

Xavier University Institutional Review Board

**Promoting Inclusivity When Collecting Information  
About Sex and Gender, Race and Ethnicity, and Sexual Orientation**

The following represent examples for researchers measuring demographic questions regarding sex and gender, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation. These examples encourage researchers to be sensitive in their measurement of demographic questions assessing individuals' social identities by recognizing the diversity among people. The examples also encourage researchers to provide participants a "prefer not to respond" or "write in" option (as appropriate).

Although these are not formal recommendations and best practices may change over time, they are based on current best practices for promoting inclusive measurement of demographic questions regarding various social identities, such as sex and gender, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Researchers should not to collect more information from participants than is needed to answer their research questions.

**Example for Measuring Sex**

1. Assigned sex at birth:
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Prefer not to respond

**Examples for Measuring Gender**

**Example 1 -- One-Step Approach:**

2. Gender:
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Non-binary
  - d. Write in: \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Prefer not to respond

**Example 2 -- Two-Step Approach**

3. Assigned sex at birth:
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Prefer not to respond
  
4. Current gender identity:
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Transgender male to female
  - d. Transgender female to male
  - e. Gender non-conforming
  - f. Do not identify as female, male, or transgender

- g. Write in: \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Prefer not to respond

**Example for Measuring Sexual Orientation**

- 5. Sexual orientation:
  - a. Straight
  - b. Gay or lesbian
  - c. Bisexual
  - d. Write in: \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Prefer not to respond

**Example for Measuring Race and Ethnicity**

- 6. Race/Ethnicity (please circle/mark all that apply):
  - a. American Indian
  - b. Asian
  - c. Black/African American
  - d. Hispanic American or Latino/a
  - e. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - f. White/European American
  - g. Write in: \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. Prefer not to respond

**Resources for further reading**

American Psychological Association. (2016). *Resolution on Data about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*. Retrieved from: <http://www.apa.org/about/policy/data-sexual-orientation.aspx>

National Institutes of Health (NIH). (2015). *The Sexual and Gender Minority (SGM) Research Coordinating Committee (RCC)*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://edi.nih.gov/people/sep/lgbti/research/about>

National Resource Center on LGBT Aging & SAGE. (2013). *Inclusive Questions for Older Adults - A Practical Guide to Collecting Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*. Retrieved from [http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/pdfs/InclusiveQuestionsOlder%20Adults\\_Guidebook.pdf](http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/pdfs/InclusiveQuestionsOlder%20Adults_Guidebook.pdf)

SMART (Sexual Minority Assessment Research Team). (2009). *Best practices for asking questions about sexual orientation on surveys*. Retrieved from The Williams Institute website: <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/SMART-FINAL-Nov-2009.pdf>