

Style Guide for Cultural Competency in NATA Projects

Purpose: The purpose of this style guide is to provide a resource, not a prescription, for NATA Committees and staff to be conscious of ways they can be more culturally aware in their projects. The goal is to make NATA projects more inclusive and culturally competent.

Words matter!

Principle: In any verbal, written communication or media, take a step back and review the specific language and terms used. Is language inclusive, appropriate and does it convey respect for all persons?

- **Use people first language:** Make personhood the foremost characteristic of every person.
 - “An athlete with an ACL tear” NOT “the ACL tear athlete”. “The man who is homeless” NOT “The homeless man”.
- **Be gender inclusive:** Avoid using words that refer to one gender.
 - Congressman = legislator, congressional representative
 - Chairman = chair, chairperson, coordinator
 - Gender Inclusive Language
- **Race vs. Ethnicity:** Understand the difference between words that describe race and those that describe ethnicity. This may require some additional research on your part before submitting final version of your product.
 - https://www.diffen.com/difference/Ethnicity_vs_Race
- **Allow self-identification:** Outwardly assigned categories and labels can be used to oppress groups, whereas self-identification gives power back to the individual. Use pronouns and group names. Here are some commonly used terms, please see the Appendix for additional rationale and resources.
 - E.g. Native American, Alaskan Native, American Indian (not Indian or Eskimo)
 - E.g. Asian (not oriental)
 - E.g. Black or African American
 - E.g. People of color (not colored people)
 - E.g. Use appropriate terminology and pronouns around the LGBTQ+ community
 - <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/identity>
- **Hispanic vs. Latinx:** These words describe different populations
 - Latinx = A person whose lineage is from Latin America
 - Hispanic = A person whose lineage is from a Spanish speaking country/area.
 - <https://medium.com/@puentera/what-is-latinx-64d333c22d6>
- **Religion:** Consider sensitive words surrounding religion. Be mindful of slang phrases if you do not know the origin.
 - Reference the NATA News [“Why Words Matter”](#)
- **Gender vs Sex:** Understand the difference and what message you are trying to convey
 - Sex = A biological assignment at birth based on outward anatomy
 - Gender = A social construct surrounding self-identification
 - <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/identity>

A picture is worth 1,000 words

Principle: Visual communication with members is important. The images used send a message, intended or not. Images also spread like wildfire. Stories of PR nightmares related to poor choice of images abound. NATA leaders should be conscientious and intentional in their use of images to convey messages related to NATA projects.

As a NATA committee member please ask yourself, “**Are images we are using on an NATA project representative of the population depicted?**” Take a moment to think about the target population (e.g., whether that is patients, athletic trainers, other healthcare providers). For example, if all pictures of patients are Caucasian, that unintentionally sends a message that athletic trainers only serve Caucasian populations. Another example, if all pictures of patients showcase student-athletes in traditional athletics settings, it fails to represent the diversity of settings in which athletic trainers work.

In addition to asking if the image represents the population depicted, does the image:

- Overtly sexualize the subject, especially women or children?
- Body-shame its subject for being too fat, thin, ugly, unhealthy, etc.?
- Play into racist or international stereotypes, such as the “poor African” or the “All-American” blonde family?
- Play into sexist stereotypes, such as a male doctor or female housewife?
- “Out” people as LGBTQ+ who might not be out?
- Is the image controversial in such a way that it could alienate NATA membership?

Start with the right people at the table (include diverse voices from the get-go) and unashamedly seek consultation when needed. An individual committee member should not be the only person reviewing image selection for an NATA project. Include or consult with diverse individuals—**ask the question “Does this image effectively convey our INTENDED message, without any UNINTENDED effects on specific populations?”**

Resource: A Progressive’s Style Guide,

https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.sumofus.org/images/SUMOFUS_PROGRESSIVE-STYLEGUIDE.pdf

<http://www.glenguyton.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Ten-Simple-Tips-for-Culturally-Competent-Ads.pdf>

Economics (money matters)

Principle: NATA committees are always working on many valuable projects. Some of these projects have economic impact for specific populations (e.g., preceptors, committee members, athletes, parents, faculty). For example, an educational service project on proper fitting football equipment, could benefit youth sports, but also may have financial impact for parents who cannot afford to buy new equipment. This includes making recommendations for properly fitted shoes and clothing. Use terms like, “try to replace shoes” versus “replace shoes and make sure clothes aren’t too big.” Does the project acknowledge costs, provide resources, and avoid shaming parents? For example, a project to increase educational standards requires new preceptor training. Is it assumed that all preceptors or all institutions can & will absorb the cost?

What economic biases might occur due to this assumption (e.g. disadvantage schools with smaller budgets, preceptors without CEU budgets)?

Consider social-cultural determinants of health:

- Income and social status – e.g., availability of resources to meet daily needs, poverty
- Education – e.g., quality schools
- Physical environment – e.g., housing, physical hazards, pollution, transportation
- Social support networks – e.g., neighborhood, peers
- Social norms – e.g., discrimination
- Language barriers – e.g., availability of resources
- Access – e.g. LGBTQ+ individuals are less likely to seek out health care and preventative services

Questions to ask:

- Who does the project benefit, and does the socioeconomic factor of the patients/students/clinicians/community have an impact on the effectiveness of the project?
- Does the project increase preexisting economic disparities present in society?

Consider barriers to economic issues:

- Insufficiency of resources
- Poor infrastructure
- Information barriers

Questions to ask:

- What are the unintended expenses that accompany this project?
- Are there additional methods to off-set the cost?
- What potential resources exist to address the barriers identified?
- Is there a necessary infrastructure for the project to be successful?
- Does everyone have access to the information necessary to make the project successful?

Resource:

<https://academic.oup.com/heapol/article/21/3/157/654792>

<http://www.who.int/hia/evidence/doh/en/>

<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/about/foundation-health-measures/Determinants-of-Health>

Scheduling Sensitivity

Principle: Respect individual’s preferences by avoiding conflict with religious holidays or events whenever possible. For example, be aware of religious holidays when scheduling committee activities whether internal (e.g. conference calls, meetings) or external (e.g. deadlines for grant applications, etc.). Similarly, consider other potential non-religious conflicts as well. For example, if you wouldn’t schedule something for July 4th, would it be appropriate to schedule it on Martin Luther King Day?

Share Resources

Principle: Cultural competence is the responsibility of all individuals, groups, committees, and associations. When material related to cultural competence is discovered and/or developed, it should be shared. Work with the NATA staff liaison to add links to the new materials and/or resources to the Cultural Competence webpage on the NATA site. Also consider reaching out to other groups/committees to review materials to receive additional input regarding cultural competency of the work being developed.

Appendix

It can be difficult to know when and how to use the many terms for people of the many backgrounds in the US and around the world. Not to mention that it is common for appropriate terms to change over time; A term that was acceptable in 1980 perhaps should not be used today. Provided here are some additional descriptions to help in understanding some of the group terms as well as some additional resources.

African American, Black: Hyphenate when using African American as an adjective. Not all black people are African Americans (if they were born outside of the United States). Let a subject's preference determine which term to use. In a story in which race is relevant and there is no stated preference for an individual or individuals, use black because it is an accurate description of race. Be as specific as possible in honoring preferences, as in Haitian American, Jamaican American or (for a non-U.S. citizen living in the United States) Jamaican living in America. In news copy, aim to use black as an adjective, not a noun; when describing a group, use black people instead of just blacks.

Asian American: Similar to African American uses (see above). Additionally, it is important to note that many people prefer to utilize their country of origin (e.g. Japanese American, Korean American) versus Asian American.

Native American: Frequently the terms Native American and American Indian are used interchangeably. Remember, however, that these terms are related to a group of 2 or more people from different tribal affiliations. Use the tribal specific terms (e.g., Navajo, Iroquois, Miwok, Seminole) whenever referring to a specific person or specific group of people. Alaska Native refers specifically to the Indigenous people of Alaska which includes people from numerous groups (e.g. Inupiat, Tlingit, Haida, Yu'pik). The term Eskimo should be avoided. Never use Indian – the term Indian refers to people from India, rather than the native people who inhabited the Americas prior to the arrival of Europeans. When using the word indigenous, it should be capitalized when referring to Indigenous people but not for indigenous plants, for example.

LGBTQ+: In order to stay respectful when writing about transgender people or the issues facing the LGBTQ+ community, use terms like:

- Gender Identity
- Gender Expression
- Transgender
- Non-Binary
- Queer
- Transition
- Them/They/Their

When writing about LGBTQ+ issues, do not use terms like:

- Transgendered
- Transgenderism
- Sex-change
- Biologically male/female

Here is a listing of other specific guides which may be of help:

- National Association of Black Journalists
 - www.nabj.org/page/styleguide: This guide provides the ability to look up a wide variety of specific words/terms to help determine appropriate usage.
- Native American Journalists Association
 - https://najanewsroom.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NAJA_Reporting_and_Indigenous_Terminology_Guide.pdf
 - <https://najanewsroom.com/reporting-guides/>
- The Association of LGBTQ Journalists
 - <https://www.nlgja.org/stylebook/>
 - <https://www.nlgja.org/stylebook/terminology/>