

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy



In the fall of 2017, HUC began the journey of implementing an Equity & Inclusivity Policy (now called the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy) by first implementing an E&I Committee (now DEI) and providing learning and discussion opportunities for any league members who showed interest in supporting this initiative.

Simply stated, all players are encouraged to play ultimate in our league, regardless of their gender, gender identity, socio-economic class, or race.

HUC's goal is to help those that may feel uncomfortable feel more at ease in our community. We recognize that players who have not experienced these feelings of inequity may find these improved equity and inclusivity targets difficult or uncomfortable at first, however the benefits to those groups who have been previously overlooked will make the efforts of our community worthwhile.

## **Gender Inclusion in Ultimate**

\*Gender, the policy acknowledges, is non-binary, fluid, and self-determined.

We welcome and encourage participation by people of all genders. We believe the opportunity for people of all genders to play together in a recreational sport environment is important because it leads to respect between HUC community members, both on and off the field.

The following excerpt was shared by *Trans Student Educational Resources* (TSER). Please visit this [link](#) for more terms.

Terms are always changing in the LGBTQ+ community. This list will be updated ([here](#)) as often as possible to keep up with the rapid proliferation of queer and trans language.

**Cisgender/cis:** term for someone who exclusively identifies as their sex assigned at birth. The term cisgender is not indicative of gender expression, sexual orientation, hormonal makeup, physical anatomy, or how one is perceived in daily life.

**Transgender/Trans:** encompassing term of many gender identities of those who do not identify or exclusively identify with their sex assigned at birth. The term transgender is not indicative of gender expression, sexual orientation, hormonal makeup, physical anatomy, or how one is perceived in daily life.

**Binary:** Used as an adjective to describe the genders female/male or woman/man. Since the binary genders are the only ones recognized by general society as being legitimate, they enjoy an (unfairly) privileged status.

Additional terms frequently used by sport organizations, including HUC:

**Womxn:** Used to include all cis and trans women and any other person who identifies as a woman. Instead of explaining explicitly to trans and non-binary folks that they are welcome to our league, the spelling can be considered self-explanatory and therefore should not force a player to ask specific, and possibly uncomfortable questions about where they might belong. \*\*\*Moving away from the use of "womxn" as we educate members to understand that "women" includes anyone that feels more comfortable filling that roster spot.

**Gender Inclusive:** Being gender inclusive means respecting the right of all individuals to identify their own gender -- that means that another person does not have a say in what another person's gender is.

Every effort will be made to use gender inclusive language in HUC communications, and, where possible, HUC will also advocate for gender inclusive language. Examples may include calling players "people" and referring to a person or group as "them" or "they", or discussing a "match" defence rather than a "man" defence.

HUC encourages all players to learn about gender diversity and inclusion. The Ontario Human Rights Commission offers a free [webinar](#) that we encourage all players, especially captains and league coordinators, to view. This webinar includes a summary of the Ontario Human Rights Code recognizing Trans people as equals, updated in 2014.

HUC's policy is one step toward gender inclusion and will evolve as we gain more experience and feedback. HUC commits to reviewing this policy on a regular basis and encourages players to send feedback to the Equity & Inclusivity committee.

### **Gender Inclusion Protocol**

1. When referring to people in general or to a person whose preferred pronouns are unknown, use 'they'. It is acceptable to ask a person their preferred pronouns in a respectful way.
2. Everyone is required to respect each other's gender identity, expression & pronouns. If a player has specified pronouns for themselves, regardless of whether those pronouns are what you think they should be, it is expected that others will make every attempt to use the specified pronouns.
3. Trans and non-binary players are invited to self-determine whether they should hold a Woman's roster spot. There may be players who are included in an Open roster spot that do not use male pronouns.
4. You may assume that every team member is aware of this policy and respectfully self-selects where they should be rostered (just as you assume every player understands the rules of ultimate).

**Acknowledgments:** The creation of this policy benefited from information, experiences, policies, and feedback drawn from the following organizations: Peterborough Ultimate League, Trans Student Educational Resources, Peterborough Rainbow Coalition, Whitehorse Women's Hockey Association, Saskatoon Ultimate Discsport Society, and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

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## **Current Status**

### HUC'S RULE TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUITY

#### **The intention of the Ratio Rule is:**

1. To ensure people of all genders have access to time on the field.
2. To provide more opportunity for women players to play (remember: to work towards equality we must first practice equity).

#### GENDER PARITY

(See below for Rationale)

#### Ratio Rule A:

#### **What is Rule A? (Section A7.2, WFDF Rule of Ultimate 2017)**

Before the start of the game an additional disc flip happens with the winner selecting the gender ratio for the first point. For the next two points the ratio will be reversed (points 2 and 3). For the two points after this, the ratio must follow the first point (points 4 and 5). This pattern of alternating the ratio every two points, repeats until the end of the game. Halftime has no impact on this pattern.

Options will be:

3W/4O

4W/3O

The term 'open' means that players do not need to indicate what their gender is on the field. Open = any player in the league: could be man, woman, trans, self-defined, gender fluid or players could prefer not to say.

#### **Rationale**

- **Gender equity is important** – Ratio Rule A produces near equal time for women and open athletes and encourages the gender ratio of mixed teams to include equal numbers of athletes who identify with each gender.
- **Get with the program** – The World Games is currently using Ratio Rule A, as well as the Australian Flying Disc Federation & even our national sport organization, Ultimate Canada, has moved to gender parity. Many high schools and both recreational and competitive leagues across Canada have adopted it as well.
- **Encourage and support** – Ratio Rule A is expected to increase long-term participation of women in the mixed divisions. It also reflects an inclusive culture that HUC is proud of.
- **Women players have been asking** – Many women that have participated in our gender parity leagues (6v6 & 4v4 indoor leagues) have expressed their excitement of having more opportunity to make an impact on the field. Allowing more space for women to play has changed the dynamic of the game and players on the field are noticing this positive change.
- **We are almost there already** – For the past two years we have required teams to have 6 women on their regular roster. Teams should have a solid base of veteran women and can build on this in the years to come.

## **What is the league doing to help?**

- **Women Engagement and Recruitment** – this is a subcommittee focused on recruiting women into the league and helping teams find players or help create a positive culture on the team they have already established encouraging the development of women players.

- **Women's Clinics** – Skill building clinics specifically for women. To assist in developing the skills of the women athletes in the league in a supportive environment that feels safe from judgement or the fear of failure.

- **Women's League** – A league where women players of all levels can choose to support each other in development, or simply join in the fun and have more field time.

**\*\*\*LOOKING FOR A WOMEN'S LEAGUE DIRECTOR \*\*\* Need to fill role**

## **What can you do?**

- **Captains:** Recruit! If each summer team recruits one new women player, that tips the scales very close to the desired balance. Have an open and honest discussion with players on your team about how they feel your team might be able to improve retention or become more inclusive to women players.

- **Players:** Talk to your teammates if you see or hear something that does not support this goal. Talk to your captains about any concerns or ideas you have to improve the enjoyment of the game for all players on the field. Be vocal about the spirit of the game.

## **Interested in helping HUC build?**

Contact the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee lead at eandi @hamiltonultimate.com

### **DEI COMMITTEE GOALS:**

- Women recruitment & retention
- Gender equity in all leagues (to work towards equality)
- Equity and support for undervalued players (including those previously undervalued because of their race or socio-economic status) \*the DEI committee especially welcomes members to offer support specific to this initiative.