

## **Transgender Focus Group Discussion**

### ***Brainstorm What to Include on Website***

All three trans Teacher Candidates emphasized a desire to see more explicit queer/trans-inclusive language when they were researching programs and applying to GTEP. The group brainstormed the following content that needs to be included in online program marketing.

#### *Website Content:*

- CI LGBTQ resolution statement
- LGBTQ Task Force meeting information
- Contact person and available office hours
- Q &A about admissions
- Information and resources for current students

From CI and/or GTEP Home Page → “If you identify as LGBTQ please click here for information, resources, and support”

As part of its commitment to social justice and human dignity, the Curriculum & Instruction Department demonstrates LGBTQ advocacy through inclusive policies and practices that are both intentionally proactive and strategically responsive.  
*CI Resolution Statement unanimously approved by Curriculum and Instruction Department faculty in January 2012*

#### **Queer Task Force Meetings**

*6:00-7:00pm every third Tuesday of each month in ED 212.*

Current GTEP students: Come talk about pressing issues related to gender and sexual orientation in education. Build community across cohorts with other LGBTQ individuals and allies.

#### **Contact Information**

If you are interested in applying to GTEP or if you are a current GTEP student and need information, resources, or support on LGBTQ content or issues then please contact Olivia Murray at [omurray@pdx.edu](mailto:omurray@pdx.edu) or 503-725-4765.

#### **Q&A for LGBTQ Students**

Q: My legal name does not match my preferred name. When completing admissions paperwork what do I do if the name on my letters of recommendation does not match the name on my background check and other legal documents?

A: It is best to confidentially notify the Curriculum and Instruction Program Assistant, Mark Walters <[mwalters@pdx.edu](mailto:mwalters@pdx.edu)>, to inform him that paperwork will reflect two different names. It is also recommended that you tell Mark your preferred name and gender pronoun(s) so faculty can be consistent and respectful in honoring your identity.

Q: Is it safe to be “out” within the Graduate School of Education (GSE)?

A: The Curriculum and Instruction department encourages all Teacher Candidates to be who they are at all times. Faculty and staff have received ongoing professional development and spend a considerable amount of time talking about how to best meet the needs of LGBTQ Teacher Candidates. In addition, there has been an active LGBTQ Task Force since 2010 that consults with faculty and students to ensure inclusive practices and provide necessary support.

Q: Is it safe to be “out” within my K-12 field placement?

A: The CI department has spent decades building meaningful partnerships with K-12 schools. The CI department communicates its advocacy and support for LGBTQ individuals in the field and hopes that Teacher Candidates will notify their Cohort Leaders and/or supervisors if they feel unsafe or disrespected in the field as a result of their LGBTQ identity. “Outing” oneself to K-12 faculty, staff, and students is a difficult decision based on many considerations. The CI department recommends that a Teacher Candidate discuss this decision with their Cohort Leader(s) and Cooperating Teacher. Members of the CI LGBTQ Task Force are also available for consultation and advocacy support.

### **Information and Resources for Current Students**

- One gender neutral bathroom is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the GSE near the vending machines
- The LGBTQ Task Force (CI faculty) and the Queer Task Force (CI students) are two active organizations aimed at making the GSE a more inclusive setting
- The CI Department offers a 1-credit course in the spring called LGBTQ Advocacy in K-12 Classrooms. This course is designed to provide a forum to explore issues of gender and sexual diversity for professionals in (or preparing for) K-12 school settings. This course will provide students with knowledge and skills to facilitate increased understanding of others and of self around issues of identity, context, sexual orientation, and gender. Using constructivist approaches, participants will develop a personal framework for encountering and making sense of gender and sexual identity as they manifest in K-12 schools
- Helpful Web links and resources:
  - [PSU Queer Resource Center](#)
  - [Welcoming Schools](#)
  - [GLSEN](#)
  - Oregon Safe Schools Report (May 2013) – attached PDF
  - 2011 National School Climate Survey – attached PDF