Annotated Bibliography: LGBTQ Inclusivity on College Campuses

Jesse D. Holt

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
LGBTQ Inclusivity on College Campuses

LGBTQ inclusivity is an important topic because of its relevance to today's society. Same-sex relationships and LGBTQ egalitarianism is this generation's equality movement, and we are at the forefront of change within our government and college institutions. I chose this topic because many institutions have dealt with bullying, hazing, social prejudices, and other injustices within the LGBTQ community. These articles vary from the harassment this community has received to recruitment of gays to programs and resources specific to LGBTQ students. Some campuses have resisted change and are now forced to adapt because of the support and outcry from their students.


Questioning the way in which college campuses recruit their students, this article identifies diversity efforts that are strictly racial and not inclusive of other diverse students. There has been very little done in terms of recruiting LGBTQ students to college, which raises the issue of student inclusiveness and acceptance once they attend the school. If the admissions office is not playing an active role of these students, how can they attract them to campus? Some campuses are making efforts to connect to the LGBTQ students, for example creating a "safe zone" and promoting "safe zone" training. "Safe zone" is a program that teaches heterosexual participants (students, staff, or faculty) to be allies and create a safe environment to discuss LGBTQ related issues.

This article identifies one simple question: Do LGBTQ students who are applying to college consider the gay-friendliness of the campuses in which they apply? The research of this study was not conclusive, because of the overwhelming factors in which student chose one institution over another. However, race, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status plays a large role when selecting the friendliness and sense of community within a particular campus. On a 5-point scale system the top reasons student chose an institution were: Quality of education (3.73), Good reputation (3.29), Student organizations (2.64), Gay-friendly campus (2.63), Diversity (2.63), Academic support (2.52), Financial aid (2.33), Housing (2.16), and Athletic programs (0.85). So clearly there are many demining factors, but the data does show that students at least consider the desire to attend a gay-friendly institution to be relevant to their choice process.


This article is very hard to read because of the graphic nature of the subject matter. Gay Rights on Campus discusses the harassment and discrimination against an openly gay freshmen at Rutgers University, which ultimately led to his suicide. Cyber bullying has created a safe haven for homophobic bigotry to happen anonymously through the anonymity of the internet. While another freshmen at Messiah College received death threats and bullying taunts on his way to class. However, students are not the only victims on college campuses. LGBTQ faculty and staff are also experiencing anti-LGBTQ sentiments from state laws and extremists. The
article explores how each state can do more to create a sense of inclusion and collaboration on behalf of the LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff.


College students encounter heterosexism and homophobia daily in their lives. This article explores how American college students make meaning of this. 23 LGB college students were interviewed through a focus group and four themes involving this topic were discovered. These themes included: a majority of students minimizing their interactions and incidences of heterosexism and homophobia; a lot of LGBT participants wanted to develop an identity different from their sexual identity; the overall climate on the campus toward the LGBT community was considered generally positive; and some participants stated that interactions with the LGBT community can be countered. This article is especially useful for this research paper because it gives a focused perspective of the LGBT community and the issues they face on a college campus.


The article addresses discrimination against the LGBTQ community within college campuses and the way universities have addressed the issue. It discusses how various universities have implemented new programs and resources to make college campuses more inviting for LGBTQ students. According to the article a majority of the larger universities are bridging the gap to make each student feel welcome on their campus. In 2010, a survey was
conducted by the Campus Pride club asking about the level of awareness about the LGBTQ community. The results of the survey and after suicides of several gay students, many campuses were forced to implement changes to the LGBTQ policies on campus. Resources and programs that were addressed or later implemented, involved campus community, inclusiveness, and counseling services.


LGBT students often face harassment and bullying on college campuses. Two colleges are examined in this article as colleges that have taken initiative in launching anti-bullying campaigns targeted specifically for the LGBT community. The article discusses safety measures these schools have taken and how other schools can follow suit. It also goes in depth on what the Department of Education considers student bullying to violate federal education anti-discrimination laws. This article was chosen to add to the overall research for this topic because it points out a specific problem that is happening with the LGBT community on college campuses and also gives specific solutions that colleges have implemented to solve the problem. Examples of bullying are given throughout the article and statistics are shared as to how the anti-bullying campaigns have helped the LGBT community combat bullying.


At a Elmhurst College, the decision was made to include an optional question on the 2011 application regarding the potential student's membership in the LGBT community. This
article examines that decision, referencing both the criticisms and the applause the college has received for making this decision. One religion professor specifically is cited in this article and his views toward the matter. He believes that including this question on the application shows the college's commitment to diversity, explores Elmhurst's affiliation with the United Church of Christ, and discredits to some degree, concerns regarding scholarship eligibility. This article is unique in the fact that a religious professor commends the decision to include LGBT individuals on campus. It also adds to the overall research of inclusivity on campus by showing an excellent example of how this community can be embraced and add to the overall diversity on a college campus.


This article was extremely useful to the overall research for this topic. Within the article, senior student affairs officers detail the challenges they have faced to end the hostility, oppression, and invisibility that typically characterize the college experience for the LGBT community. The article credits the following ways to helping LGBT students feel inclusivity on a college campus: First, a leadership philosophy needs to be created that includes LGBT students as part of the diversity on a campus. Next, service needs to be committed toward this group of students. A students affairs leader also needs to develop a personal capacity of support toward this group. And finally, community outreach programs need to be implemented that will ensure the tolerance and acceptance of this group of people. This article gives a great perspective on what leadership in higher education can do to make a difference for the LGBT community on a college campus.

Counseling services can play a crucial role in helping a student cope with the diversities and discrimination of being a member of the LGBTQ community. According to this article very few LGBTQ students utilize the counseling services offered at their college campus, despite the service being free to most students. However, the students might not be to blame according to the study. This article sampled 203 different universities and college counseling centers websites to assess the various resources available to for LGBTQ students. The results of the study showed, very few (one third) of the counseling centers had LGBTQ specific content or resources and even less had a drafted pamphlet. With the advances in technology, there needs to be more of an emphasis in electronic messaging and this article suggests creating more LGBTQ-specific marketing to attract the students who can utilize their services.


This article focuses on the inclusivity of LGBTQ individuals at a liberal arts college in Pennsylvania. At this college, low levels of sexual prejudice were found and overall, the was a generally positive perception of the LGBTQ community. However, these positive attitudes were more advocated by heterosexual participants in the study than LGBTQ participants in the study. The perceptions of inclusivity on campus and how LBGTQ individuals are viewed was analyzed in relation to the impact that these perceptions have on LGBTQ student's co-curricular
involvement. Additionally, this article discusses some of the changes that are being made at the campus in regards to more wholly including this diverse group of students.


There are a few colleges in American that have reached out in recruiting efforts to bring LGBT students to their campuses. These colleges include: Dartmouth College, Tufts University, and the University of Southern California. This article examines the efforts of these colleges and why they have moved to reaching out the gay students as part of their mission to create more diversity on campus. The above mentioned colleges consider the LGBT community as enhancing to a students' personal perspective and knowledge about the world. This article gives great insight as to why LBGT students should be specifically recruited to a college campus, not only to fulfill diversity needs, but to create a rich learning environment for all students on the campus.