

Gender-Inclusive Language

In your writing at Denver Seminary, you will be required to use gender-inclusive language except when referring to God or when using a direct quote from another source.

Commonly, when a gender-inclusive noun is used as subject of a sentence, the pronoun “he” is used as the referent pronoun in the remainder of the sentence. There are ways to avoid using the masculine pronoun, and thus make the language gender-inclusive, including the following:

1. Write in the plural.

Example: The Denver Seminary student who takes seriously his call will do his work conscientiously.

becomes

Denver Seminary students who take seriously their call will do their work conscientiously.

This is the easiest method and will work in most cases. Remember: if you start in the plural, stick to the plural.

2. Revise the sentence.

Example: The student will not know what is expected of him unless he has had an opportunity to work through an inductive study with the professor and then has repeated the procedure by himself.

becomes

The student will know what is expected after having an opportunity to work through an inductive study with the professor first and then repeating the study alone.

Revising like this is a good technique when writing about a one-to-one relationship which would be lost by pluralizing.

3. Delete the pronoun.

Example: A Christian is someone who can endure the ridicule of others for the sake of his own principles.

becomes

A Christian is someone who can endure the ridicule of others for the sake of principle.

4. Substitute an article (a, an, the) for the pronoun.

Example: Every student must submit his thesis next week.

becomes

Every student must submit a thesis next week.

5. Repeat the noun.

Example: Take your professor's suggestions seriously. He knows the topic and grades papers.

becomes

Take your professor's suggestions seriously. A professor knows the topic and grades papers.

6. Use a synonym.

Example: Take your professor's suggestions seriously. He knows the topic and grades papers.

becomes

Take your professor's suggestions seriously. This is an individual who knows the topic and grades papers.

7. Substitute *one* or *one's*.

Example: As a person matures, his goals and objectives change.

becomes

As one matures, one's goals and objectives change.

8. Use compound pronouns (*she* or *he*, *his* or *hers*).

Example: Did each student have an opportunity to describe the situation in his class?

becomes

Did each student have an opportunity to describe the situation in his or her class?

or

The student will take the classes he knows will contribute to his future ministry.

becomes

The student will take the classes he or she knows will contribute to his or her future ministry.