

PHILLIPS SEMINARY

Inclusive Language Policy Phillips Theological Seminary

As a Christian and theological community, we recognize the important role that language plays in shaping, perpetuating, or reshaping our lives. We know that language is not merely a collection of inert tools that enable us to “say what we want to say,” but is a powerful and subtle force that orders the forms and values through which we perceive and interpret our world.

As Christians and leaders of religious communities, we commit ourselves to avoid using language that damages or excludes persons or perpetuates demeaning stereotypes.

This includes language that establishes or reinforces bias against people because of their race, gender, ethnic group, age, profession, religion, economic status, national group, sexual orientation, marital status, etc.

- Phillips recognizes that there is room for legitimate differences of opinion on such matters and does not attempt to prescribe in detail precisely which words, expressions, and usage are acceptable.
- Phillips is not attempting to impose an ideology or arbitrary standard on anyone. It is attempting to raise consciousness in regard to language that may be offensive to some.
- Phillips also encourages the community to be aware of the problem of language with reference to God. We need to be sensitive to the metaphorical, analogical nature of all our language about God, and to be aware that the Bible and Christian tradition use feminine and non-human as well as masculine images and categories for speaking of God.

(See “Academic Policies” in the current version of the PTS Catalog at <https://www.ptstulsa.edu/current-students/academic-resources/>.)

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