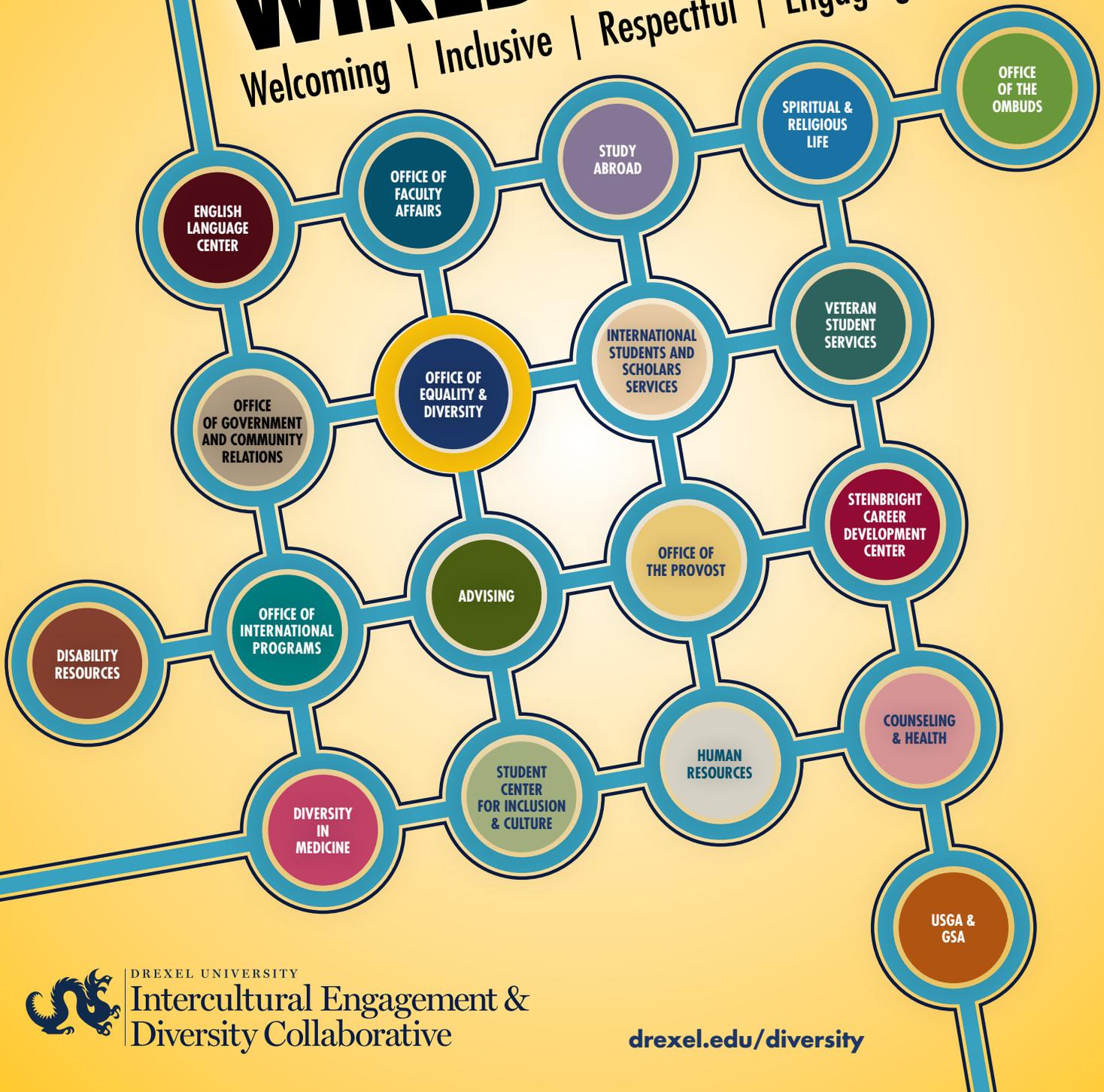


# The WIRED Guide

Welcoming | Inclusive | Respectful | Engaging | Diverse



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

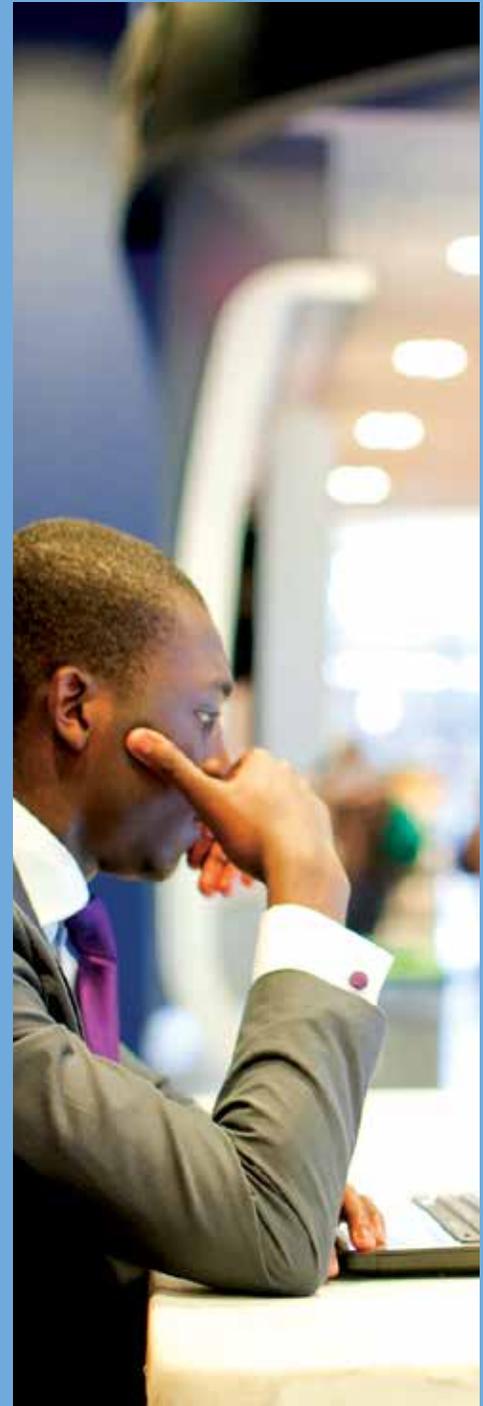
Intercultural Engagement &  
Diversity Collaborative

[drexel.edu/diversity](https://drexel.edu/diversity)

# Contents

---

<i>Introduction</i>	2
UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECTING DIFFERENCE	
Age/Generation	4
Disability	4
Ethnicity & Race	7
Gender Identity & Expression	8
Lifestyle Choice	9
National Origin	10
Physical Appearance & Body Size	11
Religious Practice	12
Sex	13
Sexual Orientation	14
Socioeconomic Status	15
Union Membership	16
Veteran Status	16
CREATING A WIRED COMMUNITY	
Accessible Documents & Materials	18
Bystander Intervention	18
Career Development	19
Cross-cultural Communication	20
Event Planning	21
Housing	22
Legal and Safety Issues	23
Meetings and Project Teams	24
Office / Shared Spaces	24
Universal Design	25
Work-life Balance	26





## Introduction

The WIRED Guide is intended as a resource for supporting our welcoming, inclusive, respectful, engaging, and diverse (“WIRED”) community and for preparing our students to be leaders in the communities and workforces of the future. The WIRED Guide is organized both by identity and application. It includes links to University resources and best practices for understanding and respecting difference and creating a WIRED community that supports all members of our diverse and global community. As such, we expect that students, faculty, professional and union staff, and guests can all benefit from the guide and the principles it contains.

This guide is the product of the University-wide effort of the Forum for Inclusive Culture (“I-Forum”), in collaboration with the Office of Equality & Diversity and other individuals and departments within the University with topical expertise. The I-Forum, made up of students, faculty, professional staff, and community members, is an open membership coalition that addresses issues of diversity and inclusion on Drexel’s campus. We aim to weave diversity into the fabric of the University and foster a community that is grounded in respect for difference and engages with openness and humility.

Although the guide contains sections organized by identity, as noted above, we recognize that there are some best practices that transcend individual group identity and, when adopted as core values, foster a community that is welcoming for all. The seven Dragon Culture commitments, adopted from the Sanctuary model developed by Dr. Sandra Bloom of Drexel’s Dornsife School of Public Health, provide such a model.

A community that is dedicated to **Nonviolence** will be one in which we treat others with respect. The principle of **Emotional Intelligence** encourages us to be aware of our behavior and how it affects others, to acknowledge our implicit and explicit biases, and to use inclusive language. Conversations between individuals committed to **Inquiry and Social Learning** value asking questions and listening generously to the answers, and being open to discussing how each of us is capable of causing harm to others, even inadvertently. The participation of a broad range of diverse voices is a sign of healthy **Democracy**. **Open Communication** permits us to explore differing perspectives even if it is uncomfortable, as those engaged in the dialogue express dissent in the spirit of the Dragon Culture commitments, without being accusatory or defensive. We hold ourselves and others accountable for this as part of **Social Responsibility**, including being comfortable turning our missteps into opportunities for **Growth and Change**. It’s on all of us to take opportunities to learn about those who differ from us as a critical part of our academic and professional development.

This is a living document and will be updated periodically. The WIRED Guide was first published in 2012. This version was released in 2017. If you have a comment or suggestion concerning this guide, email. You can also visit us online at for more information, including links to the University’s nondiscrimination policies and information about reporting discrimination, harassment, or misconduct. Thank you for everything you do to make Drexel welcoming, inclusive, respectful, engaging, and diverse.

# Understanding and Respecting Difference

## Age/Generation

### BEST PRACTICES

- Understand that there are members of multiple generations included in our University community, who may have different needs.
- Communicate respectfully with people of all ages by being mindful of your tone, body language, and assumptions.
- Do not assume that skills or a lack of certain skills are connected to age; learning is lifelong.
- Comments about age in the workplace, even if about younger ages, can set a negative tone.
- Appreciate the diverse experiences and knowledge bases brought to the table by individuals of different ages and generations, and encourage working in diverse teams.
- Create opportunities for individuals to express preferences about communication style and/or concerns about culture so that problems do not brew unheard.

## Disability

### BEST PRACTICES

- GENERAL
  - Remember the person before the disability (i.e. the student or employee with a disability, not the disabled student or employee).
  - If you offer assistance, wait for the offer to be accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.
- HEARING LOSS AND DEAFNESS
  - When talking with a person with hearing loss or deafness, speak directly to that person rather than to a companion or sign language interpreter who may be present.
  - To get the attention of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, tap the person on the shoulder or wave your hand. Look directly at the person and speak clearly.
  - Not all people who are deaf or hard of hearing can speech read. For those who do speech read, be sensitive to their needs by placing yourself facing the light source and keeping hands and food away from your mouth when speaking.
  - Keep in mind that for those who know American Sign Language (ASL), English can be difficult – it is literally a second language.
- AUTISM
  - When talking to a person with autism, please keep in mind that their communication, body language, and response patterns may not always follow the social norm. Avoid feeling offended by reactions that you may not understand.
  - A person with autism may not want to be touched, especially without warning.
  - A person with autism may not always make direct eye contact when you are speaking, so do not demand or expect it.
  - Finally, a person with autism may not like loud noises or voices. Avoid raising your voice even if the person does not seem like they are paying attention. Try another method of engaging them.



## — CHRONIC ILLNESS

- A person's chronic illness may be visible or invisible to others. When speaking to a person with a chronic illness, avoid commenting on their physical appearance (*i.e.* "You don't even look sick!"). Not being visibly ill or impaired may bear no relation to the individual's actual health, rendering the compliment a hollow one.
- Avoid giving advice on how to manage chronic illness and symptoms, even if you mean well. Chronic illness does not improve with time and remains chronic even with intervention. Providing advice under these circumstances can imply that the person has control over the state of their chronic illness and is simply not addressing it properly.
- People with chronic illness have "good days" when things seem manageable and "bad days" when their symptoms get the best of them. Many deal with mood fluctuation, pain, and fatigue on a daily basis. The symptoms of a person living with chronic illness can change at any given moment, so they will appreciate patience and understanding.

## — VISION LOSS AND BLINDNESS

- Introduce or identify yourself before making physical contact with the person who is blind.
- Describe any hazards while walking with an individual who is blind.
- Do not touch a guide dog, cane, or other device without permission.
- Stay aware of times when the individual needs you to help with reading and/or counting money.
- Be aware that the person most likely uses technologies to read electronic materials, but the technology is only helpful when materials are presented in an accessible format. (*See* Section on Accessible Documents and Materials).

## — PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

- Stay aware of individual needs in the following respects:
  - » Amount of physical space.
  - » Distance between the individual and necessary items.
  - » Accessible mobility conditions.
  - » Accessible transportation options.
- Do not touch a wheelchair or other personal device without permission.

## — SPEECH IMPAIRMENTS

- Give the person your full attention.
- Do not interrupt or finish their sentences.
- Repeat what you think you have heard (if necessary) so that the person can confirm.
- You can ask the person to write down the message.
- Suppress reactions of nervousness or impatience.



- MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS
  - People with mental health conditions are unique individuals who may present in broadly variant ways; there is no one set of characteristics to expect.
  - Understand the distinction between an individual's behavioral choices and manifestations of their disability.
  - Ask the person what they need to feel comfortable.
  - Listen and be supportive.
- SERVICE ANIMAL USERS
  - If someone brings an animal to an event, know that the only authorized service animals are dogs and miniature horses.
  - If you are in a position in which you must know if an animal is a service animal (*i.e.* not just personal curiosity), the only questions you can legally ask are, “Is this a service animal?” and “What task(s) does it perform for you?”
  - Please do not touch or distract the animal. Service animals are working, and it breaks their training to interact with others when they are on duty. When the animal is not working, some owners may allow interaction.
  - Emotional support animals provide a therapeutic benefit to their owners through companionship. They are not trained to perform tasks like service animals. There is no requirement to permit the presence of emotional support animals other than in housing that otherwise prohibits pets, as part of the Fair Housing Act.
- LEARNING OR OTHER COGNITIVE DISABILITIES
  - Keep in mind that many individuals with learning disabilities have average or above average intelligence, but simply process information differently.
  - They may need information presented in a different way, more time to complete tasks, or other tools.
  - Be direct with communication to avoid misunderstanding / misinterpretation.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Disability Resources](#)

[Resources for Faculty with Disabilities](#)

[Family Medical Leave](#)

[Short-Term Disability Leave](#)

[Environmental Health and Safety](#)

## Ethnicity & Race

### BEST PRACTICES

- A person's racial or ethnic identity may not be apparent based on physical appearance. Making assumptions based on appearance can be inaccurate and insulting.
- So can making assumptions based on someone's known ethnicity or race. There is tremendous diversity within races and cultures. That is why it is inappropriate, and alienating, to single out any one individual as a representative/spokesperson of their race or culture.
  - This is related to the idea of tokenism, which involves using individuals in symbolic ways, such as recruiting a member of an underrepresented group to your team in order to create the appearance of diversity.
- Learn about other cultures, but be wary of using basic information or generalizations to stereotype or oversimplify your ideas about another person.
- Attend events that are not organized by members of your identity group.
- Be respectful when using language to refer to a person's ethnic or racial identity.
- If you use a term that a person does not appreciate, it is all right to acknowledge the error with regret, then move on.
- Discussing ethnicity, race, and culture is part of how we learn and grow. Asking respectful questions can be appropriate. But, also respect that a person may not want to engage in an intercultural dialogue, and seize other opportunities to learn. Relying on members of a marginalized group to teach or educate members of a dominant group can further burden an individual who is already burdened by marginalization.

### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU



Black Faculty & Professional Staff Association  
Bienvenidos (Colleague Resource Group)  
Student Center for Inclusion and Culture  
URM Faculty Interest Group  
The Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority  
Participation at Drexel University

## Gender Identity & Expression

*Transgender, or trans, is an umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity or expression diverges from the societal expectations for that individual based upon their sex assigned at birth. People whose gender identity and expression aligns with their sex assigned at birth are cisgender.*

*To give an example, someone who is assigned the sex of female at birth, and inwardly identifies and outwardly expresses as a woman, is a cisgender woman. Someone who is assigned the sex of male at birth, but inwardly identifies and outwardly expresses as a woman, may identify as a transgender woman. Both of these individuals are women, regardless of their sex assigned at birth, due to their gender identity and expression.*

*Some people do not identify as male/man or female/woman. They may find the binary nature of sex and gender (two options: male or female, man or woman, masculine or feminine) restrictive and uncomfortable. Such individuals may rather prefer to identify as gender non-conforming, non-binary, genderqueer, or agender.*



## BEST PRACTICES

- Use the correct name and pronoun.
  - The correct name is whatever the person has given you.
  - If you are unsure of which pronouns to use, just ask. You can introduce yourself with your pronouns, giving an opportunity for the person to respond in kind (“Hi, I’m Sam, and I use the pronouns he, him, and his”), or you can just use the person’s name (“As Jordan was just saying...”).
  - If you make a mistake with a pronoun or name and you are alone with the person, apologize and move on. If you are in a crowd, just move on. Use the correct name and pronoun the next chance you get and you can always acknowledge the error privately at a later time, if appropriate.
- Use gender-inclusive language (e.g. “partner” instead of “husband/wife”).
- Do not do things to “out” or call attention to a transgender individual, even if your goal is to let that person know that you accept them – no winking, smiling, little innuendos.
- If possible, when using forms, offer an option to include “preferred name” as well as “legal name” and an inclusive list of “sex/gender” options.
- Not all transgender individuals have similar opinions, feelings, preferences, or experiences. Group identities have value, but can also mask tremendous diversity from within!
- Remember that many people you meet are not cisgender. It is “cisnormative” to assume that other individuals are cisgender.

- Similarly, you cannot assume that a transgender individual would like to discuss gender identity with you. If the person wants to talk about these issues, they will bring them up
- Allow people to express themselves in their own words, which might not be the words you would use. It is ok to ask them to define those words or statements that you do not understand, without placing the burden of educating you on the already-burdened individual.
- Be mindful of your facial expressions and reactions when an individual opens up to you. Expressions of shock, disapproval, or disbelief can be hurtful and silencing.
- Prevent bullying by speaking out when you see such behavior as the following:
  - Using derogatory words or comments to demean others.
  - Attacking people for gender diverse behavior.
  - Using gender as a means of discipline or correction (for example, phrases such as, “Act like a man”).
- Provide support and connection to resources.
- Under Philadelphia’s Fair Practices Ordinance and Drexel Policy, individuals are permitted to access bathrooms in accordance with their gender identity and expression, rather than their biological sex.
- It is illegal and against University policy to require a transgender individual to use a single-person restroom or to use a restroom that correlates with their identity only when others are not present or do not object.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[LGBTQA+ Faculty & Professional Staff Network](#)

[LGBTQA Student Center](#)

[LGBT Faculty Resources](#)

[Transitioning at Work: Guidelines & Resources for the Drexel Community](#)

## Lifestyle Choice

### BEST PRACTICES

- Not everyone has the same values or common practices: your normal may not be someone else’s normal.
- For example, not everyone is family centric, or has the same belief in what “family” is. And, not everyone celebrates holidays or birthdays (*See* section on Religious Practices).
- Our community includes individuals who make broadly variant choices with respect to diet, views on medical treatment (including approaches to, for example, illness and birth), childrearing practices, taste in media and other forms of cultural consumption, vision of the role of work in life, and style of dress / body modifications (*See* Physical Appearance).
- This contributes to the vitality of our community, and a WIRED environment is one in which individuals do not feel judged or excluded because of difference.

## National Origin

### BEST PRACTICES

Tips for communicating with individuals who speak English as a second language, such as our international students and scholars:

- Greet the person and learn their name — how is it spelled? What does it mean? Most names have wonderful meanings and stories. Do not nickname someone for your convenience.
- Allow wait time when asking questions it takes time to process information.
- Be a conversational partner, and use context clues to try to understand what is being said.
- It is ok to ask interested questions about the person’s country, without expecting the person to always represent their country or explain its actions.
- Be aware of your use of idioms, slang, and “insider” references;



rephrase and give examples on the spot so the person feels understood and included.

- Be attentive to the person’s nonverbal behaviors — do they look puzzled or confused? Take a moment to bring them back into the conversation.
- Expand your comfort with world varieties of English and other accents; volunteer to tutor; learn another language; listen to foreign language movies; ask others to teach you new words; expand your world language horizons.
  - Unfortunately, a common reaction to hearing accented English is to complain that the speaker “doesn’t speak English.” Individuals studying or working at Drexel may not speak English as a first language, but they do speak English. Successfully communicating with a non-native speaker can be challenging, but it is also enriching, and instructive of a critical life skill in our globalized society.
- Ask genuine questions beyond, “Do you like it here?” and provide time to really listen to the response.
- In the case of communication breakdown, writing down or spelling a word out can help clarify the meaning.
- Assume that answering the first question you are asked does not include all the information that the person needs to know.
- Ask questions yourself in different ways until you are clearer about what the person wants.
- Ask the person to repeat the information back to you so you are sure it is understood. *See* the section on Cross-Cultural Communication.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

Resources for prospective international undergraduate students

Resources for prospective international graduate students

International Faculty Handbook

Drexel Fellowships Office

International Programs within the College of Engineering

English Language Center

International Students and Scholars Services

Office of International Programs

Study Abroad Office

Department of Global Studies & Modern Languages

*Note that this department includes not only Global Studies and Modern Languages, but also Africana Studies, Judaic Studies, and Women’s and Gender Studies. Affiliates of this department may, then, prove to be valuable resources for a number of issue areas discussed in this guide.*

## Physical Appearance & Body Size

### BEST PRACTICES

- Unsolicited comments about an individual’s appearance are often unwelcome, even if intended to be complimentary.
- Body art, piercings, or alternative hair color are not indicative of a certain personality “type.”
- Do not assume women are pregnant based on body size and/or weight gain. If someone is pregnant and wants you to know, they will tell you.
- Attributing moral qualities to body size is inaccurate and insulting (e.g. assuming a large person is lazy, or a slim person is disciplined).
- A person can be slim without being ill or having an eating disorder. Making jokes about eating disorders (“You need to eat a sandwich, you look anorexic!”) can be hurtful to both slim people and individuals with disordered eating.
- Be mindful when meeting at a restaurant that some people do not feel physically comfortable sitting in a booth.
- Along the same lines, if you are in a position to purchase furniture for an office or shared space, be mindful of diverse sizes. You can ask, “Is that chair comfortable for you?”
- Be mindful of size options when ordering and distributing clothing, such as team tee shirts.
- When planning activities and outings, consider that some people have difficulty engaging in team sports (climbing walls, rope course) and walking long distances or up stairs.
- Not all individuals will conform to your expectations of gender expression / performance.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

Drexel University Employee Assistance Program

## Religious Practice

*Drexel's Interfaith Council supports students, faculty and staff in the expression, understanding and practice of faith and cultivates mutual respect for the variety of faith traditions represented by the members of the Drexel University community. The Interfaith Council is currently comprised of professional religious life staff from Asbury Ministry, Baptist Campus Ministries, Hillel of Greater Philadelphia, Newman Catholic Campus, and the Muslim community.*

### BEST PRACTICES

- Support Drexel's environment of respect for the religious observances of others and make every reasonable effort to accommodate the religious observances of instructors, students, professional staff, and campus guests.
- Be mindful of dietary and work restrictions associated with religious observances.
- Avoid planning academic, professional, or social events when some individuals will be unable to attend due to religious observance.
- At events, ensure that appropriate food and beverages are available.
- Be an ally: do not stand by when others make disparaging remarks about religious groups or make assumptions about individuals based on the religious groups to which they belong, including about their political beliefs.

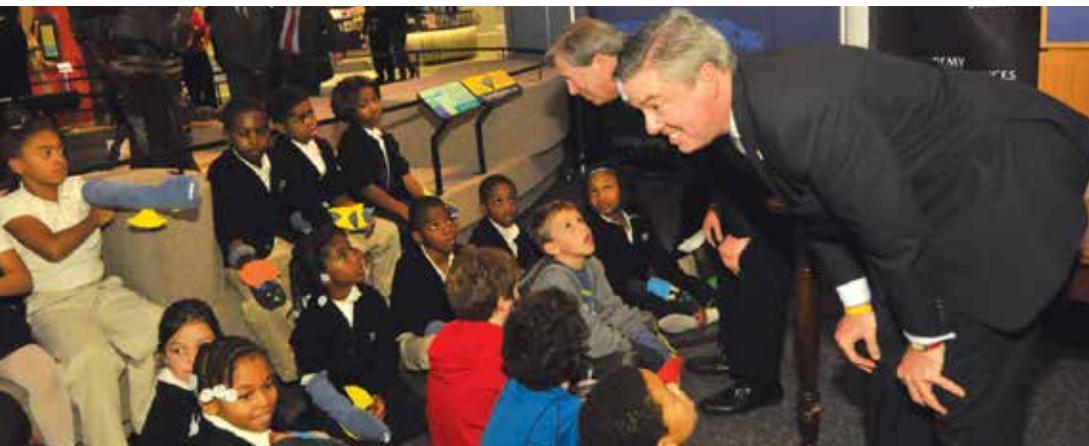
- Remember that many members of our community do not belong to a faith group at all. The absence of faith is just as entitled to respect as religious adherence.
- A person's clothing may be related to their religious practice (e.g. a hijab/headscarf, kippah/skullcap, etc). Although many individuals are happy to discuss religious practice, others may not. The fact that a person wears outward signifiers of their faith does not mean they belong to the first group and want to discuss their faith with you. It also does not mean that they are "making a statement" or broadcasting a political belief.
- Be open to learning about others' beliefs and practices by attending events hosted by our various faith organizations throughout the University.
- Interfaith Council members hold office hours and work collaboratively on interfaith and justice oriented initiatives. They provide on-campus pastoral care and participate in University community events, ceremonies, memorials, etc.

### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Spiritual & Religious Life](#)

[University's Statement on Religious Observances](#)

[Religious Observances Calendar](#)



# Sex

## BEST PRACTICES

- Relying on stereotypes about work roles or academic majors can be hurtful and limiting. This includes expressing surprise at or complimenting an individual whose sex makes them a minority in their department, like a woman in mechanical engineering or a man in nursing. Many of these individuals appreciate support, but do not want to feel like anomalies or tokens.
- When assigning tasks, consider whether you're assigning them to the best person for the job, or just the person for whom the job is societypical (i.e. female-identified individuals taking meeting notes or male-identified individuals lifting heavy things).
- Be inclusive of individuals who are non-binary, non-conforming, genderqueer, or agender. *See* the section on Gender Identity & Expression.
- Use gender-inclusive language when possible (i.e. the student, they). It is common to fall into patterns when giving hypotheticals or examples that reinforce stereotypes (for example, the hypothetical marketing director is male and the customer is female).
- Drexel provides resources to members of our University community regarding sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and misconduct. *See* Drexel's Title IX Resource Page. This includes:
  - Discrimination on the basis of sex, such as discrepancies in hiring, promotion, grading/performance review;
  - Sexual Harassment, both quid pro quo and through the creation of a hostile work, living, or learning environment;
  - Sexual Assault, which includes any form of nonconsensual sexual conduct; and other forms of sexual or gender-based conduct, such as Sexual Exploitation, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence.
- Drexel also prohibits discrimination based on pregnancy and related

discrimination or harassment, such as that of nursing mothers.

- In Philadelphia, a person can breastfeed in public and not be asked to leave or move if they would be permitted to stay were they not nursing; the person does not have to use a nursing cover or otherwise hide the breast/nipple.
  - The University must reasonably accommodate the need to express breast milk. A list of "lactation stations" is included below.
- Work-life balance is important for all members of our community. *See* the section on Work-Life Balance. It limits all of us when work-life balance is considered frivolous or "merely" a "women's issue."

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Women's Finance Colleague Resource Group](#)

[Executive Leadership in Academic Technology and Engineering \(ELATE\)](#)

[Society of Women Engineers \(SWE\)](#)

[Drexel University College of Medicine Institute for Women's Health and Leadership](#)

[Vision 2020 Equality in Sight](#)

[Lactation Stations](#)

[Women's & Gender Studies Program](#)



## Sexual Orientation

### BEST PRACTICES

- Know the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity:
  - Sexual orientation describes to whom a person feels attraction: people of a different sex or gender, the same sex or gender, or two (or more) genders.
  - Gender identity refers to a person's inner sense of gender: man/masculine, woman/feminine, non-conforming, non-binary, genderqueer, agender, or something else. Transgender people have a gender identity or expression that is not aligned with the sex to which they were assigned at birth.
  - “LGBT” is a convenient umbrella term, but “T” is not a sexual orientation. Transgender individuals can have any sexual orientation.
- Remember that many people you meet are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or another orientation that is not heterosexual. It is “heteronormative” to assume that other individuals are heterosexual.
- Using the phrase “that’s gay” to describe things that are weird or bad is disrespectful, as it necessarily implies that being gay is weird or bad.
- Respect privacy. If someone asks you whether or not “Jane Doe is a lesbian,” a good response might be, “You should ask her” or “Why does it matter?”
- Challenge your own assumptions and behaviors:
  - Do you look at an LGB+ person and automatically think of their sexuality rather than seeing the individual as a whole, complex person?
  - Are you as supportive of your LGB+ colleagues, students, and friends as you would be of someone who is heterosexual?
  - Do you avoid asking about a person’s same sex partner when you would regularly ask a heterosexual friend about their partner?
  - Do you avoid confronting homophobic remarks?
- Consider attending an educational program offered by the Office of Equality & Diversity or another campus partner and proudly post the “Ally” sign you’ll receive in your classroom and/or office.
- Do not be surprised when an individual “comes out” to you. Be flattered: they trust you.
  - Know what resources are available for LGB+ individuals, on and off campus.
  - If someone approaches you to talk, remember that they may be feeling a lot of challenging and complex emotions. You can assist them by listening.
  - Keep the door open for conversations and assistance.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[LGBTQA+ Faculty & Professional Staff Network](#)  
[LGBTQA Student Center](#)  
[LGBT Faculty Resources](#)

## Socioeconomic Status

### BEST PRACTICES

- Treat all people with respect regardless of socioeconomic status or perceived status.
- You cannot assume a person’s socioeconomic status by their appearance or other classification.
- Be honest with yourself – what are your personal class biases? Could they be affecting how you behave towards others?
- Make sure to not assume that others have the same access to resources as you do. This can include healthy foods, laundry services, transportation, and healthcare.
- Make academic, professional, and social opportunities available regardless of wealth / income to the maximum extent possible.
- Be mindful of the pressure you exert on individuals to participate in collections, drives, gift exchanges, etc.
- Do your research – take time to learn about others who come from backgrounds that are different from your own.
- Consider learning about others through Civic Engagement opportunities.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Lindy Center for Civic Engagement](#)  
[Office of Government & Community Relations](#)  
[Drexel Liberty Scholars Program](#)  
[Drexel Home Purchase Assistance Program](#)

## Union Membership

### BEST PRACTICES

- At Drexel, each person's contribution to the mission of the University is valued.
- When planning an event for the University community, remember to consider our union members (namely, Facilities).
- Consider circulating event invitations, flyers, etc. in hard copy form to union staff, as many do not have a Drexel e-mail account or access to e-mail during the day.
- Respect the unions' responsibilities on campus and remember that everyone plays a role in Drexel's success - at all levels of the institution.
- Speak to union staff in a respectful manner and show appreciation to union members for the support that they provide.
- Get to know the union staff, particularly those that support your areas.
- Respect union rules that may impact your requests, and do not use that frustration as an excuse for making disparaging remarks about union workers.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Drexel Facilities](#)

## Veteran Status

*The Veteran's Task Force is a cross-campus committee designed to ensure a comprehensive infrastructure to support veterans and their family members. "DU Remembers...Will You?" is an ongoing effort to build a culture that makes Drexel University a welcoming, inclusive, respectful, and engaging place for veterans and their family members.*

### BEST PRACTICES

- Direct student veterans to resources provided by the Office of Veteran Student Services.
- Student veterans are encouraged to join the Drexel Veterans Association ("DVA") for continued comradeship and support. For faculty and professional staff, there is a Veterans Colleague Resource Group.
- Contact Drexel ROTC for information about military related initiatives and protocols.
- Drexel University Online offers the flexibility necessary to support active duty military and other veterans and has many such students.
- The "Higher Education Opportunity Act" enables veterans to manage their deployment and educational obligations; veterans should be referred to their advisors.
- The Center for Learning and Academic Support Services provides academic support for veterans and family members.
- Veterans can clarify their benefits by contacting the Veterans Administration ("VA").



- Be sensitive to differences in learning and communication veterans may experience.
- Avoid making assumptions about veterans’ political beliefs or asking insensitive questions about veterans’ mental health status or military experience, such as:
  - “Thanks for your service, but I don’t think we should have been there in the first place.”
  - “Do you have post-traumatic stress disorder?”
  - “What’s the worst thing that happened to you over there?”
  - “Have you ever killed anyone?”
  - “Were you scared?”
  - “Did you lose any buddies over there?”
- By contrast, it is always ok to thank a veteran for their service to our country and to let veterans know if you share connections, like being ex-military or having family members who are veterans.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Admissions](#)

[Academic Advising](#)

[Online Military Degrees](#)

[Veteran Student Orientation](#)

[Veterans’ Education Benefits](#)

[Army ROTC – Drexel University](#)

[Drexel Veteran’s Association \(DVA\)](#)

[Veterans Colleague Resource Group](#)

[Center for Learning and Academic Support Services FMLA](#)

# Creating a Wired Community

## Accessible Documents & Materials

*A screen reader is a software application that enables people with severe visual impairments to use a computer. Screen readers provide information to the user in two formats: text to speech and Braille. Documents that are not in an accessible format may be not be recognized by the screen reader.*

### BEST PRACTICES

- Microsoft Office has detailed instructions on creating accessible Word documents.
- Use an accessibility checker when creating documents. It alerts you to certain accessibility issues in your file so that you can fix potential problems that might keep someone with a disability from accessing your content. It also lets you know about application features that you can use to make your content more accessible. However, an accessibility checker may not detect all accessibility issues.
- Avoid using repeated blank characters. Extra spaces, tabs, and empty paragraphs may be perceived as blanks by people using screen readers. After hearing “blank” several times, those users may think that they have reached the end of the information. Instead, use formatting, indenting, and styles to create whitespace.
- To accommodate hearing impairments, consider using closed captioning when possible. Closed captioning allows persons with hearing disabilities to have access to television programming by displaying the audio portion of a television program as text on the television screen.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Web Accessibility In Mind](#)

[Disability Resources](#)



## Bystander Intervention

### BEST PRACTICES

- Trust your inner voice when it tells you that something is wrong and overcome the barriers that prevent you from taking action: be an ally.
- Three powerful life skills to use whenever you see unhealthy or negative behavior among your colleagues, in your classes, on campus and in your life:
  - IDENTIFY those moments when there is a problem.
  - GO BEYOND the powerful thought — the barrier — that will immediately be there in the way of intervention.
  - TAKE ACTION — any kind of action — to make a difference in the situation.
- When you step up, you send a message to the target that you are in their corner, and a message to the perpetrator that their behavior is unacceptable.
  - When you don't step up, you send a message that the behavior at issue is fine by you.
- Drexel's nondiscrimination policies prohibit retaliation against anyone who participates in a report or investigation of discrimination, harassment, or misconduct, and explicitly promote bystander intervention.
- Drexel maintains a webpage dedicated to bystander intervention in the context of sexual assault.

### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Drexel Civil Rights Policies](#)

[Student Conduct and Community Standards](#)

[Employee Code of Conduct](#)

[Dragons Against Hazing Initiative](#)

## Career Development

### BEST PRACTICES

- You can find professional development opportunities online.
- To advance your career, consider applying for the Supervisory Training Program offered by Human Resources.
- Participate in educational programs provided by the Office of Equality & Diversity and other offices.
- Drexel and Drexel College of Medicine provide tuition remission for employees, which allow them to take undergraduate and graduate classes at the University tuition-free — we encourage lifelong learning.
- Make sure professional development is available to all individuals within your purview, and ensure you are maintaining fair practices for hiring, promotion, and other employment decisions.
- Consider joining an affinity or colleague resource group for networking and support.

### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Drexel Human Resources](#)

[Faculty Affairs & Professional Development - DUCOM](#)

[Colleague Resource Groups](#)

## Cross-Cultural Communication

### Assumptions/Approach

#### BEST PRACTICES

- Practice, practice, practice. It's in the doing that we actually get better at cross-cultural communication.
- Do not assume that there is one right way (yours!) to communicate. Keep questioning your assumptions. For example, think about your body language; postures that indicate receptivity to one person might indicate aggressiveness to another.
- Respect others' choices about how they engage in communication with you, within the bounds of the professional relationship.
- Remember that cultural norms may explain the behavior of all of us — there is no inherent "normal." We are all shaped by many, many factors — our ethnic background, our family, our education, and our personalities — and are more complicated than any cultural norm could suggest.
- Check your interpretations if you are uncertain what is meant.

- Variation in attitudes toward disclosure and confrontation is something to consider before you conclude that you have an accurate reading of the views, experiences, and goals of the people with whom you are working, learning, or living.
- The way people communicate varies widely between, and even within, cultures. One aspect of communication style is language usage. Across cultures, some words and phrases are used in different ways. For example, even in countries that share the English language, the meaning of “yes” varies from “maybe, I’ll consider it” to “definitely,” with many shades in between. A student may couch an answer differently to a professor than to a peer out of deference or intimidation. Keep this in mind when interpreting communication.
- Another major aspect of communication style is the degree of importance given to non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication includes not only facial expressions and gestures; it also involves seating arrangements, personal distance, and sense of time. In addition, different norms regarding the appropriate degree of assertiveness in communicating can add to cultural misunderstandings.
- Try to understand your own culture and communication variables such as social role, symbolism, thought patterns, worldview, silence, and particularly the various nonverbal aspects of communication.
- Learn the communication rules for other cultures. Be sensitive to verbal and nonverbal language codes, and use language appropriate for the culture or co-culture to which the person you are trying to communicate with belongs.
- Approach intercultural communication with a positive attitude and with the goal of understanding the other side rather than promoting or defending your own.
- Avoid centrism or normativity that interprets everything on the basis of your own social and cultural values. Instead, try to understand how a concept, product or practice fits into other cultures.
- Understand that you will never fully understand the experiences of another culture if you are not a part of that culture.

## Cultural Conflict Resolution

### BEST PRACTICES

- Do not assume that breakdowns in communication occur because other people are on the wrong track. Search for ways to make the communication work, rather than searching for who should receive the blame for the breakdown.
- Listen actively and empathetically. Try to put yourself in the other person’s shoes, especially when another person’s perceptions or ideas are very different from your own. You might need to operate at the edge of your own comfort zone.
  - Stop, suspend judgment, and try to look at the situation as an outsider.
- Awareness of current power imbalances, and openness to hearing each other’s perceptions of those imbalances, are also necessary for understanding each other and working together.
- When you are dealing with a conflict, be mindful that people may differ in what they feel comfortable revealing. Questions that may seem natural to you — What was the conflict about? What was your role in the conflict? What was the sequence of events? — may seem intrusive to others.
- Some cultures view conflict as a positive thing, while others view it as something to be avoided.
- Drexel’s Office of Equality and Diversity (OED) has a mediation program for the resolution of complaints of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and of workplace issues.



## Event Planning

*Consider your audience and their concerns, including accessibility, timing, and dietary restrictions.*

### BEST PRACTICES

- Familiarize yourself with the accessible entrance to the event location and publicize it to all invitees.
- Do the same with gender-inclusive restrooms and other facilities.
- Inform invitees that if they have a disability and need an accommodation for the event, they should contact Disability Resources.
- Consider the event location and set up from the perspective of individuals with disabilities and individuals of different body sizes.
- Chairs should always be available even for events that primarily involve standing in order to be inclusive of those who may have difficulty standing for long periods of time and may not think to request this basic accommodation.
- Ask invitees if they have any dietary restrictions and work with the caterer to accommodate those individuals. Always include a vegetarian and vegan option to the menu.
- When selecting a date for your event, consider whether the date falls on a religious holiday or observance and if it does, if possible, select another date without a conflict.
- When selecting a time for your event, consider whether the time will allow invitees to maintain a work/life balance or would be inaccessible or inconvenient for attendees with home responsibilities or limited financial means.

### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Event Services](#)

[Disability Resources](#)

[Religious Observances Calendar](#)

[Single Person Restroom List](#)

## Housing

### BEST PRACTICES

- If your roommate comes from a different cultural background, learn about their background and be open to it. Remember that college is a learning experience.
- Be willing to have conversations about cultural norms & differences.
- Seek out or provide educational opportunities to learn about other cultures.
- Accept that learning/experiencing a different culture or one that you have less experience with can be challenging and can require more effort – and consider that the rewards of learning about a new culture can be lifelong.
- Attend the trips and events that are organized by the residence hall to feel more connected to the community.
- Deal with small problems when they occur so they don't escalate. See the RA if you feel that things are getting out of control.
- Respect your roommate's belongings and personal space and make sure invited guests respect them as well.
- Consider working with your roommate(s) to create House Rules and post them in a central location.
- Focus on understanding the need behind a request.

### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[University Housing \(Drexel Business Services\)](#)

[Residential Living \(Student Life\)](#)

[Office of Campus Activities](#)

[Undergraduate Student Life - Housing](#)

[Gender-Inclusive Housing](#)

## Legal and Safety Issues

### Safety

#### BEST PRACTICES

If an individual feels targeted or unsafe, the following resources are available.

- Emergency Numbers:
  - University City Campus Security: 215.895.2222 or 911
  - Center City Campus Security: 215.762.7111 or 911
  - Queen Lane Campus Security: 215.991.8102 or 911
- Upon request, Drexel Public Safety security officers provide walking escorts for Drexel students, faculty, and staff within patrol boundaries.
- To receive text messages in an emergency update your DrexelAlert Contact Information under the Drexel Tab in Drexel One.
- Download the Guardian App.

#### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Department of Public Safety](#)

[Drexel Guardian App](#)

### Legal

#### BEST PRACTICES

- Know and follow the University's policies, and ensure that others in your microcommunity do the same.
- If you have experienced discrimination, harassment, or misconduct, contact the Office of Equality & Diversity. At OED's website, there is information for reporting by phone, email, or in person, and anonymously by phone and online.

#### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Understanding Title IX at Drexel](#)

[Office of Equality & Diversity](#)

[Human Resources – University Policies Page](#)

[Drexel Office of General Counsel](#)

[Drexel Office of the Ombuds](#)

## Meetings and Project Teams

*Research has shown that diverse groups outperform homogenous groups.*

#### BEST PRACTICES

- Choose people with different backgrounds and perspectives to work on projects together.
- Consider the meeting logistics (seating, order of speakers) and how they will encourage participation and signal that all members are valued.
- Be mindful of the impact of your response to others' input and ideas.
- Recognize when you look to the same people for input on a particular topic and consider expanding your perspective.
- Respond to input and ideas in a way that will send a message to the initiator that their input and ideas will be considered, even when they are not implemented.

## Office / Shared Spaces

#### BEST PRACTICES

- Improperly placed or laid area rugs or mats could make it difficult for people with mobility limitations to get around safely.
- Be mindful of the artwork / decorations you have displayed and the message that they send.
- Hiring Managers who have a new employee with special needs should consult with Disability Resources if special equipment or accommodations are necessary.
- Office furniture should be purchased using University preferred vendors, which includes diverse vendors.
- Consider whether the assignment of office or living space in your area is equitable and whether it reinforces cooperation and makes sense, or simply reinforces hierarchy and division.

#### IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Preferred Vendors including Diversity Vendors](#)

## Universal Design

*Universal Design is a concept which encourages the creation of aesthetic products and built environments that are usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status.*

## BEST PRACTICES

- In our everyday environment, we see examples of Universal Design all around us. For example, an automatic door opener at a grocery store not only allows a person in a wheelchair to access the building but also makes it easier for someone pushing a shopping cart, a parent pushing a child's stroller, the delivery person bringing in goods, and the person leaving with many bags, to gain access.
- People of all abilities and disabilities use accessibility features like curb cuts at intersections, elevators in tall buildings, and moving walkways at the airport.
- In this age of technology, many (with and without disabilities) are also finding that dictation software, autocorrecting, or text enlarging tools can enhance the way in which we access and send information, making it easier for us to work and learn.
- At work and at home, consider the arrangement and choice of furniture, as well as the inclusive development of materials and any changes to layout or other aspect of physical space.

- If you are feeling overwhelmed or overloaded, know when to ask for help. Whether it be a professional counselor, therapist, or a family member, knowing when you're maxed out is important for your mental and physical health.
- Take time to unwind: read a book or talk to a friend instead of continuing to focus on work.
- Nurture yourself by eating healthy foods, including physical activity in your daily routine, and getting enough sleep.
- Bolster your support system — join forces with co-workers or friends who can support you by holding you accountable for going to bed at a reasonable hour, hitting the gym at lunchtime, or making time to eat breakfast.
- Avoid using hours / quantity of time spent working as a proxy for assessing performance. It is an inaccurate measure of success and can pressure people into punishing schedules, which in turn diminishes the quality of their work. To illustrate this cycle, one recent study showed that coders who worked 60 hours per week produced less high-quality code than those who worked only 40 hours per week, but that those who worked more were seen as better employees. Avoid the competitions about how many hours were put in at the library or the office, and be proud of your achievements, not your exhaustion.

## Work-Life Balance

*Supporting work-life balance supports our diverse University community. People may have different needs, which may correlate to sex, or culture, or age, but also may not. Work-life balance is not an issue that is relevant only to employees. Students may face tremendous academic workloads that they find difficult to balance with a healthy and fulfilling personal life. Academic and professional success will prove elusive for individuals who are under excessive stress and not engaging in self-care.*

## BEST PRACTICES

- Be mindful of scheduling meetings after regular business hours or before 8 a.m.
- Set priorities: you cannot do everything.
- It is tempting to pick up responsibilities — including leadership roles — but learn how to say no and take on only what you can handle.

## IMPORTANT LINKS WITHIN DU

[Lactation Stations](#)

[A Healthier U](#)

[Drexel University Employee Assistance Program](#)





© 2017 Drexel University - All Rights Reserved

*Permission is granted to make use of The WIRED Guide with  
proper attribution to Drexel University.*

[drexel.edu/diversity](https://drexel.edu/diversity)