

University ends use of Mr, Ms and Mrs

25th July, 2018

*Title

*First name

*Last name

A university in South Africa has decided to no longer use titles such as Mr, Ms or Mrs. The University of the Witwatersrand said it will stop using these titles on any form of communication with students. It took this decision to support

people who were transgender or gender non-conforming. A statement from officials read: "The university realizes that it is invalidating and distressing for a person who, for example, was...female at birth but identifies as male to be constantly addressed by a non-affirming title." It added that people who were transgender or non-binary are choosing the gender-neutral title "Mx," which is legally recognized in many countries across the world.

The decision has been widely welcomed by the university community. The university said it, "opposes all public and private discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression". A university official said: "We want people in our university community to feel safe, supported and ultimately respected. As a transgender person myself, it means a lot being in a space which is welcoming." A law professor said the action was, "the most wonderful moment for true equality across a multitude of spectrums". She added: "It's a triumph for an understanding of the diversity of gender identity, sexual orientation and the right to be respected for whomever you are."

Sources: timeslive.ca.za / bbc.com / ewn.co.za

Writing

We no longer need titles like Mr and Mrs. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

university / titles / communication / decision / gender / transgender / female / Mx / welcomed / community / discrimination / safe / space / professor / diversity / respect

True / False

- The article said a university will stop using the titles 'Dr' and 'professor'. T / F
- The university wants to stop using titles to support transgender people. T / F
- The university said it can be distressing for people to have to use titles. T / F
- Many transgender people are choosing to use the title 'Mx'. T / F
- The university's decision is very unpopular in the community. T / F
- The university said it wants people to feel safe. T / F
- A law professor said the university's action did little for equality. T / F
- The professor said taking away titles was disrespectful. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. such as | a. variety |
| 2. form | b. help |
| 3. support | c. prejudice |
| 4. distressing | d. approved of |
| 5. choosing | e. kind |
| 6. welcomed | f. victory |
| 7. discrimination | g. opting for |
| 8. ultimately | h. like |
| 9. triumph | i. basically |
| 10. diversity | j. upsetting |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of the titles used in your country?
- What title do you like to be called by?
- What do you think of titles?
- Should titles tell people what gender someone is?
- Why do we have titles?
- Why do some countries have titles and others don't?
- What do you think of the gender-neutral title "Mx"?
- Should there be more titles to recognize all kinds of people?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. no longer use titles such | a. of gender identity |
| 2. stop using these titles on any | b. were transgender |
| 3. support people who | c. university community |
| 4. female at | d. equality |
| 5. legally recognized | e. as Mr, Ms or Mrs |
| 6. widely welcomed by the | f. respected |
| 7. discrimination on the basis | g. birth |
| 8. feel safe, supported and ultimately | h. in many countries |
| 9. the most wonderful moment for true | i. you are |
| 10. whomever | j. form of communication |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Do you like selecting Mr, Ms, etc. on online forms?
- Is asking people to use one of three titles a form of discrimination?
- What other things should change to make transgender people feel safe?
- How much equality is there in your country?
- How much equality do transgender people have in your country?
- How good is the university's action?
- What questions would you like to ask the university?

Spelling

- decided to no rongle use titles
- It took this icdneosi
- proupts people who were transgender
- idfeienist as male
- choosing the gender-nralute title
- elgalyl recognized
- wlydei welcomed
- public and ptviear discrimination
- a university fifaciol
- true tuaeqliy
- It's a mputhir
- the right to be ertepcsde

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. e	3. b	4. j	5. g
6. d	7. c	8. i	9. f	10. a

Role Play

Role A – Job Applications

You think job applications is the most important time to use titles. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their times. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): meeting royals, introducing friends or talking to customers.

Role B – Meeting Royals

You think meeting royals is the most important time to use titles. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their times. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): job applications, introducing friends or talking to customers.

Role C – Introducing Friends

You think introducing friends is the most important time to use titles. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their times. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): meeting royals, job applications or talking to customers.

Role D – Talking to Customers

You think talking to customers is the most important time to use titles. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their times. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): meeting royals, introducing friends or job applications.

Speaking – Using Titles

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important times to use titles at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| • introducing friends | • job applications |
| • talking to customers | • e-mails |
| • at meetings | • speeches |
| • meeting royals | • degree certificates |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.