

# Academic Support Unit Assessment

Academic Equity, Diversity and Inclusion  
Gender and Sexuality Resource Center  
10/4/2019  
Molly Holmes, Director



**Northern Illinois  
University**

Division of Academic Affairs  
Gender and Sexuality Resource Center  
4/1/2019  
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## Academic Support Unit Assessment

### Part I: Assessment Plan

#### 1. History and Context

##### *History of NIU and Support for Women's and Gender Identity/Expression*

###### 1970s

Between the 1970s and today, there have been many milestones that marked our progression into the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center. During the 1970s and 1980s, NIU saw the formation of the Gay Liberation Front, formed as the university's first student organization supporting LGBT persons, through the end of the decade with the creation of University Resources for Women, located in Swen Parson Hall; this was accomplished with recommendations from NIU's Women's Programming Committee and Provost Wendell Harris. The 1980s saw the establishment of the NIU Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), and the Board of Regents establishing the Office of University Resources for Women.

###### 1980s and 1990s

Two significant developments came into existence at NIU During the 1990s: (1) the Presidential Commission on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Concerns, established as a result of NIU's Gay Liberation Front proposal to NIU President John LaTourette; and (2) NIU's The Task Force on Discrimination Based on Sexual orientation (1992).

###### 2000s

The pace and support for underrepresented sexual and gender identities increased throughout the decade of the 2000s, with the establishment of the Campus Climate Survey and The Task Force on Discrimination Based on Sexual orientation. Results from survey results and task force recommendations led to the opening of NIU's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center. In 2005, The Division of Student Affairs transitioned the Office of University Resources for Women to the Women's Resource Center (WRC).

###### Milestones

NIU celebrated two major milestones as the 2000s entered into their second decade with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Women's Resource Center (2009), during which updated branding (logo) was unveiled and a campus- community-wide book donation project occurred to mark the occasion. The LGBT Resource Center celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013 with a photo project to commemorate the event and to highlight NIU's accomplishments, as well as pointing the way to work yet to be done.

###### New Paradigms, Practices and Operations

New paradigms and practices related to gender identity and intersectionality helped inform an approach that would combine the Women's Resource Center and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,

Transgender Resource Center into a single entity, the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center (GSRC), in the summer of 2014.

At the time of the merger until late fall term 2016, the GSRC was organized within Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM) and reported to the Associate Vice President (AVP) for Diversity. In 2013, President Douglas Baker established a Vice President for Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI), and from 2013-2016, the GSRC, along with other cultural centers, collaborated in a shared model between SAEM and ADEI. In 2015, NIU embarked upon a university-wide Program Prioritization planning process to align campus resources with student impact. Recommendations from Program Prioritization, along with the departure of SAEM's AVP for Diversity prompted a reorganization. Beginning in November 2016, the GSRC, was reorganized within Division of Academic Affairs, reporting to the Vice President for Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Within FY 2018, the unit, along with all diversity and cultural centers (Asian American Resource Center, Center for Black Studies, and Latino Resource Center) began reporting to the Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Diversity.

Currently, the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center works to support students, faculty, and staff at Northern Illinois University by providing resources, programs, and support on topics of gender and sexuality. The Center works to support the NIU community by offering opportunities through programming, advocacy initiatives, and space. These efforts help foster a sense of belonging, support, and inclusion of individuals of diverse genders and sexualities. This sense of belonging is key in student persistence and retention, particularly for LGBTQ and minoritized students.

### *Context*

Since the merger of the LGBT Resource Center and Women's Resource Center in 2014, the GSRC continues to respond to campus needs and social and academic understandings of gender and sexuality in dynamic ways, working to collaborate with more academic and support offices across campus. Each year, we strive to reach more students as well as involve more faculty and staff. We currently collaborate with two Presidential Commissions, the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) as well as the Presidential Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (PCSOGI) to share information, resources, and plan events. We provide a number of tailored trainings to academic departments and support units across the university. The Center has consistently held a number of events each year such as a kick off event to welcome incoming students and introduce them to our Center and resources, advised multicultural women's student organizations, held Lavender Graduation to honor LGBTQ graduating students, collaborated with PCSOGI to hold Pride Awards where students, faculty, and staff are honored for their allyship, and a number of educational and advocacy-based programs to support student learning, persistence, and retention.

## **2. Mission, Goals and Objectives**

### *Mission Statement*

In alliance with the vision and mission of Northern Illinois University, our Center acknowledges the historical impacts of women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer identities. We are a

home away from home for all persons, inclusive of sexual and gender identities, and all forms of masculinity and femininity.

Our Center serves as a central location for resources and support where acceptance of intersectional identities is encouraged and celebrated. Through student leadership development, advocacy, campus and academic engagement, and professional development opportunities, we collaborate with community, state, and national partners, alumni and other stakeholders to challenge societal constructs of gender and sexuality norms and promote social justice.

#### *Unit Goals and Objectives*

**Goal 1.** Create and sustain partnerships with academic and supportive departments and organizations to promote the retention of students

**Objective 1.1.** The Center, through programs such as Speakers Bureau, Womanist Wednesday, and other educational programs will present to and engage with academic and supportive departments, and organizations. These programs will share the experiences of NIU's LGBTQ community individuals' lived experiences and promote awareness, allyship, and inclusivity on NIU's campus.

**Assessment Method(s):** Speakers Bureau Program Evaluation; tracking participation

**Target(s):** Annually, the Speakers Bureau will participate in at least 10 panels campus wide.

**Objective 1.2.** The Center, in collaboration with Housing and Residential Services will provide affordable, inclusive, and affirming housing with the LGBTQ living community. This living community will provide students opportunity to connect with resources and support.

**Assessment Method(s):** Tracking number of new and returning residents through floor rosters

**Target(s):** LGBTQ floor will be at or near capacity; interest and participation will increase each year

**Goal 2.** Provide students with experiences to develop as culturally-competent professional leaders

**Objective 2.1.** The GSRC, through the program Speaker's Bureau, will provide experiences for Speaker's Bureau panelists that promote development of culturally competent professionalism through monthly meetings. The GSRC will also promote opportunities to develop culturally competent leaders through building awareness and strategies for inclusion for audience members of Speaker's Bureau.

**Assessment Method(s):** Program Evaluation; student panelist reflection, tracking participation

**Target(s):** Each panelist will have opportunity to reflect upon their participation in Speaker's Bureau and how that leads to their cultural competence and leadership development at the end of each panel and in monthly meetings. Panelists will also be asked to engage in self-reflection regarding their leadership development and cultural competence after each panel they deliver.

Audience members will be given opportunities to engage with topics of inclusion, power, privilege, and information about allyship to help build their cultural competence and leadership on campus.

**Objective 2.2.** The GSRC, in collaboration with Housing and Residential Services, will provide residents of the LGBTQ living community to learn from engaged staff and faculty and developing self awareness of skills and areas for growth.

**Assessment Method(s):** Tracking student participation

**Target(s):** Each resident on the floor will meet with the Community Advisor to discuss growth, development, and opportunities for engagement on and off the residence floor.

**Goal 3.** Connect and engage students through networking opportunities with peers, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners

**Objective 3.1.** The GSRC will create and facilitate quality programming that centers gender and sexuality across campus, providing opportunities for students to engage with peers, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners.

**Assessment Method(s):** Program goal review with Center Goals; tracking participation

**Target(s):** 100% of programs offered will provide opportunities for students to engage with peers, faculty, staff, alumni, and/or community partners; programs will engage at least 10 students/participants per program

**Objective 3.2.** The Gender and Sexuality Resource Center will facilitate the NIU LGBTQ Floor for a minimum of 8 students each year.

**Assessment Method(s):** Quarterly one-on-one with floor's community advisor; tracking student retention.

**Target(s):** A minimum of 8 students will live on LGBTQ floor; each resident will meet with Community Advisor each semester.

**Goal 4.** Create opportunities for all to learn about the impact of privilege and equity and how to honor supportive spaces by marginalized populations

**Objective 4.1.** Gender and Sexuality Resource Center will create and facilitate educational programming about gender and sexuality topics, centering power, privilege, and equity, through programs such as Womanist Wednesday, Crafting Gender, Period Project at NIU Campaign, and Speaker's Bureau.

**Assessment Method(s):** Tracking participation; program evaluations

**Target(s):** Programs will reach a minimum of 10 participants per program

**Objective 4.2.** Gender and Sexuality Resource Center will create and facilitate LGBTQ Ally Training and tailored LGBTQ Trainings.

**Assessment Method(s):** Program Evaluation; Tracking participation and completion of Ally Training

**Target(s):** 85% of Ally Training attendees will indicate a rise in awareness of LGBTQ identities in their evaluation form.

### 3. Assessment Methods

**ASSESSMENT METHODS TABLE**

Assessment Method	Explanation			
	Description	Assessment-Level Target <sup>a</sup>	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible
Tracking Program Participation	At events, the number of participants will be tracked and recorded	Reaching a minimum of 10 students per program	Each program offered	Assistant Director
Tracking LGBTQ Floor Participation	Counting number of students living on LGBTQ floor	Reaching threshold of 8 students living on floor	Beginning and End of Each semester	Director
Speaker’s Bureau Program Evaluations	Attendees will be given evaluation after Speaker’s Bureau panels. Instrument asks attendees.....	85% of participants indicate learning and/or awareness about gender and sexuality topics.	Following each Speaker’s Bureau Panel	Graduate Research Assistant for LGBTQI Programs
Speaker’s Bureau Self-Reflection Prompts	Each panelist will be given a reflection prompt about their cultural competence and leadership development in monthly meetings and after each panel session.	90% of panelists will demonstrate self-reflection about their cultural competence via reflection prompt	Following each Speaker’s Bureau Panel	Graduate Research Assistant for LGBTQI Programs
LGBTQ Ally Training Evaluation Survey	Survey asks participants to rate their rise in awareness, learning, and	85% of participants indicate learning and/or awareness about LGBTQ identity.	Following each Ally Training session	Director
<p><i>Note.</i> <sup>a</sup> Assessment-level target is the level of performance the unit hopes to see on the assessment (e.g., 85% percent of participants demonstrate X, Y, and Z).</p>				



**ASSESSMENT METHODS-BY-OUTCOMES MATRIX**

<b>Assessment Method</b>	1. Create and sustain partnerships with academic and supportive departments and organizations to promote the retention of students	2. Provide students with experiences to develop as culturally competent professional leaders	3. Connect and engage students through networking opportunities with peers, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners	4. Create opportunities for all to learn about the impact of privilege and equity and how to honor supportive spaces needed by marginalized populations
Tracking Participation			S, I	S, I
Tracking LGBTQ Floor Participation	S, D		S, D	
Speaker’s Bureau Program Evaluations	S, D	S, D		
Speaker’s Bureau Self-Reflection Prompts	S, D	S, I		
LGBTQ Ally Training Evaluation Survey			S, I	S, D
LGBTQ Ally Training Completion	S, D			F, D