Adding Pronouns to Your Email Signature

Adding pronouns to your email signature is important and useful. Feel free to use our example email signature to include your pronouns.

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Signature 1:

> Your Name (Your Pronouns)
> Your Position
> Department of Biological Sciences
> Columbia University

Signature 2:

> Your Name
> Pronouns: Your Pronouns
> Your Position
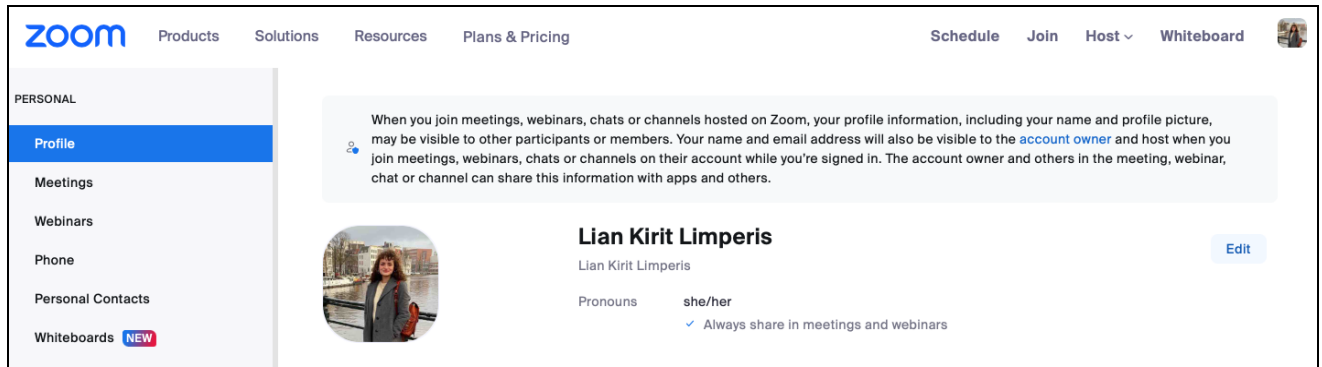> Department of Biological Sciences
> Columbia University

Examples:

> Lian Kirit Limperis
> Pronouns: she/her
> Ph.D. Candidate, Tavazoie Lab
> Department of Biological Sciences
> Columbia University

> Kwass Wass (they/them)
> Ph.D Student
> Department of Biological Sciences
> Columbia University

Adding Pronouns to Zoom

Adding your pronouns to Zoom is very easy. The result is that your pronouns will show in parentheses next to your name.
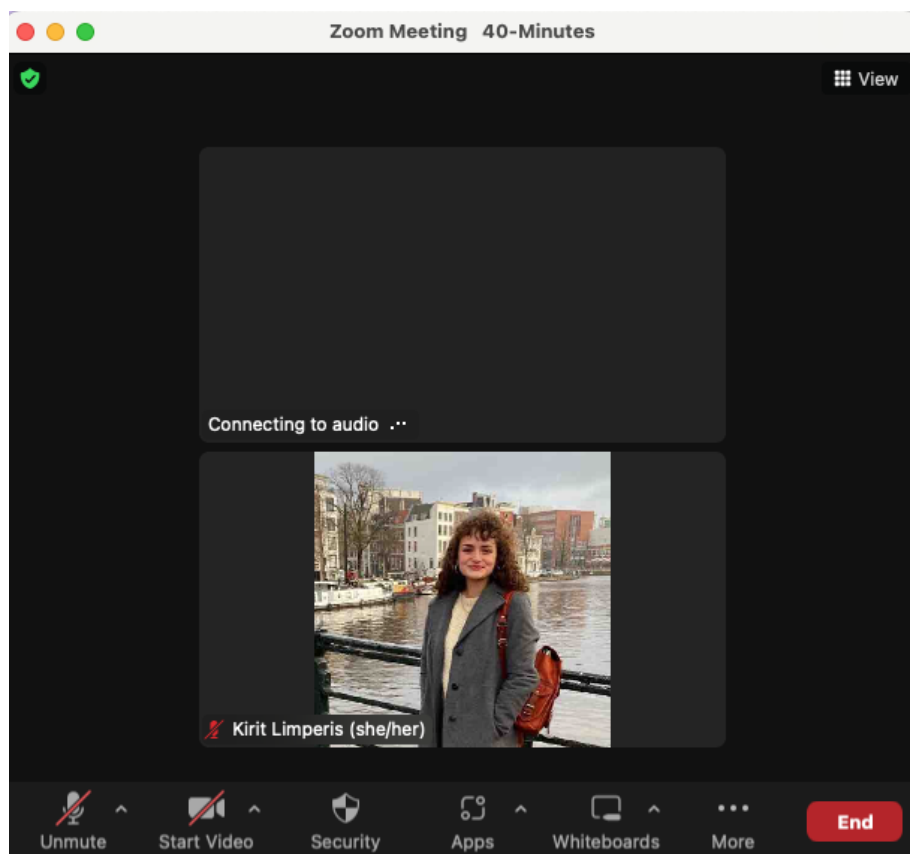
1. Go to your Profile page: https://zoom.us/profile. You will need to sign into your Zoom account.
2. On your Profile page, click the "Edit" button that is to the right of your name.

3. In the Pronouns section, fill in your pronouns (eg. they/them, she/her, he/his, she/they, she/he/they, ze/zir, and others). We suggest always sharing.

That's it! Now your pronouns show up next to your name (see below).

Sharing Your Pronouns in Introductions and Conversation

Sharing your pronouns when you're introducing yourself is an important way to foster inclusion.

An example is when you are teaching a class – if you are having students go around the room introducing themselves, ask that they share their name and their pronouns.

You can begin by saying,
"Hi, my name is Albie and I go by he/his."

Other ways to share pronouns is by adding them on your name tag next to your name (ie. Maria, they/them).

Moments to share pronouns:
- Classroom introductions
- Start-of-semester survey to students (add an option in the survey to share pronouns)
- Name tags
- Interviews ("Nice to meet you! I'm Sam, I go by she/they pronouns. How would you like me to refer to you?")
- Zoom and email signature

Use of Honorifics

We use honorifics when we want to show respect to someone (ie. "Ms. Malik, welcome!"). Many people are aware of the Mr. and Ms. honorifics, but it is also important to use the Mx. honorific when someone wishes to not be referred to by a gendered honorific.

See here for descriptions of the three honorifics, Mx., Ms., and Mr.

Mx.
The Mx. honorific is pronounced "mix". Mx. may be used by folks who are non-binary or trans, who do not want to be referred to by a gendered honorific (Mr., Ms.).

I'm honored to introduce our esteemed colleague, Mx. Rossi.

Dear Mx. Levi, …

Mx. Garang and *Mr. Su did incredible work in their collaboration.*

Mr.

Is a gendered honorific that is often used to refer to men, but not always. People who are non-binary or trans may also wish to be referred to by Mr. This is why it is best to always ask someone what their preferred honorific is.

Ms.
Is a gendered honorific that is often used to refer to women, but not always. People who are non-binary or trans may also wish to be referred to by Ms. This is why it is best to always ask someone what their preferred honorific is.

Avoiding Gendered Language

It's important not to assume someone's gender before you meet them. There are many ways we can shift our language to avoid assuming people's genders.

For example, instead of "Ladies and Gentlemen", we can say "Everyone", Colleagues", "Folks", or "Friends".

If we are referring to someone we don't know, instead of "he" or "she", we can use "they" or "them", or "the client", "the student", "the colleague".

Shifting away from gendered language (only referring to men/women, he/she) creates an environment that everyone feels comfortable and safe within. There are many resources online that you can use to learn more about how to avoid gendered language and foster an inclusive environment. Here is one such resource: https://pronouns.org/

Thank you!
DEI Committee
Columbia University, Department of Biological Sciences