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Presidential Task Force Report Regarding the RIT Climate Study

for

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Faculty, Staff, and Students

October 22, 2012

“Diversity comes in a variety of shapes and sizes, colors and forms. We take a holistic approach to diversity at RIT, and it is interwoven into the fabric of the university.”

Dr. William Destler, President of RIT; 2011

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Section 1: Introduction

Task Force Charge

The Task Force regarding the Climate Study for GLBT Issues is charged to review the climate study data, and create a list of recommendations that addresses them. The recommendations will be based on the task force members’ further assessment, research, benchmarking, and examination of best practices regarding GLBT employment practices. (December 11, 2010)

1. How to read the report.

Section 1, the Introduction, frames the report with instructions regarding how to read the report, while providing an overview and description of the Task Force’s plan of action.

Section 2, is the Executive Summary providing an overview of the process, and an abbreviated listing of the report’s recommendations.

Section 3 is the official list of recommendations in a narrative format, and its most complete summary.

In Section 4, rationales and documentation are listed according to their relevance as related to each recommendation. Recommendations are categorized by topics; justifications are listed in alphabetical order by author’s last name according to each recommendation.

Occasionally, the name of a business or corporation will appear next to each justification (within brackets) to indicate who or what institution is the focus of the citation.

Finally, annotated comments are listed for each reference in Section 4; they are italicized with an asterisk under each reference to briefly highlight the contents of each article.

The Appendix is a listing of information and data obtained from the on campus assessment efforts (i.e., Focus Groups, Feedback surveys).

Section 5 is a Glossary, included for those who might wish to reference words, phrases or terms with which they are not familiar.

Section 6 is a listing of References that were used to support the writing of the document by various Task Force members.
2. Overview

1. In the winter of 2010, President Destler convened a Climate Study Task Force to examine issues as they related to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) issues. His charge to the committee was to:
   a. review the 2009 Climate Study data;
   b. research and generate a report of related data summarizing benchmarking or best practices (if required) for the development of a holistic report; and
   c. create a list of recommendations which addresses the issues raised in the data.

2. The creation of the Task Force came at an important time when:
   a. RIT welcomed its first Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion,
   b. legal marriage among members of the GLBT community was a national issue, and
   c. the needs of transgendered students were beginning to be addressed in higher education.

3. The creation of the Task Force gave RIT the opportunity to position itself to align with best practices for respect and inclusion of its GLBT community members. Since the inception of the Task Force,
   a. the Marriage Equality bill was approved in New York state,
   b. housing for transgendered first-year students has been approved in the residence halls, and
   c. RIT has begun to identify institutional measures regarding the four dimensions of performance related to its institutional document, The Framework for Inclusive Excellence.

4. Despite these forward moving initiatives and other significant (positive) considerations within the university climate, the task force reviewed the assessment data, and has identified areas which also require attention. The concerns were identified through four initiatives which comprised its plan of action.

C. The Task Force Plan

In order to determine the existence of any credible concerns, the Task Force launched four initiatives, based upon the review of the 2009 Climate Study. These four initiatives included:

1. Researching practices from other universities and corporations that emphasized employee and business practices that promote equity, visibility, recruitment, professional development, and retention of its GLBT employees.

2. Retaining a nationally-acknowledged consultant to conduct focus groups in the summer of 2011 and September of 2011 (see report in Appendix A).
   a. The process invited GLBT faculty and staff, self-identified allies and other stakeholders
i. The goal was to gather more information about the GLBT professional atmosphere. Approximately 60 people participated across three focus groups.

ii. Additionally, a clipboard survey was distributed (e-mail) campus wide for those unable to participate in the focus groups. An additional 27 individuals participated in the survey.

3. Recruiting students and asked them to voice their concerns in the focus groups; on average, one student representative attended the focus group sessions.

4. Reaching a carefully weighed decision to review GLBT student programs and services, and made recommendations regarding their status, due to the interrelated aspects of climate among faculty and staff, and also students.
Section 2: Executive Summary

General Findings:

1. In reviewing the data, the Task Force identified a fair amount of positive feedback as well as areas of concern. Specifically, the data suggested that RIT has not historically acknowledged the GLBT faculty and staff as a valuable component of the university’s diversity plan, or of its organizational mission. Both positive indicators and indicators reflecting challenges from within the campus environment are identified below.

Positive Indicators:

a. The presence of various Human Resource statements supporting GLBT populations (i.e., Affirmative Action, hiring equity)
b. Some summaries regarding some GLBT employee benefits were found on the RIT web site.
c. Some departments, offices and programs that were particularly cited as being considered GLBT-friendly,
d. A Safe Zone training program and some other limited educational programs which have been sporadically administered over the past decade, focusing on the development of awareness, knowledge, and skills for GLBT Allies; and
e. The presence of some undergraduate courses offered on GLBT related topics for academic credit.

Indicators of Challenge:

a. At the time of the Task Force’s convening, the GLBT community was still omitted in the goals and objectives of The Framework for Inclusive Excellence, originally published in 2010.
b. Consequently, the document outlines measures of success for women, AALANA, Deaf/Hard-of Hearing (DHH) and international undergraduate students. The absence of measures for the GLBT populations is a glaring omission suggesting that this population is less important to the administration. This can be perceived as being disrespectful and unfair.
c. There is a lack of programs for recruitment, retention, and promotion for GLBT faculty and staff.
d. Among those services, programs, and benefits found that were specific to the GLBT community, some were difficult to find, identify, or understand.
e. There are perceptions that:
   i. The employee grievance process is difficult to locate among RIT policies on the website, and
   ii. The employee grievance process is difficult to interpret and understand, with few protections for the GLBT (or any) employee against retaliation (active and passive) if complaints are brought forth.
1. This perception further led some participants to feel that RIT is not an entirely safe environment where one can be admittedly gay, bisexual, lesbian, or transgender.

b. Those support services, office space, and office/lounge spaces that are currently allotted to the GLBT Center are inadequate for the increased number of students using the space, as well as the increasing number of student organizations who wish to access the space.

i. This limited availability of resources and omission from *The Framework for Inclusive Excellence* creates opportunities for GLBT faculty, staff, and students to experience micro-aggressions, and to feel unwelcomed and unacknowledged - all of which can negatively affect performance, morale, and health.

These examples suggest an unintentional but potentially systematic inability to acknowledge the real climate issues for GLBT faculty, staff, and students, which thus inadvertently defaults to ideological systems of heterosexism.

The following set of recommendations (listed below, also elaborated in Section 3) is derived from these general findings. The recommendations reflect earnest efforts on the part of the Task Force to be fair and accurate. The Task Force did not take lightly the challenges posed when addressing and facilitating a truly inclusive environment addressed by Dr. Destler’s enlightened charge.

Nevertheless, the Task Force believes that this set of recommendations can re-enforce a vision that will be vital to enhancing the climate as addressed by Dr. Destler’s charge, and can contribute to the overall climate of RIT.

**Recommendations:**

The seventeen specific recommendations are listed below in an abbreviated format:

1. Incorporate the GLBT populations into RIT’s *Framework for Inclusive Excellence* and utilize national standards to define and measure university performance along the four *Inclusive Excellence* dimensions.

2. Establish a GLBT faculty/staff advisory board to the President.

3. Audit and update university policies to ensure equitable and inclusive benefits for GLBT faculty and staff.

4. Update media portrayals of RIT such that (through inclusive language and imagery) they are inclusive and mindful of the GLBT populations on campus and in the community.

5. Establish a meaningful senior administrative presence at GLBT celebrations.

6. Expand the definition of bias-related offense beyond the NYS definition to include gender identity and/or expression.
7. Review the facilities on campus for access and suitability to meet the needs of transgender faculty, staff and students.

8. Develop a recruitment strategy to solicit and attract openly-out GLBT faculty and staff.

9. Assess the process of reporting incidents related to GLBT harassment, discrimination, and bias-related incidents and responsiveness.

10. Support the creation of GLBT awareness and educational programs for administrators, supervisors, managers, department chairs, and other campus leaders.

11. Establish a full-time, permanent professional director for the GLBT Center (with competitive salary and benefits), and with both appropriate staff support positions and budget.

12. Identify a bi-annual (every other year) process or mechanism by which RIT can determine the size of its GLBT population for faculty, staff, and students (through optional self-disclosure), to assess and accommodate funding and support systems.

13. Create and ensure an on-going evaluation process regarding the newly-implemented procedure that allows transgender students to seamlessly change their preferred name and gender on all academic systems.

14. Initiate university-based scholarships for GLBT students of need and merit, in a comparable ratio to other underrepresented populations of need and merit (AALANA and women).

15. Assess the current GLBT (for-credit) course offerings to expand options for elective offerings, or enhance educational standards through implementation of at least a minor or concentration.

16. Review RIT’s preferred vendor and vendor lists to identify and conduct business with those local, regional and national vendors who do not discriminate according to gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation, as do numerous other Rochester-based and national corporations.

17. Design and establish an intentional strategy to identify, assess, and recruit prominent GLBT leaders for the Board of Trustees, for representation at all levels, and in adequate numbers.

**Summary**

These recommendations are fully expanded in Section 3; they reflect a holistic approach to the GLBT climate and they mirror many of the specific issues addressed by the assessments and data reviewed by the Task Force. These recommendations are offered respectfully to those offices and leaders on campus who already are working with their best use of resources to proactively address these issues. We believe that this set of recommendations can reinforce a vision that will be vital to enhancing the climate as addressed by Dr. Destler’s charge, and will contribute to the overall climate of RIT.
Section 3. Recommendations

1. Incorporate and fully integrate GLBT populations into the content of *The Framework for Inclusive Excellence* document. The document should also explicitly state that gender identity and expression are included in the RIT non-discrimination policies at all levels, and will be incorporated with their own performance measurements, in efforts paralleling those performance measures for women, AALANA, Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing (DHH), and international undergraduate students, faculty and staff.

To accomplish robust measures of institutional performance, we recommend that RIT participate in two national indices:

a. Regarding campus climate and student life:

   1) *The National Assessment Tool* which is a GLBT-friendly Campus Climate Index to assist in the following: reviewing the GLBT campus atmosphere; identifying ways to improve their campus life; and ultimately shaping the educational experience to be more inclusive, welcoming and respectful of GLBT and Ally people.

b. Regarding organizational and business structure:

   1) *Corporate Equality Index*, a business operations instrument that documents the degree to which organizations provide equity within and among the GLBT community, serving as a goal setting instrument for leaders, and then providing comparative data. (Data is available for more than a decade to analyze the degree to which organizations provide equity within the greater GLBT community.)

2. Establish a GLBT faculty/staff advisory committee that will advise the President and RIT administration, and Human Resources regarding GLBT related issues on campus.

3. Audit/review and update current university policies to ensure equitable and inclusive benefits for GLBT faculty and staff including:

a. Development of a university statement which clarifies the differences between marriage and domestic partnership benefits for GLBT and heterosexual employees who qualify appropriately for each.

b) Review RIT’s presentation of adoption assistance benefits for equity, clarity and accessibility for both married and unmarried employees, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. (For example, same sex *married* couples are not eligible to receive the same ‘second parent adoption benefits’ as same sex *unmarried* couples.)
c) Support the designation of a Human Resource staff person or a staffing system that is dedicated to addressing employment issues, and advising GLBT faculty and staff. This person would also be charged to stay current with federal, state and local laws, and their application to RIT employment benefits for the GLBT community.

   a. Establish an in-house system of uniform knowledge that will serve as basic competencies regarding GLBT issues and knowledge for Human Resource staff. Administer an orientation for new HR employees as well as on-going annual or bi-annual development, as appropriate.

d) Under the current policy, which follows federal law, tuition benefits for married GLBT and domestic partners are taxed. These RIT policies should be clarified.

   a. Identify the financial differences in taxation of benefits for the spouses of heterosexual versus the spouses of GLBT married couples.

   b. Offer to pay that difference as a standard benefit; develop a reimbursement plan for those who have had to pay with after-tax money since the effective date of their marriage.

e) Complete a broad-based assessment of the benefits for Transgender faculty and staff.

f) While RIT has made efforts to ensure uniform procedures that allow transgender faculty and staff to legally change their gender on employment and benefits records (when gender transition begins), procedures for these and other transgender issues require greater transparency and clarity. These are:

   a. Providing web-based, public guidelines for recruitment, and

   b. Providing (FAQ’s) frequently asked questions for employees and department managers to assist faculty and staff members who undergo gender transition (from male to female or female to male) in the workplace.

g.) The employee grievance process should be placed more visibly on the RIT website and assessed with RIT employees to determine the best format and content for interpretation and clarity.

   a. The process should be evaluated to determine the protections for faculty and staff who submit complaints, and the advocacy process to guide and safeguard them against retaliation.
4. Ensure inclusive language and imagery regarding the portrayal and inclusion of GLBT students, faculty and staff in announcements and marketing for official RIT events, and in public relations communications (brochures, web sites, etc.).
   a. The events should include (at least): Orientation, Parent Orientation, Convocation, Brick City Homecoming, The RIT Father/Daughter Dance, and Commencement.
   b. These revised graphic design and print media would avoid heterosexist and transphobic assumptions, language and exclusions.

5. Establish a meaningful senior RIT administrative presence (e.g. President, Provost, Vice Presidents, and Deans) at GLBT celebratory events (e.g. Rainbow Graduation Ceremony for GLBT students; 2013 Northeast LGBT conference.)

6. Expand the definition of bias-related offense beyond the definition provided by the New York State Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2000 to include gender identity or expression.

7. Review of transgender students’ needs regarding two issues:
   a. Evaluating facilities as related to access and suitability to meet the needs of transgender faculty, staff and students (e.g. restrooms, showers, locker room access, and housing accessibility). Establish policies and deadlines to include adequate and accessible gender neutral facilities in all new construction and renovations of existing buildings.
   b. Assessing the current health insurance coverage to determine if it is adequate for the needs of transgender students, and if needed, the costs for doing so.

8. In conjunction with Human Resources, develop a recruitment strategy to solicit and attract openly-out GLBT faculty and staff, with the same level of priority as all underrepresented AALANA and women faculty.
   a. Create a Grow Your Own and Future Faculty Program for GLBT faculty and staff.
   b. Provide appropriate gap funding to assist in the transition of newly hired GLBT faculty staff to transition them to tenure.

9. Assess the process of reporting incidents related to GLBT-related harassment and discrimination, and bias-related incidents, as well as the responsiveness of university offices to those incidents. The goal of the assessment would be to improve the sense of perceived safety for: individuals making a report; timeliness of the university response to these incidents; and to ensure that these incidents are treated with the same degree of immediacy and priority as other underrepresented populations on campus.
a. One example perceived to a historic issue was anti-gay graffiti that was written on the restroom walls and left there (not having been removed) long after the time of its report.

10. Support the creation of GLBT awareness and educational programs for administrators, supervisors, managers, department chairs and other campus leaders as they are appointed and hired, with on-going development throughout their tenure at RIT.

11. Establish a full-time, permanent professional director for the GLBT Center (with competitive salary and benefits), and with appropriate staff support positions. Ensure that the budget allows for an increasing menu of programs for educational and social development of GLBT students, faculty, staff, allies and the educational needs of the entire community.

12. Identify a bi-annual (every other year) process or mechanism by which RIT can determine the size of its GLBT population (through self-disclosure) for faculty staff and students, to accommodate funding, support systems.

a. Require that researchers and assessment professionals include the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender populations as identity choices in all institute surveys and research and funded research where demographic data is sought.

13. Ensure an on-going evaluation of the newly-implemented progress by which transgender students can seamlessly change their preferred name and gender on all academic systems (e-mail, SIS, myCourses, Student Health, Counseling Services, Academic Advising) so that no faculty or staff, other than those of the Registrar, Payroll, and other related employment or legal offices, with a need to know, may access their legal name and gender.

14. Initiate university-based scholarships for GLBT students of need and merit, in a comparable ratio to other underrepresented populations of need and merit (AALANA and women).

a. Concurrently, the Development and Alumni offices should work with the GLBT alumni to create an alumni affinity and gift-giving initiative.

15. Assess the current GLBT (for-credit) course offerings to expand options for elective offerings, or enhance educational standards through implementation of at least a minor or concentration.

16. As per other Rochester-based and national corporations, RIT should review its list of preferred (and other) vendors so as to identify and conduct business with those local, regional and national vendors who do not discriminate, according to gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Design and establish a strategy to identify, assess, and recruit prominent GLBT leaders for the Board of Trustees, for representation at all levels.
Section 4: References

In this section (Section 4), rationales and documentation are listed according to their relevance regarding each recommendation. Recommendations are listed in numerical order, but also re-categorized by topics; under each recommendation, each rationale and justification is listed in alphabetical order by author, within each recommendation.

Finally, each reference is annotated (in italics with an asterisk) directly following the citation, providing an overview of the article’s content or purpose as related to its content.

Recommendation 1: (Mission Statement)


*Publication demonstrates how the Red Cross includes the GLBT populations within their overarching diversity mission, including all operations.*


*An example of another nationally based, sociological non-for-profit organization that included the GLBT populations as a part of their diversity mission.*


*An example of a major corporation recognized for excellence of employee benefits among its GLBT employee base and the community.*


*This article discusses a major corporation that includes GLBT populations as a part of their diversity initiatives, and more importantly, demonstrates how it positively affects the consumers’ Return-On-Investment.*
Recommendation 1: Mission Statement (continued)


*Information about one assessment instrument that can provide performance measures regarding the LGBT climate and crystallize evaluative feedback within an organization.


*A citation summarizing how a major corporate sports giant (ESPN) received a diversity award for its support of the GLBT population.


*The diversity statement of Google recognizes that the GLBT population is a part of their valued workforce.


*The annual report of the Corporate Equality Index, associated with the Human Rights Campaign, which publishes performance indices as quantitative measurements, reflecting best practices for companies that wish to remain competitive in providing a workplace of equality for the GLBT populations.


*The diversity statement of Microsoft which recognizes sexual orientation as a part of their valued workforce.


*The diversity statement of Owens Corning that identifies the GLBT population as a part of their valued workforce.
Recommendation 1: Mission Statement (continued)


*A foundational diversity publication that sets the standard for inclusive excellence and discusses the critical role of diversity for the future of American colleges and the United States a country, while also identifying the GLBT population as a vital diverse population. Smith's caveat: that universities need to stop doing “business as usual.” Already distributed to RIT academic deans and leaders.


*Listed here to demonstrate how a RIT institutional Diversity statement omits the GLBT services and programs.


*The diversity statement of Starbucks identifying the GLBT population as a part of their valued workforce. (If the link above does not lead you to the reference, conduct an internet search regarding Starbuck, diversity accessibility, and then insert the term 'LGBT').


*The diversity statement of the United States Government, Department of Justice (US federal government) that values and seeks workers from the GLBT (and other) populations.


*A listing of premiere corporations that received top ratings regarding their best employment practices for the GLBT populations from 2008. Many use this kind of rating to acknowledge their being an “employer of choice.”
Recommendation 1: Mission Statement (continued)


*An example of corporate pride in recognizing a diversity award regarding inclusivity for the GLBT population in the workplace, not only for 2009, but three consecutive years before.

Recommendation 2: (Advisory Board)


*Demonstrates an on-going corporate shift to providing gay partner benefits including health insurance.


*Presents a GLBT advisory board as a strong practice regarding advising of the GLBT population and university governance.


*Serves as an example of a model for GLBT governance and advising of the GLBT population and university governance.


*Considered a strong practice regarding advising of the GLBT population and corporate leadership.


*This page demonstrates that Owens Corning fosters a GLBT affinity group for employees
Recommendation 2: Advisory Board and Benefits Continued


*Considered a strong practice regarding advising of the GLBT population and educational governance system.


*Considered a strong practice regarding advising of the GLBT population and university governance.


*Considered a strong practice regarding advising of the GLBT population and university governance.

Recommendation 3: (Benefits)


* Demonstrates corporate shift to providing gay partner benefits including health insurance.
Recommendation 3: Benefits

Advisory Board Company (2007). *Supporting LGBT students on the university campus: Custom research brief.*

*The report from a private company who was contracted to research different aspects of GLBT programs, business and standards of various services or programs at American colleges and universities.*


*Documentation that the world’s premiere entertainment corporation extended benefits to GLBT employees and partners without backlash and while enhancing family values.*


*Demonstrates how a respected university provides tax equity.*

Recommendation 4: (Media)

Advisory Board Company (2007). *Supporting LGBT students on the university campus: Custom research brief.*

*A private company which can be contracted to research different aspects of programs, business and standards of various services or programs on American colleges and universities.*
**Recommendation 4: Media Continued**


*An article that states a case regarding how to market to college students as well as employees; the focus in this case is comprehensive approaches to including GLBT employees more intentionally.*


*Similarly, this book states a case and some approaches as to how to create a GLBT labor force, and particularly this labor case is easier to identify, recruit and retain than one might think.*


*A primer for re-thinking how communication, outreach, and marketing can be improved when including GLBT populations.*


*An example of on-going GLBT market research highlighting more recent trends that demonstrate how behaviors in the market place do not match the current stereotypes about the GLBT community.*
Recommendation 4: Media Continued


*A forum in which professional marketers discuss the social taboos and potential benefits when marketing to the GLBT community occurs. These practices can be applied to internal dynamics and public relations.


*This document provides an understanding regarding practical and easily implemented tips on inclusive language for the LGBT populations.

Recommendation 5: (GLBT Celebratory)


*A speech by the Chair of the Academic Senate, (Berkley, University of California) for the university’s Lavender ceremony.


*This publication reviews submits a review of the Lavender graduation event at Michigan State, and includes a listing of student responses to the value and challenges of the Lavender graduation as an event.
Recommendation 5: GLBT Celebratory Continued


*Oldest private military college cited for being the first university in the US to host its own Gay Pride events.


*University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee holds a Lavender Ceremony where its Chancellor spoke.

Recommendation 6: (Bias-Related Offenses)


*A recent court case finding demonstrating shifting rights for a transgender workforce.


*A comprehensive research study commissioned by the GLBT Alliance in and for the state of Massachusetts demonstrating that sexual orientation and transgender identity are easy targets for crime. Recommendations include incorporating transgender status as a basis for bias-related crimes.
Recommendation 6: Bias-Related Offenses Continued

New York State Bias-Related Offenses (2000). *Bias-related offenses in New York state.*


*A summary of New York State laws which outlines how populations are protected from bias-related offenses, thus demonstrating that gender identity and expression are not embraced in the current laws or norms.


*An RIT policy statement identifying bias, which omits gender expression.

Recommendation 7: (Transgender and facility issues)


*A recent court case finding demonstrating shifting rights for a transgender workforce.

Recommendation 7: Transgender and Facility Issues Continued

*A comprehensive research study commissioned by the GLBT Alliance for the state of Massachusetts demonstrating that those of a different sexual orientation and transgender identity are easy targets for crime. Recommends: incorporate transgender status as a basis for bias-related crimes.


*RIT policy statement identifying bias, and omitting gender expression.*


*RIT policy statement identifying bias, and omitting gender expression.*


*A possible guide to be used for transgender or transitioning employees and students on the job or co-op; serves as a prototype regarding the kinds of materials that other businesses are using for employees and students.*
Recommendation 7: Transgender and Facility Issues Continued


*A subsection from the Transgender Policy, related to the previous publications (FAQ) to use as a possible guide to be used for transgender or transitioning employees and students on the job or co-op.

Recommendation 8: (Hiring and Recruitment)


*Online brochure that identifies common approaches to inclusivity and inclusive language in the workplace with resources that list best practices.


*Online article demonstrating the financial value, potential value, and ROI of the GLBT community as a market and employee base.


*This GLBT placement service identifies major corporations now pursuing GLBT professionals to diversify their workforce.
Recommendation 8: Hiring and Recruitment Continued


*Online magazine demonstrates how the GLBT work force and its purpose complements hiring goals in the twenty-first century.


A report by a LGBT non-for-profit organization that identifies best of practices for business and corporations in self-identification including forms, issues and ethics.


*The diversity statement of the Department of Justice (US federal government) valuing and seeking workers from the GLBT (and other) populations.

Recommendation 9 (Systems regarding Harassment and Bias)


*A report that reflects general feedback that some faculty and staff are uncomfortable with the reporting of bias-related incidents and the lack of protection for GLBT employee ‘victims’ when reporting such incidents.
Recommendation 10: Administrative Development


*An article defining the value of cultural competency among executive leaders, and its effect on raising awareness, enhancing the role modeling function, and changing organizational climate.


www.pennbehavioralhealth.org/documents/cultural_competency.pdf

*This article identifies how an ‘out’ multicultural staff can change and enhance the work place for the better.

Recommendation 11 and 12: (Development of the GLBT Center)


*A report from a private company who specialized in researching different aspects of programs, business, and standards of various services or programs on American colleges and universities. This report serves as an overview regarding basic practices as to how GLBT students can be served on college campuses.
**Recommendations 11 and 12: Development of the GLBT Center**


*National standards for all universities and colleges in the United States regarding assessment and practice of GLBT centers, adopted to establish a baseline of standard practices. RIT’s current center falls dramatically short on these standards.*

**Recommendation 13: Transgender Student Support**


*Identifies the unique needs of transgender students, including the need for easy procedures to change their preferred and at some point, their legal name.*


*This document summarizes emerging practices used by universities regarding the new and undisclosed needs of transgender students.*
Recommendation 13: Transgender Student Support Continued


*The article references University of Pennsylvania’s Multicultural Scholarship for potential of GLBT students and their attitudes.


*A summary (already cited) regarding frequently asked questions related to the growing transgender population on college campuses.


*An overview of the needs of transgender students and their respective name changes.

Recommendation 14: (Student Scholarships and Admissions)

*The references in Section 14 represent an overview of initiatives assumed by Alumni offices, Development offices, and private foundations to solicit and/or distribute funds for GLBT scholarships.

Recommendation 14: Student Scholarships and Admissions Continued

*This article reviews the beginning of a movement within colleges for students to self-identify their sexual orientation. The Academic Senate with the State University System of California passed a resolution requiring this practice to ensure that the needs of the annual incoming freshmen class were addressed, following the example of Elmhurst College.


*An article (cited earlier in this report) identifies how gay (high school) youth are openly admitting their gay orientation as they seek ivy league schools (i.e. Bowdoin, Penn State, and Dartmouth) and seeking scholarship support (Penn State’s Multicultural scholarship).


*This article discusses the practices of Elmhurst College, a private liberal arts college, as being the first college in the country to ask an optional question about a student's sexual orientation and gender identity on an undergraduate admission form.


*This article discusses the power of gift giving among the GLBT alumni population.
Recommendation 15: Student Scholarships and Admissions Continued


*A catalog of GLBT scholarships available for undergraduate and graduate students.


*A catalog of GLBT scholarships available for undergraduate and graduate students.


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*A catalog of GLBT scholarships available for undergraduate and graduate students.

Recommendation 15: (Evaluate GLBT Course Offerings)


*A listing of GLBT related courses and minors offered for credit at other universities.


**A listing of GLBT related courses and minors offered for credit at other universities, with emphasis regarding the value of GLBT studies to prospective students.
Recommendation 15: GLBT Course Offerings Continued


*Announces the pros and challenges about the value of GLBT studies to prospective students.


*Announces the pros and challenges about the value of a GLBT major discipline.


*This website provides a broad-based view of GLBT curricular offerings among listings of services, information, and programs (by college) across the North American continent (Canada and the USA). Gender-related curriculum is listed as well, as it often address lesbian or GLBT-related issues.

Recommendation 16: (Preferred Vending Status)

Recommendation 16: Preferred Vending Status Continued

*A listing of those corporations who have successfully re-aligned purchasing and vending procedures to accommodate GLBT-owned and operated businesses into the corporate procurement systems.


*An overview of JP Morgan Chase and Company’s policies and procedures regarding Supplier Diversity and accommodations regarding GLBT-owned and operated businesses.


*A power point presentation unfolding the website of the National Gay Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, demonstrating a national presence and array of resources for vendors and purchasers.


*A major local corporation identifies supportive practices in minority-owned business practices, including GLBT.

Recommendation 17: (Diversifying Trustees)


*This news article outlines how the California State University is attempting to diversify its board. While not addressing GLBT populations for say, the article highlights discussions surrounding the move including: the opening of the new seats dedicated to more random choices, creating a mix of thought that did not perpetuate the common group think of the board.
Recommendation 17: Diversifying Trustees Continued


*An article outlining Dartmouth’s decision to add Trustees’ positions is prompted by their need to diversify the board.*


*An article from The Chronicle of Higher Education, which published survey data from the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. Data reflected a general lack of diversity in the makeup of college trustees nationwide. Duke University was one such institution specifically cited. Diversity was generalized as women and minorities.*


*An article demonstrating that one out of every four foundation board members is a person of color.*


*An article outline how a new trustee committee has been created to guide the University’s efforts to advance diversity among the faculty, graduate student body, and senior administration.*
Recommendation 17: Diversifying Trustees Continued


*An interesting position statement by the SACSCC identifying the value of diversity on Trustee positions.*
Section 5: Glossary

Common GLBT (or LGBT) Language

**Ally:** A person who supports and honors diversity, acts accordingly to challenge homophobic and heterosexist remarks and behaviors, and is willing to explore and understand these forms of bias within him or herself.

**Androgyny:** A profound blend of gender that blurs the distinction between masculine and feminine.

**Bi-gender/Dual-gender:** A person who possesses and expresses a distinctly masculine and a distinctly feminine persona; is comfortable and enjoys presenting in both gender roles.

**Biphobia:** The fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who are bisexual.

**Bisexual:** A person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to members of either sex, though not necessarily simultaneously.

**Closet:** To be "in the closet" means to hide one's sexual identity in order to keep a job, a housing situation, friends, or in some other ways, to survive. Many LGBT persons are "out" in some situations and closeted in others.

**Coming Out:** To publicly affirm one's sexual orientation, sometimes to one person in conversation, sometimes by an act that takes place in the public eye. It is not a single event, but a life-long process. In each new situation, a LGBT person must decide whether to disclose his or her sexual orientation.

**Domestic Partner:** One who lives with her or his beloved and/or is at least emotionally and financially connected in a supportive manner with another.

**Gay:** An umbrella term for a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to members of the same sex, although it most specifically refers to men who are attracted to other men. It is equally acceptable and more accurate to refer to gay women as lesbians.

**Gender:** The collection of characteristics that are culturally associated with maleness and femaleness; gender is to "masculine" and "feminine" as sex is "male" and "female".

**Gender Blending or Bending:** Dressing in such a way as to question the traditional feminine or masculine qualities assigned to articles of clothing or adornment; gender blending/bending may be part of "fashion" or possibly a "political statement."

**Heterosexual:** A person who is emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, and relationally attracted to people of the opposite sex.
**Heterosexual Privilege:** Social benefits accorded to those individuals who identify as heterosexual.

**Homophobia:** The fear of homosexuals or homosexuality, or of any behavior, belief, and/or attitude of self or others that does not conform to traditional, stereotypical sex roles. Also said to be the insecurity one has with his or her own sexuality.

**Human Rights Campaign:** The largest not-for-profit advocacy center in the United States, providing resources, information, annual data reflecting quantitative and financial advancement that promotes advancement in the civil rights of the GLBT community.

**Intersex:** One who is born with both male and female sexual organs.

**Lesbian:** A woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women.

**Outing:** Making someone's sexual orientation known without his or her permission.

**Rainbow Flag:** The LGBT Rainbow Freedom Flag was designed in the 1970's to designate the immense diversity of the LGBT community; it is also a sign of LGBT pride.

**Sexual Orientation:** Used to describe everything that goes into why people are attracted to each other both emotionally as well as sexually.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term used to include all people who cross gender lines, including transsexuals, cross-dressers, and drag queens.

**Transsexual:** One who wants to have, has had, or should have sex reassignment surgery. This also includes non-surgical transsexuals.

**Source:** (Action & Workman, n.d.)
Section 6: Academic References


Appendix

Section A-1: Assessment Data

Executive Summary: GLBT Campus Climate Report Focus Groups (12.6.11)

In the fall of 2011, RIT hired an external consultant to assess the campus climate around GLBT issues through a series of focus groups. Information arose from three sources:

1. The Climate Study of 2009.

2. A total of six focus groups were conducted in the summer and fall, and individuals who were unable to join these groups were provided an online questionnaire to add their feedback. A total of 66 individuals participated, and represented a cross section of students, faculty and staff.

3. A survey asking the RIT faculty and staff community to respond if they had not fully disclosed their thoughts or feelings during focus groups (due to anonymity or other issues), or if they were unable to attend. A total of 27 individuals participated, and represented a cross section of faculty and staff with a response of six pages of dense paragraphs summarizing thoughts.

From among the four focus groups, and survey, over 110 pages of transcripts were analyzed, and recurring themes and recommendations are noted below.

Major Findings

Introduction

While compiling the results from all of the above data, a number of broad based themes emerged.

1. Mixed experiences and perceptions of GLBT Campus Climate
2. Policy Considerations
3. Practices

1. Mixed Experiences & Perceptions of GLBT Campus Climate

- Many GLBT faculty and staff expressed a supportive environment, and especially one that has become more supportive over time (especially true for long term employees). Allies in general reported an inclusive climate while GLBT individuals had much greater variation in their experiences.
- A majority of participants reported transphobic incidents.
- Students generally shared a sense of support within different parts of the institutions, however their experiences varied much more than faculty and staff.
  - Students tend to face more overt forms of homophobia & transphobia.
  - Homophobia & transphobia amongst students was largely attributed to a lack of education in the high schools.
  - Some students only feel safe, or are “out” in limited contexts because of variation in levels of acceptance across campus environments.
- Many participants noted a lack of a prominent and visible “out” faculty and staff community.
There were significant differences in climate depending on college or departmental affiliation:
- Unit or department heads often set the tone for the climate.
- Several faculty and staff reported isolated, but overtly homophobic incidents and colleagues.
- Jokes and side comments often attributed to a hostile climate within individual departments.
- Many, but not all, homophobic comments were explicitly connected to religion.

Perceptions of climate were very strongly correlated with past experiences in other environments; Many participants compared the campus climate at RIT to other environments or campuses that they have lived or work within.

Some participants felt that the GLBT community is not as valued as other marginalized communities on campus, and that they are not included in the “Diversity” work of the institution.

1. **Policy Considerations**
   - Many folks commented on the domestic partner policies as being positive, although some hoped for financial equity (see grossing up section in full report).
   - Transgender inclusion, especially from a policy point of view, was reported as really lacking, particularly around:
     - Name changes and class rosters.
     - Bathroom & other facility Issues.
     - Education on transgender issues.
     - Housing Issues.
   - Some participants noted a lack of clarity in how to report bias or discrimination incidents, in addition to fear of reprisal for doing so.
   - A majority of participants expressed need for more institutional support for Safe Zone and other educational efforts. Some noted a need for training at all levels, but especially so for supervisors.

2. **Practices**
   - The vast majority of homophobic and transphobic incidents are not being reported
   - There was wide level of support for the creation of the GLBT center. Furthermore:
     - Students were very appreciative of having the Center as a resource for them.
     - Diversity within the GLBT community has historically not been served well by the RIT Gay Alliance (GLBT), and many hoped that the GLBT center could reach out to those who have been historically marginalized within the GLBT community (such as Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals, transgender students, GLBT people of color, etc.).
     - Center does not have stable leadership as there is no permanent director position.
     - Several participants noted that the GLBT center space was too small, and not in an ideal location.
- Graffiti in restrooms spans racist, sexist, homophobic and other forms of discrimination and was viewed as complicit acceptance by the institution.
- While most participants felt that RIT was an equitable environment, a few participants reported discrimination in promotions, tenure, etc. and the vast majority of this has not been reported.

### Section A-2: Sample Commentaries
Provided by Facilitators’ Summaries

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive</th>
<th>Less or Non-Supportive</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Conditions regarding homophobia and bias have improved over time over the past years, as noted by long term employees.</td>
<td>• Comments from ‘out’ GLBT faculty, staff, and students similarly indicated that straight allies often over-estimated the support available on campus.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Presence of a GLBT center has been helpful for educational and symbolic purposes.</td>
<td>• GLBT individuals tended to report both isolated incidents and policy/practice concerns that need to be addressed regarding - harassment, - filing of complaints, - obtaining clear information about policies.</td>
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<td>• GLBT faculty have been out for many years and feel supported and comfortable in their environment.</td>
<td>• Some stories reported that allies, especially supervisors, were either forcing or “outing” GLBT colleagues without consent.</td>
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<td>• GLBT faculty and staff are comfortable with the benefits package that were created by Dr. Simone for the GLBT (and other) populations</td>
<td>• There was a potential undercurrent that those who do not support the GLBT ‘lifestyle’ should not be ostracized for it.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Most participants expressed a need for ongoing advocacy and support for the LGBT community, and noted a need for educational and programmatic resources for the larger community.</td>
<td>• Informal and unsolicited outing for GLBT faculty and staff by others, including supervisors and institutional leaders.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Those who were concerned expressed a decreased value as a minority compared to other minorities on campus as compared to race and gender.</td>
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