



***Equity in Demographic Data:
Why It Matters How We Ask***

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**Assessment Institute
October 29, 2024 2:45–3:45 p.m.**

WELCOME

Slides will be posted to the Assessment Institute's site.



Session is not being recorded.



Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

Session Outcomes



Identify more inclusive practices in asking demographic questions



Develop appropriate demographic questions with categories that are meaningful to the work



Share model practices within your own institution

About Me

(Or Who am I and Why Does it Matter?)

Professionally

Assistant Director of Assessment by title

- Student learning outcomes assessment
- Qualtrics Brand Administrator and survey consultant

Personally

- White
- Woman
- 60+ age range
- Master's degree in Education
- First generation college student
- Two mixed race children, 1 of whom is nonbinary

Why does it matter?

- Context to understand my approach and motivation
- Potential biases

About Bridgewater State University



- Largest of the 9 Massachusetts state universities
- 8,300 undergraduate students
- 1,500 graduate students
- 46% first generation students
- 69% commuter students
- 27% students of color
- 14% self-identify as LGBTQ+
- 105 academic degree programs



My Family

1990 US Census

4. Race

Fill ONE circle for the race that the person considers himself/herself to be.

If **Indian (Amer.)**, print the name of the enrolled or principal tribe. _____→

If **Other Asian or Pacific Islander (API)**, print one group, for example: Hmong, Fijian, Laotian, Thai, Tongan, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on. _____→

If **Other race**, print race. _____→

- White
- Black or Negro
- Indian (Amer.) (Print the name of the enrolled or principal tribe.) ↗

- Eskimo
- Aleut
- Asian or Pacific Islander (API)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Chinese | <input type="radio"/> Japanese |
| <input type="radio"/> Filipino | <input type="radio"/> Asian Indian |
| <input type="radio"/> Hawaiian | <input type="radio"/> Samoan |
| <input type="radio"/> Korean | <input type="radio"/> Guamanian |
| <input type="radio"/> Vietnamese | <input type="radio"/> Other API ↗ |

- Other race (Print race) ↗

2020 US Census

9. What is Person 1's race?

Mark one or more boxes **AND** print origins.

- White – *Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.* ↴

- Black or African Am. – *Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.* ↴

- American Indian or Alaska Native – *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.* ↴

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean | <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Chamorro |

- Other Asian – *Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.* ↴

- Other Pacific Islander – *Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.* ↴

2030 US Census Race & Ethnicity Items

New combined race and ethnicity question on U.S. Census Bureau surveys will include 'Hispanic or Latino' and 'Middle Eastern or North African'

What is your race and/or ethnicity?
Select all that apply and enter additional details in the spaces below.

American Indian or Alaska Native – Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation of Montana, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, Aztec, Maya, etc.

Asian – Provide details below.

Chinese Asian Indian Filipino
 Vietnamese Korean Japanese

Enter, for example, Pakistani, Hmong, Afghan, etc.

Black or African American – Provide details below.

African American Jamaican Haitian
 Nigerian Ethiopian Somali

Enter, for example, Trinidadian and Tobagonian, Ghanaian, Congolese, etc.

Hispanic or Latino – Provide details below.

Mexican Puerto Rican Salvadoran
 Cuban Dominican Guatemalan

Enter, for example, Colombian, Honduran, Spaniard, etc.

Middle Eastern or North African – Provide details below.

Lebanese Iranian Egyptian
 Syrian Iraqi Israeli

Enter, for example, Moroccan, Yemeni, Kurdish, etc.

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander – Provide details below.

Native Hawaiian Samoan Chamorro
 Tongan Fijian Marshallese

Enter, for example, Chuukese, Palauan, Tahitian, etc.

White – Provide details below.

English German Irish
 Italian Polish Scottish

Enter, for example, French, Swedish, Norwegian, etc.

Source: Federal Register. U.S. Office of Management and Budget, accessed Sept. 5, 2024.

Why Do Demographics Matter for our Campus Work?

Disaggregate the data
for equity in assessment

Identify gaps to help
students succeed

If you don't ask, you
won't know

Three Key Questions to Ask Yourself

Why do I ask for this information?

How am I going to use it in assessment and related work?

Do all of the respondents see themselves in one or more of the categories or are they “othered” and how does that feel?

Common Demographic Questions Used in Higher Education Assessment

Gender identity

Race/Ethnicity

Sexual orientation

First generation status: parent/guardian level of education

Disability status

Resident status

Transfer status

Undergraduate class standing

Age

Sexual Orientation &
Gender Identity
(SOGI):

Recommendations
based on best
practices from the
Consortium of
Higher Education
LGBT Resource
Professionals

Avoid

Avoid conflating concepts of sex and gender

Provide

Provide information about how the information and data collected will be used and protected, and who will have access to it

Avoid

Avoid asking questions that are not relevant or helpful for meeting the unit or research objectives

Ask

Ask questions related to gender and sexuality using the most inclusive option possible

Gender Identity

Open-ended is most inclusive but more challenging to analyze

Agender

Genderqueer

Gender fluid

Gender nonconforming

Man (whether assigned male at birth, AMAB, or not)

Non-binary

Queer

Questioning or unsure

Transgender

Trans man

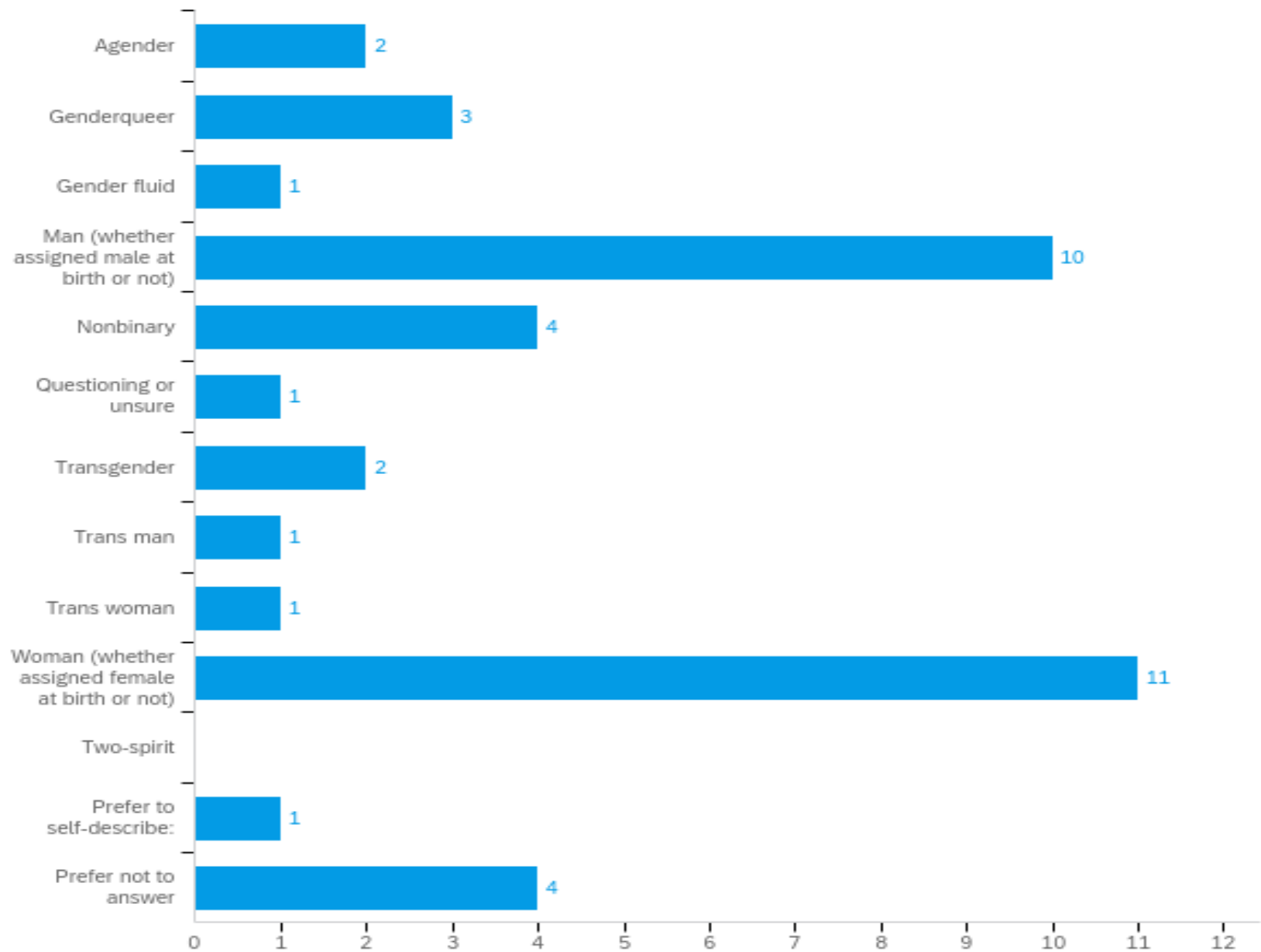
Trans woman

Woman (whether assigned female at birth, AFAB, or not)

Two-spirit

Prefer to self-describe:

Prefer not to answer



From a recent college-wide alum survey: Prefer to self-describe:

I have 2 X chromosomes and a uterus.-guess

I am a man.

Me

Man at birth

Biological woman

Universities need to question popular culture.

There are only two genders. Man and woman. The rest is nonsense

Woman

MAN

There are only two genders, man or woman. I am a man.

Seriously? This kind of nonsense has no place in an academic institution. I see that things have only gotten worse, not to my surprise of course.

The “X” Factor

Alumnx

Folx

Latinx

Womxn

From a recent college-wide alum survey: How can the college better support alumx in their career development?

alumx? I'm all for this stuff but I've never heard that one. As I understand it, the "x" suffix is there to avoid gender assumptions. Does the word "alumnus" have a gender?

Invite alumx to speak at BSU about their careers/life after BSU to incoming students

Encouraging the alumx to return and contribute with career development.

Race/Ethnicity
(Select all that
apply.)

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Asian

Black or African American

Cape Verdean

Latina/o/x/e or Spanish origin of any race

Middle Eastern or North African

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

Prefer to self-describe:

Prefer not to answer

Sexual
Orientation
(Select all that
apply.)

Asexual (Ace)

Bisexual

Heterosexual or straight

Lesbian or gay

Pansexual

Queer

Questioning or unsure

Two-spirit

Prefer to self-describe:

Prefer not to answer

Highest Level of Education Attained by Parent or Guardian?

Up to 8th grade

Some high school, no diploma or the equivalent

High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent

Some college credit, no degree

Trade/technical/vocational training

Associate's degree

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Doctorate or Professional degree

No formal schooling

Other - describe:

Unsure

Do you
experience
any of the
following?

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/(ADHD)

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Brain injury, concussion

Deaf or hard of hearing

Learning disability

Medical disability

Physical disability

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Psychiatric disability

Speech and language disability

Visual impairment (blindness/low vision)

None of the above

Resident Status

(Select all that
apply if status
changed
during the
year.)

Live in a residence hall

Live in off-campus housing not with family
members

Live with parent(s) or legal guardian(s)

Live with other family members

Did not have a consistent place to sleep (e.g.,
couch-surfing, living in car, no housing)

Transfer Status

Did you transfer
from another
institution?

Yes, from a community college

Yes, from another public university

Yes, from a private college or university

Yes, from another type of institution - please
describe:

No

Undergraduate Class Standing

First year student

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

What is
Your Age?

Younger than 18

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55 and older

Other Potential Categories for Student Surveys

Caretaker responsibilities for child(ren),
elders, and/or other family members

Jobs held/hours worked per week

Distance from school, if commuting

Military/Veteran status

International student status

Additional Recommendations for Demographic Items in Survey Design

Placement

- Put demographic questions at the end unless using as screening questions

Include

- Include “prefer not to answer” and “prefer to self-describe” options

Don't force

- Don't force answer to items except for consent to participate

Additional Considerations in Data Analysis

Sometimes people will write in a category that already exists and you may have to adjust your analysis.

Equity in data visualizations

What you can do



Investigate how demographic questions are being asked across your institution and consider if they inclusive enough for your work and the institutional culture



Identify appropriate demographic questions with categories that are meaningful to the work



Share model practices within your own institution

Selected
Readings,
References,
& Resources



Questions, Comments, & Contact Information



Q & A



Contact me at:
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