oe=UTF8&msa=0&msid=202315120220102458113.0004c91a0a21bb217a91>] and

[<http://www.students.ubc.ca/access/orientation-gender/programs-initiatives/accessible-washrooms/>]

	BUILDING	ROOM #	BUILDING	ROOM #	BUILDING	ROOM #
<p>This brochure is part of a campaign to raise issues of washroom accessibility on campus, especially for those who are gender-variant. Current unisex signage presumes a female-male gender system, and so excludes those who identify outside of it. Gender-inclusive signage ensures that a range of genders outside of this binary are recognized and respected.</p> <p>In this brochure, you'll find a list of campus washrooms, each of which is designated with one of the following accessibility codes:</p> <p>GI = Gender-Inclusive signage on the washroom.</p> <p>N = No signage on the washroom.</p> <p>U = Unisex signage on the washroom.</p> <p>UW = Unisex and Wheelchair Accessible signage on the washroom.</p> <p>W = Wheelchair Accessible signage only, no gendered signage.</p> <p>* = Washrooms that are physically accessible except for the presence of some inaccessible hardware and/or a heavy door.</p>	Aquatic Ecosystems Research Lab 2202 Main Mall	111 <sup>UW</sup>	Cunningham Building 2146 East Mall	172 <sup>UW*</sup>	Horticulture Building 6394 Stores Road	112 <sup>UW*</sup>
	Asian Centre 1871 West Mall	523 <sup>N</sup>	David Lam Management 2033 Main Mall	22 <sup>UW</sup> 226 <sup>UW*</sup>	Hugh Dempster Pavilion 6245 Agronomy Road	104 <sup>UW*</sup>
	Auditorium Annex B 1924 West Mall	210 <sup>U</sup> 114 <sup>UW*</sup>	Earth & Ocean Sciences 2219 Main Mall	218 <sup>U</sup> 361 <sup>U</sup>	Institute for Computing, Information, and Cognitive Systems (IICIS) 2366 Main Mall	X134 <sup>U</sup> X222 <sup>UW*</sup> X622 <sup>UW*</sup>
	Belkin Art Gallery 1825 Main Mall	12 <sup>UW*</sup>	Earth & Ocean Sciences 6339 Stores Road	East 218 <sup>U</sup> 361 <sup>U</sup>	Instructional Resources Centre (IRC) 2194 Health Sciences Mall	813 <sup>U</sup> 889 <sup>UW*</sup>
	Botanical Gardens Gatehouse 6804 SW Marine Drive	32 <sup>U</sup>	English Language Institute 2121 West Mall	Main 112 <sup>UW*</sup> South 166 <sup>U</sup> South 266 <sup>U</sup> South 366 <sup>U</sup>	Jack Bell Building 2080 West Mall	23 <sup>UW*</sup>
	Botany Annex 6386 University Blvd.	218 <sup>U</sup>	Faculty of Law Annex 2 6020 Walter Gage Road	A1100 <sup>UW*</sup> B2100 <sup>UW*</sup>	James Mather Building 5804 Fairview Ave	227 <sup>UW*</sup>
	Brock Hall 1874 East Mall	East 1071 <sup>UW*</sup> West 1210A <sup>U</sup>	First Nations House of Learning 1985 West Mall	123 <sup>UW*</sup>	JB Macdonald Building 2199 Westbrook Mall	191A <sup>U</sup>
	Buchanan 1866 Main Mall	E453 <sup>UW*</sup>	Food, Nutrition, & Health 2205 East Mall	161 <sup>UW*</sup> 212 <sup>UW*</sup>	John Owen Pavilion 3055 Westbrook Mall	72 <sup>GI*</sup> 74 <sup>U*</sup>
	Buchanan Tower 1873 East Mall	101 <sup>UW*</sup>		78 <sup>U</sup>	Kaiser Building 2332 Main Mall	3132 <sup>UW*</sup> 3134 <sup>UW*</sup> 4132 <sup>UW*</sup>
	Centre for Integrated Computer Systems Research (CICSR) 2366 Main Mall	154 <sup>UW*</sup> 254 <sup>UW*</sup> 354 <sup>UW</sup>	Forestry Field House, UBC Farm 6186 South Campus Road	5 <sup>U</sup> 7 <sup>U</sup>	Kenny Building 2136 West Mall	1405 <sup>UW*</sup> 2010 <sup>UW*</sup> 3002 <sup>UW*</sup>
Chan Centre 6265 Crescent Road	115 <sup>UW*</sup> 273 <sup>UW*</sup>	Frederic Wood Theatre 6354 Crescent Road	6 <sup>UW*</sup>	Koerner House 6371 Crescent Road	463 <sup>UW*</sup>	
Chemical & Electrical Engineering 2216 Main Mall	1.88 <sup>U*</sup> 1.89 <sup>U</sup>	General Services Admin. Building 2075 Westbrook Mall	10 <sup>U</sup> 110E <sup>U</sup> 100A <sup>UW</sup>	Koerner Library 1958 Main Mall	164 <sup>UW*</sup> 264 <sup>UW*</sup>	
Chemistry North 2036 Main Mall	E212 <sup>U</sup>	George F. Curtis Building 1822 East Mall	166 <sup>UW*</sup>	Koerner University Centre 6331 Crescent Road	222 <sup>UW*</sup>	
Civil & Mechanical Engineering Annex 2345 East Mall	40 <sup>UW*</sup>	Hennings Building 6224 Agricultural Road	314 <sup>UW*</sup>			

### List of Gender Inclusive, Unisex, Wheelchair Accessible Washrooms at UBC

## Gender Inclusive Washroom Proposal

Prepared by the Gender Inclusive Washroom Committee

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### University of Victoria

Multi-user gender all gender washroom:

[<http://www.ctvvancouverisland.ca/2012/09/everybodys-welcome-uvic-students-adjust-to-gender-neutral-washrooms/>] and

[<http://www.ctvvancouverisland.ca/2012/09/everybodys-welcome-uvic-students-adjust-to-gender-neutral-washrooms/>]



### Dalhousie University

[[http://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/student\\_services/health-and-wellness/lgbtq/gender-neutral-washrooms.html](http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/health-and-wellness/lgbtq/gender-neutral-washrooms.html)]



### McGill University

[[http://www.mcgill.ca/equity\\_diversity/special-projects/gender-neutral-washrooms](http://www.mcgill.ca/equity_diversity/special-projects/gender-neutral-washrooms)]



### **Queens University**

[<http://www.queensu.ca/news/articles/policy-promotes-gender-neutral-washrooms>]

### **University of Winnipeg**

[<http://www.ctvnews.ca/university-students-push-for-gender-neutral-washrooms-1.712020>]

### **University of Regina**

[<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/story/2013/02/18/sk-gender-neutral-washrooms-ur.html>]



### **Western University**

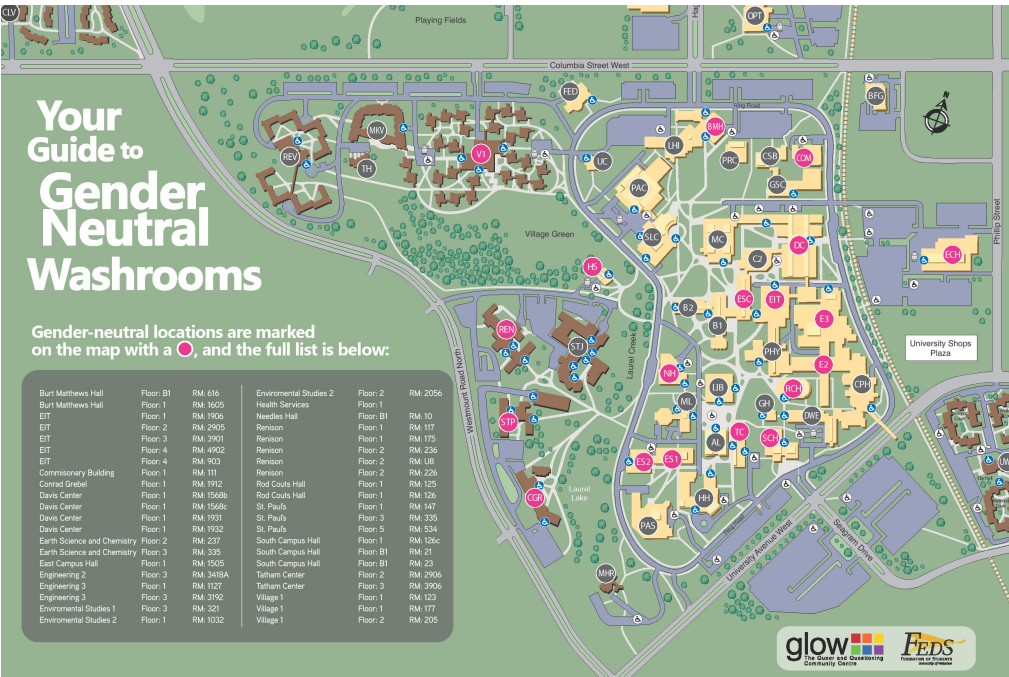
[[www.uwo.ca/equity/gender\\_neutral\\_washrooms.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/equity/gender_neutral_washrooms.pdf)]



### **York University**

[<http://www.yorku.ca/csbo/planningrenovations/washroomlayout/genderneutral.html>]

University of Waterloo  
[http://www.feds.ca/glow/]



List of Gender Neutral Washrooms at University of Waterloo

## Appendix B: Statements of Support

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Catherine Anley - Employment Equity Advisor, Organizational Learning and Effectiveness

"I encourage the Student's Union to seize the opportunity the upcoming SUB renovations provide and enhance the building's accessibility through the re-designation of the East male and female washrooms into gender inclusive facilities. This proactive step towards accessibility will demonstrate the Student's Union commitment to being sensitive to the needs of individuals and the student body as a whole (<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/about/whoweare/>). Not only will it contribute to the respectful inclusion of gender-minority individuals, many others may benefit from having access to multiple washroom choices: parents with children of different gender, persons with a personal care attendant of a different gender, etc."

Erika Lejon Flodin – Gender Based Violence Prevention Project CSL Student, *CSL research placement on Gender Inclusive Washrooms*

"Accessibility to washrooms is something most people take for granted. Thus, for some of us, trying to find a safe washroom can be a huge problem. This is because most washrooms are only accessible for people who identify with the traditional characteristics of male or female. For the ones who don't, there is a concern over possible harassment and violence in washroom areas, which would have an impact on everyone's life. In this era of liberation and freedom, one can ask why our washrooms are not constructed to fulfill all peoples' needs. The idea of installing gender neutral washrooms derives from the hope to make the washroom area safer for all users at the U of A.

The installment will be a third choice, and will not take away the alternatives we have today, but enlarge them. No one will be questioned concerning their washroom choice, and everyone can choose the one where they will feel most comfortable and safe. In order to make this successful, information and awareness campaigns is important. Besides this safety aspect, there is a legal reason for installing gender neutral washrooms. All humans' rights are to be equal. That should include access to a safe washroom. Moreover, most local and national Human Rights Law includes sexual orientation and gender identity as basis for discrimination. The right for all people at the U of A to have access to safe washrooms should be respected. If we cannot protect our students and teachers in the current situation, I believe the reasons for installing gender neutral washrooms outweigh the reasons not to. Moreover, this initiative does not only stand for washroom rights but for openness and inclusiveness. I believe to say yes to gender neutral washrooms is to say yes to differences, inclusion, modernity and tolerance, which in the end will make good for all of us."

The APIRG Board of Directors

"The Alberta Public Interest Research Group is in full support of the proposal to increase the number of gender inclusive washrooms on campus through the conversion of the main level east entrance washrooms in the Student's Union Building. These washrooms are crucial in supporting a safer, more inclusive campus for people of all genders. They will play a significant role in reducing both individual and systemic gender-based violence by both **creating safer spaces and sending a clear message that the University of Alberta and the Students' Union value all students, of all genders, equally** and wish to foster a campus that is accessible for all peoples. Supporting and implementing this proposal is essential to put our university's inclusive policies into tangible, meaningful practice."



Carol Allan, PhD student, Department of Educational Policy Studies

“While working in the Edmonton Gender Clinic, I have heard transgender high school students speak of their difficulties concerning the use of school washrooms. Rather than deal with the potentially aggressive responses of students in male or female washrooms, transgender students related how they followed the unhealthy practice of limiting liquid intake and simply "holding it" until they got home. In one high school, the drama teacher let transgender students know that they could use the gender inclusive washroom housed within the drama department. An undergraduate MTF transgender student at the University of Alberta explained how she searched out the few gender inclusive washrooms in the university area, including the University Hospital. However, she stated how few gender inclusive washrooms were within the U of A area. The psychiatrist who works with transgender persons within the Province of Alberta, provides a "carry letter" to assist the transitioning person in deflecting potential confrontational occurrences from escalating into aggressive or violent circumstances, as could occur within gendered washrooms.”

### **Office of Safe Disclosure & Human Rights**

“Everyone is born with human rights. Human rights are afforded to every human being without discrimination or harassment just by virtue of being human. Advancing human rights is a community responsibility and is integral to creating a positive work, living and study environment at the University of Alberta.

The University of Alberta’s revised [\*\*Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy\*\*](#) serves as the University of Alberta's human rights policy. In the policy, all members of the campus are prohibited from discriminating against an individual or groups from 14 protected grounds listed in the policy, which includes sexual orientation, family status or gender (i.e. pregnancy and gender identity).

The Gender Inclusive Washrooms Proposal will increase accessibility of those groups on campus that potentially face discrimination, when using a restroom facility (e.g. transgender or mothers). Our office supports this proposal. It is in line with our university’s human rights policy. It also serves to create a more respectful and inclusive campus, where it allows these groups to achieve their human rights with a sense of dignity.”



**DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES**  
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March 14, 2013

Melanie Alexander  
Coordinator, Gender-based Violence Prevention Project  
Student Union  
University of Alberta

Dear Ms. Alexander:

I am writing to express my full support for the Gender-based Violence Prevention Project's gender-inclusive washroom initiative. It is time for the University of Alberta to follow the lead of institutions like Dalhousie University and to establish gender-inclusive washrooms to meet the needs of our transgender, transsexual and gender queer students and staff. Gender-inclusive washrooms should be available in all existing buildings and there must be a commitment to include them in any new buildings.

Gender-neutral washrooms are an equity issue because many queer and trans persons face discrimination and harassment when they enter or exit gender-segregated washrooms. All students and faculty at the university should have access to safe and private washrooms.

I commend the Gender-based Violence Prevention Project for putting forward this initiative. The creation of gender-inclusive washrooms reduces gender-based violence and contributes to the goals of diversity and gender equality.

The Department of Women's and Gender Studies is in full support of this initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Lise Gotell", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Lise Gotell  
Professor and Chair  
780-492-0326  
[lise.gotell@ualberta.ca](mailto:lise.gotell@ualberta.ca)



## Appendix C: Gender Inclusive Washroom FAQ

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### Gender Inclusive Washroom Information Sheet

(This information has been adapted from UVic Pride's Gender Inclusive Washroom Initiative (GIWI) 2011)

#### **What are you doing?**

We are a committee from the Gender Based Violence Prevention Project that is consulting with SUB about modifying an existing multi-stall washroom pair (men's and women's) into gender inclusive multi-stalled washrooms.

#### **What are gender inclusive washrooms?**

Gender inclusive, multi-stall washrooms are also called family or unisex washrooms, and are common at public pools as family change-rooms.

Gender inclusive, multi-stall washrooms typically have a stall or dividers for each toilet or urinal, sinks and mirrors and may have other useful features (baby changing tables, hand dryers, bench, etc.). Multi-gender washrooms are used for activities like using a toilet, washing hands, changing clothing, checking hair, changing a baby's diaper and accessing facilities with a support worker or client of a different gender.

#### **Why do people want gender inclusive washrooms?**

There are many different user groups who benefit from these washrooms. See the previous question for a list of some activities people would use these washrooms for.

#### **What's wrong with having just male and female washrooms?**

There are many reasons people may experience difficulties or safety concerns using washrooms that are designated male or female. People may be harassed for using the "wrong" washroom. Other people may have children in

their care or be with caregivers/support people of another gender.

#### **There are only a few people who need them; why should we go to all this trouble for them?**

Everybody uses washrooms and everyone is welcome to use these washrooms.

#### **Are there gender inclusive washrooms on campus?**

Yes, campus has some single-stall, gender-inclusive washrooms.

#### **What do people use now if they don't feel comfortable with the current washrooms?**

People who don't feel comfortable using the current washrooms may seek out single stalls, hold it until they can find a comfortable space or go in a washroom and feel uncomfortable.

#### **Why don't people just use the single stall washrooms?**

There are not very many single stall washrooms in the SUB, and these are designed and needed for accessibility purposes. Multi-stall washrooms are more efficient — less waiting in line!

#### **Do these exist anywhere else?**

Yes, some universities, businesses and other organizations (such as rec centres) have gender inclusive washrooms.

#### **Which washroom would become gender inclusive? Why?**

The committee is proposing that the current women's and men's washrooms in the east entrance of SUB be converted.

These washrooms have been selected because they are high-use, high visibility washrooms, which makes them more efficient. There are also safety concerns with more isolated washrooms. These washrooms are also located near gendered washrooms so individuals who want gendered washrooms do not have to go far to use them.

### **Who would be able to use these washrooms?**

Anyone would be welcome to use them!

### **What's happening to the other washrooms in the SUB?**

Nothing.

### **I wouldn't feel comfortable.**

It is understandable that this may be different than many of the washrooms you have encountered. Only one pair of washrooms in the SUB will be converted to multi-gender at this time. The SUB has three other pairs of multi-stall washrooms as well as single stall washrooms on the main and upper floor. Do you have a specific reason you feel uncomfortable? People would be expected to follow the same norms of appropriate bathroom use as currently existed. Anything criminal or inappropriate would still be considered criminal or inappropriate.

### **What would happen if there were a lot of complaints?**

There will be an education campaign accompanying any washroom renovations. This hasn't been a problem in other places, and the washrooms will have very clear signage about the facilities inside.

