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Spelman College Opens Up to Transgender Women

by Winnie McCroy
EDGE Editor
Monday Sep 25, 2017

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In a September 5 letter to the community, the president of a historically Black women's college said that the school would open to consideration the admission of women regardless of their gender assignment at birth.

President Mary S. Campbell **wrote** that the school's mission calls for them to graduate global citizens who are agents of meaningful change in the world.

To that end, they are launching a new strategic five-year plan that takes "into account evolving definitions of gender identity in a changing world and taking steps to ensure that our policies

and plans reflect those changes in a manner that is consistent with our mission and the law."

After assembling a task force of faculty, staff, students, alumnae, and trustees and benchmarking their policies against other single-sex learning institutions, they released a set of recommendations to the college. The result was that Spelman College shall now "consider for admission women students including students who consistently live and self-identify as women, regardless of their gender assignment at birth. Spelman does not admit male students, including students who self-identify and live consistently as men, regardless of gender assignment at birth."

Spelman said that this will affirm its core mission to educate and develop high-achieving Black women. The policy will go into effect for those enrolling in the 2018-19 academic year, after which an implementation committee will convene to consider the impact the policy has had on the campus.

A story in [AJC.com](#) notes that Spelman will continue to identify as a 'woman's college.' To that end, transgender students who identify as men will not be admitted, although they will be allowed to finish their studies if they transition after they've enrolled.

In that article, some students were critical of the change, while others were proud of their progress.

"I applaud my beloved alma mater's proactive stance while still honoring the institution's traditions," said Charmagne Helton, a 1994 graduate. "I am as proud of Spelman College as I was the first moment I set foot on campus more than 25 years ago."

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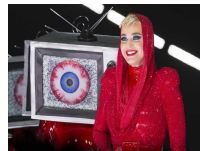
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