

A Student's Guide to Improving College Campus Climates for LGBTQIA students

Diversity

Unity

EQUALITY



Disclaimer

The following guide is a collection of resources and ideas from various professional and student sources. We do not take credit for any of the work found in this guide. The purpose is solely to describe the universal outline of improving college campus climates for LGBTQIA students, and help generate ideas to take the next step on your unique campus. This guide will continuously change as students and professionals contribute resources and ideas. If you have any questions about the material, would like to contribute to the guide, or want to share your story, please contact Matt Troy at matthew.troy@greensboro.edu.

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Lesbian- A woman who is attracted to women

Gay- A man who is attracted to men

Bisexual- A person who is attracted to two sexes or two genders, but not necessarily simultaneously or equally

Transgender/transsexual- A transgendered person has a “gender identity” that differs from the social expectations of the physical sex they were born with. Transgender is an umbrella term for transsexuals.

Queer - A simple label to explain a complex set of sexual behaviors and desires

Intersex- A person born with “sex chromosomes,” external genitalia, or internal reproductive systems that are not considered “standard” for either male or female

Asexual- Having no evident sex or sex organs. In usage, may refer to a person who is not sexually active or not sexually attracted to other people

*The above definitions are provided by the Gender Equity Resource Foundation at the University of California Berkeley. More definitions and other resources can be found at http://geneg.berkeley.edu/lgbt_resources_definiton_of_terms#asexual

Important Definitions

Ally- Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own. Reaching across differences to achieve mutual goals

Gender Identity- The gender that a person sees themselves as. This can include refusing to label oneself with a gender. Gender identity does not cause sexual orientation

Heterosexism- Assuming every person to be heterosexual therefore marginalizing persons who do not identify as heterosexual. It is also believing heterosexuality to be superior to homosexuality and all other sexual orientations.

Homophobia/Biphobia/Transphobia- The irrational fear and intolerance of people who are homosexual, of homosexual feelings within one's self, of people who are bisexual, or people who are transgendered. This assumes that heterosexuality is superior.

Internalized oppression- The process by which an oppressed person comes to believe, accept, or live out the inaccurate stereotypes and misinformation about their group

Institutional oppression- Arrangement of a society used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media education, religion, economics, etc.

Invisible Minority- A group whose minority status is not always immediately visible, such as some disabled people and LGBTIQ people. This lack of visibility may make organizing for rights difficult.

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Statistics

Only **7 percent** of colleges and universities in the United States have adequate resources and a comfortable campus climate for LGBTQIA students.

Dr. Sue Rankin, Penn State University

82.9% of LGBT students report that faculty or staff never intervened or intervened only some of the time when present and homophobic remarks were made.

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network

64.3% of LGBT students report feeling unsafe at their school because of their sexual orientation.

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network

68% of adolescent gay males use alcohol and 44% use other drugs. 83% of lesbians use alcohol and 56% use other drugs.

Columbia University HIV center

Who, What, Where, When, and Why

Who can make a difference?

Everyone! Whether you decide to stand up for someone facing discrimination or organize a mass event on campus, every small contribution will impact this nationwide movement.

What can I do?

Be the voice on your campus. As a role model, gather support and don't try to make a difference on your own. Be willing to fail and try new paths. Follow the guide, get creative, stay positive, and never give up.

Where do I start?

Trying to research the climate at your college or university on your own can be very difficult. Interview students to learn about issues they face or have seen on campus, and find somebody to talk to about them. The dean of students, director of women and gender studies, and school counselors are great people with whom to share your discoveries. After you find someone to support your aspirations to change the campus climate, share some of the "Getting Started" resources found in the guide for help filling them out.

When will change happen?

Once you gather student support and have analyzed your unique campus, set a timeline with reasonable goals. Large campuses and distance between administration and students may create many obstacles to reach your goal. Do not be discouraged. Be patient but persistent, and allow for flexibility in your timeline.

Why should I do it?

Hate crimes and verbal abuse are not the only issues LGBTQIA students face. As you will see from the six page campus climate index, students struggle with many "invisible" problems on campus. Support from LGBTQIA allies helps to increase awareness and reduce the number of challenges LGBTQIA students face at your college or university.

Assessing the Campus Climate

Every college and university campus is unique, so there is no single solution to combat the many challenges facing LGBTQIA students. However, many universal questions can be asked to colleges and universities that fall under several major categories, such as evaluating the school's policies and its overall institutional commitment to improving the campus climate. This assessment does not include every challenge facing an LGBTQIA student, but it will be useful in understanding the overall atmosphere.

The following professional tools are owned and copyrighted by Campus Pride. The leadership checklist and campus climate index have proven to be highly effective in increasing awareness and evaluating overall campus climates.

Leadership Checklist- Before requesting that a staff member or professional fills out the full campus climate index, this brief checklist will show your dedication to improving the college campus climate and demonstrate the need of an analysis.

Link: <http://www.campuspride.org/images/CP%20Student%20Leader%20Checklist.pdf>

Campus Climate Index- Once there is an agreement to pursue analysis, this six page survey will address the major categories of a four-year college or university. A faculty, staff, or professional should complete this survey.

Link: <http://www.campusclimateindex.org/details/overall.aspx>

Forming a Gay-Straight Alliance

One of the best ways to organize allies and LGBTQIA students is to create a Gay-Straight Alliance on campus!

What is a Gay-Straight Alliance?

A Gay-Straight Alliance is a safe and supportive environment for LGBTQIA students and their straight allies. The organization typically focuses on increasing awareness, combating social injustices on campus, and hosting social events free of harassment and verbal abuse.

Why should my campus have a Gay-Straight Alliance?

Homophobia is very popular on all college campuses and the many visible and invisible challenges on campus deserve greater attention. LGBTQIA students should have a safe space on campus to be themselves without a fear of discrimination.

How do I form a Gay-Straight Alliance?

Find a knowledgeable and trustworthy advisor for your organization. Host an interest meeting and gather support on campus. Be a leader and offer leadership opportunities for both LGBTQIA students and allies. After following your college's unique guidelines to become an official organization, register your Gay-Straight Alliance with the GSA network to receive resources and be linked to the thousands of GSAs across the country.

FUN FACTS

The first Gay-Straight Alliance was founded in 1988 by Kevin Jennings, a straight student at Concord Academy in Concord, Massachusetts.

The number of Gay-Straight Alliances in the United States increased from 1,000 to 4,000 from 2001 to 2008.

-Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network

Safe Zone Training

What is it?

Safe Zone training is specifically geared toward the type of institution and increases the overall campus community's understanding of the issues LGBTQIA individuals face on campus. As a result, trainees receive the Safe Zone symbol to display publicly on campus to show that their office, dorm room, etc. is a safe zone for LGBTQIA students.

Why take it?

Safe Zone training is one of the best improvements to a college campus environment. Allies can be found on every campus, but without a movement to publicly display support, LGBTQIA students will be unaware of safe places on campus.

Who should take it?

Safe Zone training should be *voluntary*. By forcing people to complete training and receive the Safe Zone symbol, you may create spaces on campus that are not true safe zones. However, faculty and staff, counselors, residential advisors, team captains, and club and organization presidents are a great targeted audience for invitations.

How do I bring Safe Zone training on my campus?

Because each campus is unique, there is no "Center for Safe Zone Training." However, professionals at other colleges and universities may be able to help you find a nearby training session similar to your campus needs, or give you the resources available to start your own training. Model Safe Zone trainings can be found at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Western Michigan University, Indiana University, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Fun Activism Ideas

Stop the Hate Board- Get creative with a Stop the Hate board on a residence hall or other visible place on campus to show ally support.

No Hate Photos- Host a photoshoot on campus with students who wear white t-shirts, have duct tape over their mouth, and write NO H8 on their cheeks. This nationwide campaign and pictures can be found at <http://www.noh8campaign.com/>.

Homelessness Sleepout- Sleep outside on campus to represent the strong number of LGBTQIA teenagers kicked out of their homes. Make signs out of cardboard with statistics and display gay pride symbols to clearly demonstrate your purpose.

Start a campaign- Contact one of the program coordinators in your region for a campaign guide, resources, and support at <http://www.gsanetwork.org/about-us/contact>. The top 5 campaigns can be found at <http://www.gsanetwork.org/get-involved/change-your-school>.

Verbal Judo- Learn how to talk to those who discriminate and bully LGBTQIA students and their allies with by hosting a tactical communication training session at <http://verbaljudo.org/>.

Label without consequence- Have students label each other with sticky “name” tags without any restrictions to generate discussion on what it’s like to be labeled without consequence.

Movie Night- A list of movies and documentaries are available in the resource section in the following pages.

Poetry Night- A list of popular LGBT themed poetry is available in the resource section in the following pages.

Flash mob- Express yourself through dance by organizing LGBTQIA students and their allies to have a flash mob on campus.

Gay and Lesbian Theater- Encourage the theater department to do a play about LGBT history. A list of plays is available in the resource section.

Attend a rally- Check out local and worldwide conferences, events, and rallies at <http://gaycityusa.com>

Host an artist- A list of musicians, poets, and inspirational speakers on LGBTQIA topics is available in the resource section.

Mark your calendars!

Participate in these holidays by wearing pins, bracelets, or hosting on campus events to increase awareness and celebrate the lives of those lost to hate

September 23rd	Celebrate Bisexuality Day
October	LGBT History Month
October 11th	National Coming out Day
October 23-29th	Asexual Awareness Week
October 26th	Intersex and Asexual Awareness Day
November 13-21st	Transgender Awareness Week
November 20th	Transgender Day of Remembrance
December 1st	World Aids Day
January 23-27th	National No Name-Calling Week
January 27th	International Holocaust Remembrance Day
April	Sexual Assault Awareness Month
April 15th	National Day of Silence
June	LGBT Pride Month
June 27-29th	Stonewall Riot Memorial Service
Make your own!	Ally Week

**Resources for these days are available on the following page*

Holiday Resources

Celebrate Bisexuality Day- Find resources at <http://biresource.net> and check out the Facebook Events

LGBT History Month- Educate students on a revered LGBT figure each day of the month. <http://lgbthistorymonth.com/>

National Coming Out Day- Developed by the Human Rights Campaign—resources available at <http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/national-coming-out-day>, and demonstration on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSTtGSUJHMs>

Asexual Awareness Week- Find resources and information at <http://asexualawarenessweek.com/index.html> and look for Facebook events

Intersex Awareness Day- “Ideas for Action” can be found at <http://www.intersex-awareness-day.org/ideas/>

Transgender Awareness Week- Find resources from a project of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition at <http://www.transpeoplespeak.org/?q=node/16> and inform students with news from The National Center for Transgender Equality at <http://www.transequality.org/>

World Aids Day- Find resources at <http://www.worldaidsday.org/act-aware.php>

National No Name Calling Week- Find resources at <http://www.nonamecallingweek.org/cgi-bin/iowa/home.html>

Holiday Resources

International Holocaust Remembrance Day- Read information about this day at http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/ihrd/comment_post.php

Sexual Assault Awareness Month- Find tips on creating a campaign by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center at http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/file/SAAM/SAAM_2011-CreateCampaign.pdf. Consider the lack of education on LGBTQIA sexual violence.

National Day of Silence- Hand out cards that say, "Please understand my reasons for not speaking today. I am participating in the Day of Silence, a national youth movement protesting the silence faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their allies in schools. My deliberate silence echoes that silence, which is caused by harassment, prejudice, and discrimination. I believe that ending the silence is the first step toward fighting these injustices. Think about the voices you are not hearing today. What are you going to do to end the silence?"

Stonewall Riot Memorial Service- Find information about the tragedy on June 27-29th in New York City at http://www.stonewallvets.org/Stonewall_Era_Club_People_Rebellion.htm

Make your own Ally Week- Receive free Ally Week posters and other advertisement material for your event at www.studentorganizing.org

Resources

This guide is available online at reclaimingdemocracy.us under the resources tab.

Find out about conferences and events to spread awareness and advocacy in North Carolina at equalitync.org.

Model Campuses

The following campuses received a 4.5 or 5 star rating on the Campus Climate Index

Small: Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts: Learn about their Rainbow Room.
<https://www.amherst.edu/campuslife/rainbow>

Medium: American University in Washington D.C: Check out the LGBTQIA resource center
<http://www.american.edu/ocl/glbta/>

Large: The Pennsylvania State University in University Park, PA: Link to the LGBTQIA resource center <http://www.sa.psu.edu/lgbt/>

Local: University of North Carolina at Greensboro in Greensboro, NC: UNC-G Pride page
<http://pride.uncg.edu/about/>

Books

General

The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students by Shane L. Windmeyer

The Princeton Review: Gay and Lesbian Guide to College Life by Princeton Review

Inspiration for LGBT students and their allies by team of authors

For Fraternities and Sororities

Brotherhood: Gay Life in College Fraternities by Shane L. Windmeyer

Out on Fraternity Row by Lambda 10 Project, Shane L. Windmeyer and Pamela W. Freeman

Secret Sisters by Pamela W. Freeman and Shane L. Windmeyer

Fraternity and Sorority Anti-Homophobia Training Manual

Resources

Movies

Christian

For the Bible Tells Me So by Daniel Karlake

Through My Eyes by the Gay Christian Network

Transgender

The Lives of Transgender People by Genny Beemyn and Susan Rankin

Nina Here Nor There: My Journey Beyond Gender by Nick Krieger

“Two Spirits” by Say Yes Quickly Productions, Riding the Tiger Productions, and Just Media

“Cruel and Unusual” by Janet Baus, Dan Hunt and Reid Williams

Gay Activism

Milk by Gus Van Sant

Hope Along the Wind: The Life of Harry Hay by Eric Slade

Stonewall by Nigel Finch

Intersex

XXY by Lucia Puenzo

Both by Lisset Barcellos

Theater

The Laramie Project by Moises Kaufman Film by Moises Kaufman

Rent by Jonathon Larson Film by Chris Columbus

Stop Kiss by Diana Son

Angels in America by Tony Kushner

Take me out by Richard Greenberg

Resources

Poetry

Lesbian

Love, Death, and the Changing of Seasons by Marilyn Hacker

The Dream of a Common Language: Poems 1974 to 1977 by Adrienne Rich

The Black Unicorn: Poems by Audre Lorde

Gay

Best Gay Poetry 2008 by Lawrence Schimel

Gay Haiku by Joel Derfner

Masquerade: Queer Poetry in America Till the end of World War II by Jim Elledge

Transgender

Trans by Hilda Raz

Shattered Memories: Prose, Poetry, and Short Stories from a Transgendered man by Lee Cole

My Mistress' Thighs by Giselle Renarde

Host an artist at your school

Visit the Campus Pride website to view the newly released 2011 “Hot Top 25” musicians, speakers, performance artists, and comedians at <http://www.campuspride.org/hotlist2011.asp>

Statistics

2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People Report by Susan Rankin, Warren Blumenfield, Genevieve Weber and Somjen Frazer

Youth Pride Inc. provides statistics on verbal harassment, isolation, homelessness, suicide, substance abuse, and several other topics on LGBT people at <http://www.youthprideri.org/Resources/Statistics/tabid/227/Default.aspx>