Cornell LGBTQ+
Resource Guide
for Faculty and Staff

OFFICE OF
Faculty Development and Diversity

Dear colleagues,

We are excited to share with you the *Cornell University LGBTQ+ Faculty and Staff Resource Guide*. The guide is designed to support Cornell employees in creating an inclusive campus for all students, faculty, and staff.

Belonging at Cornell is a framework that follows Ezra Cornell's "any person... any study" motto and is aimed at fostering a more diverse and inclusive academic and residential environment. We hope this guide plays a role in making the Cornell community a space where our LGBTQ+ members can contribute and thrive.

We celebrate Cornell's LBGTQ+ community and its rich history. Among the many accomplishments included here is the fact that in 1968, Cornell was the second university in the nation to form a gay rights organization.

The guide offers suggestions for best practices for classroom and colleague engagement, from using a gender-inclusive greeting for all students on the first day to creating LGBTQ+ inclusive and affirming curricula. A glossary provides definitions of terms, including words to overcome gender binaries and ways to describe nonconforming identities. As language continues to evolve to better depict situations and experiences, this guide will be updated.

The guide also offers resources to share with students and to help our LGBTQ+ faculty and staff navigate benefits and Human Resource policies. We hope that the listed campus and community organizations are helpful.

We'd like to thank Christopher Lujan, Crissi Dalfaonzo and Cortney Johnson from the LGBT Resource Center, who wrote significant portions of the report. Anthony Sis, of the Division of Human Resources; Melina Ivanchikova, of the Center for Teaching Innovation; and Sara Warner, the director of LBGT Studies, provided helpful suggestions. We also thank Lori Sonken and Yael Levitte with the Office of Faculty Development and Diversity for producing the guide.

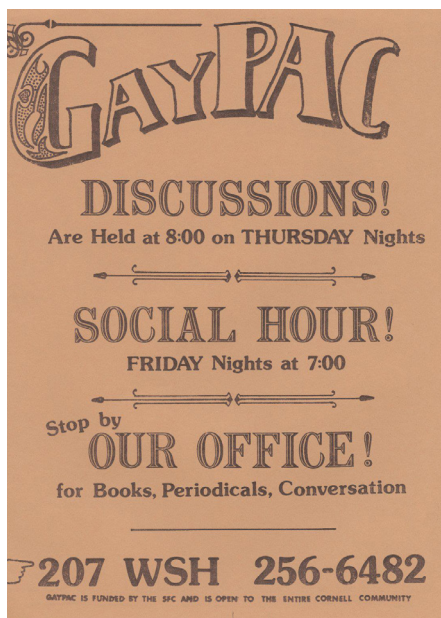Best wishes,

Michael I. Kotlikoff
Provost

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1979-1980. Courtesy of Cornell University Library's Human Sexuality Collection.

National March on Washington for LGB Rights. Courtesy of Bear Left on Flickr.

626 Thurston, home of the LGBT Resource Center

A Timeline of LGBTQ+ History at Cornell Since 1968

LGBTQ+ people have always been a part of the Cornell Community, but began to formally organize after 1968.

1968: Cornell forms the Student Homophile League (SHL) - the country's second gay rights organization on a college campus.

1970: Cornell students marched in New York City's Christopher Street Liberation Day March (later renamed Gay Pride).

1972: The Cornell Gay People's Center at Sheldon Court on College Ave. opens with support from the university administration, Cornell's Gay Liberation Front and the Graduate Coordinating Council.

1979: Alumni attending Cornell Reunion establish the Cornell LGBT Alumni group.

1988: Cornell University Library establishes the Human Sexuality Collection documenting historical shifts in U.S. lesbian and gay history, and the politics of pornography.

1992: The Student Assembly endorses two proposals for a living and learning unit for LGBT students, but President Frank H.T. Rhodes opposes. He agrees to study the issue.

1994: The LGBT Resource Office is created to serve students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

1995: A minor in Lesbian, Bisexual & Gay (LGB) Studies is launched in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, expanding the sexuality component of the Women's Studies program.

1998: The LGBT Resource Office name is changed to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center. Its current location is 626 Thurston Ave.

2002: The Women's Studies program is renamed Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies (FGSS).

2009: LGB Studies is retitled LGBT Studies

2019: With support from President Martha Pollack, the Loving House opens in Mews Hall to an inaugural cohort of 30 students. The LGBTQ+ Living Learning Unit houses LGBTQ+ undergraduates.

LGBTQ+ Foundations

Understanding the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community supports campus members who strive to build inclusive spaces for their students and colleagues. This section provides information about the LGBTQ+ community, including identity categories, guidance on language use, and a review of common experiences that LGBTQ+ students, faculty and staff may have on college campuses. The glossary at the end of this guide provides more information and terms that may be new to you. Language, however, is dynamic and constantly evolves to fit the community's needs. This document will be updated as needed and we hope you will revisit it to stay up to date on best practices.

LGBTQ+ Identities

The LGBTQ+ community is not a monolith; every person's experience is different, but it may be helpful to understand broad categories to establish an inclusive and supportive environment for community members identifying as LGBTQ+.

Gender Identity and Expression

Gender is a social construct based on norms. Gender identity is one's internal sense of their own gender, while gender expression is how one presents their gender externally. Gender in Eurocentric cultures is often categorized as binary, i.e. two distinct and opposite categories of men and women, but it's not so simple. The terms "male" and "female" fail to capture the complex biological, anatomical and chromosomal variations in the human body.

Sex Assigned at Birth

This is a term observed by medical staff at birth related to biological characteristics, such as gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics, and hormonal balances.

Sexual and Romantic Orientation

Sexual and romantic orientation describes what gender(s) a person is attracted to sexually, romantically, or both.

Common Experiences of LGBTQ+ College Students

College can be a time of exploration and discovery for LGBTQ+ students, and may include:

- Sexual and romantic Identity exploration
- Gender identity exploration
- Sexual experimentation
- Transitioning and/or coming out (see terms in glossary at the end.)
- Finding and building community
- Challenges related to family resistance/acceptance
- Increased risk of interpersonal violence

Asking for information

Campus members may worry about what is appropriate to ask those who identify as LGBTQ+. As a rule, ask for the information necessary for your interactions. Don't assume anything based on partial information (e.g. use of pronouns). Pronouns may be important for you to know when speaking with or about colleagues or students. However, the sexual orientation or transition process may not be relevant to your interactions and may feel intrusive. It is appropriate to ask questions that help you understand someone's experience and to gain knowledge enabling you to be inclusive and welcoming.

Tools to Support LGBTQ+ Students

The Center for Teaching Innovation (CTI) is a useful campus resources for faculty as they develop inclusive practices in their classroom.

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Statements in a Syllabus

Incorporating a statement of inclusiveness for diverse identities into your syllabus acknowledges your support for these identities and sets an example for students enrolled in the course.

Example:
I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

It might also be helpful to include your pronouns in your contact information and provide LGBTQ+ specific resources for students, such as those found in this guide.

Sharing Pronouns and Chosen Name

The university provides students the opportunity to change their primary name to a chosen name (more information below). It is good practice to provide students the opportunity to share their pronouns of choice and chosen name, realizing that some students may not be comfortable doing this.

Example of Classroom introduction:

"Please share your name, pronouns- if you wish to share, and a fun fact about yourself. If your name does not match my attendance sheet, please let me know after class or by email."

Follow this by modeling your own introduction.

Important notes about introductions:

- If a student's name does not match your attendance sheet, do not ask their primary name in front of the classroom. Allow the student to provide this information after class or via email.

- Make sure you honor a student's pronouns and chosen name and hold others accountable to do the same.

- In large classes, or where a group introduction might not be possible, consider sending a Google or Qualtrics survey to students to allow them to share this information privately.

Avoid Gendered Greetings

Recognizing that not all people fall within the gender binary of men and women, you can use gender inclusive language in your classroom, such as:

- "Hi **everyone**"
- "Welcome **students**"
- "How are **y'all** doing today?"
- Thanks for being here today, **folks**"

(Micro)aggressions Experienced by LGBTQ+ Students

(Micro)aggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults — whether intentional or unintentional --that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages and target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

As a faculty member, you are in a position of power to create classroom norms that counteract such (micro) aggressions and assert they are unacceptable in your classroom.

Common (Micro)aggressions Experienced by LGBTQ+ Students in the Classroom

- Calling on, engaging, and validating one gender while ignoring other students during class.

- Assigning student tasks or roles that reinforce gender stereotypes.

- Anticipating students' emotional responses based on gender norms or sexual orientation.

- Singling out a student in class because of their identities.

- Expecting students of any particular group to 'represent' the perspectives of others during in-class discussions or debates.

- Using heteronormative metaphors or examples in class.

- Assuming the gender of any student.

- Continuing to misuse pronouns even after a student, transgender or not, indicates their pronouns.

LGBTQ+ Inclusive and Affirming Curriculum

Including positive representation of LGBTQ+ people, history, and events in your curriculum is an essential step to building inclusivity in your classroom.

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Curriculum Benefits all Students by:

- Exposing students to more inclusive and accurate accounts of history.
- Encouraging students to question stereotypes about LGBTQ+ people.
- Promoting acceptance.
- Validating experiences.
- Reinforcing self-worth.
- Providing space for multiple voices.

LGBTQ+ STUDENT RESOURCES

On-Campus Student Resources

LGBT Resource Center
The LGBT Resource Center is the hub of LGBTQ+ student life and resources at Cornell. The center provides advocacy, outreach, education, support, and community to LGBTQ+ students of all identities, backgrounds, and experiences. Located on North Campus on the third floor in the 626 Thurston Avenue building, the center's physical space includes lounge for socializing and a multi-purpose room for studying or holding meetings. Professional staff are confidential resources and are available for individual support during business hours.

The Loving House: The LGBTQ+ Living Learning Unit
The purpose of Loving House is to create an environment that protects and supports Cornell University's community of LGBTQ+ undergraduates. A residential space, open to all identities, the Loving House provides an unconditionally accepting community in a supportive and safe environment.

LGBT Studies
The field of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies is devoted to the investigation of the complexities of sexuality and its importance to the organization of social relations more generally. Primary among its concerns is the study of the lives, politics, and creative work of sexual and gender minorities.

Cornell Health
Cornell Health staff members deliver affirmative and supportive services for patients and clients of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions.

Cornell Health Gender Services
Cornell Health offers medical care, mental health services, and support to students who are transgender, those who are questioning their gender identity, and those considering gender transition (medically or surgically).

Cornell Name Change Process
Cornell recognizes that many community members use a name other than their official record. Students may designate a chosen first and middle name. The university registrar will strive to use chosen names on internal documents, in communications and, where appropriate and feasible, in information systems and reporting.

Another resource for students is the Transitioning at Cornell Name and Gender Marker Resource Guide

Gender Inclusive Housing
Gender-inclusive housing is a policy that affords all Cornell undergraduates the option to live on campus with whomever they choose, regardless of biological sex, gender, or gender identity.

Human Sexuality Collection
The Human Sexuality Collection in the Cornell University Library preserves and makes accessible primary sources documenting historical shifts in the social construction of sexuality; the collection focuses on U.S. lesbian and gay history and the politics of pornography.

Cornell LGBTQ+ Student Organizations
There are several student-run undergraduate, graduate, and professional student organizations that tackle both political and social issues affecting the lives of LGBTQ+ students and their allies.

Cornell Restrooms
In keeping with principles of nondiscrimination and inclusion, students, staff, faculty, and visitors are invited to use restrooms and facilities corresponding to their gender identity. This map shows all-gender restrooms.

LGBTQ+ National Resources and Crisis Intervention Hotlines

The Trevor Project
The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning people ages 13-24. (866) 488-7386

Trans Lifeline
Trans Lifeline is a trans-led organization that connects trans people to the community, support, and resources they need to survive and thrive. (877) 565-8860

LGBTQ+ Faculty and Staff Resources

Cornell University provides a safe and inclusive work environment for the LGBTQ+ community. This section provides an overview of LGBTQ+ benefits, workplace transition procedures, and other helpful resources for LGBTQ+ faculty and staff at Cornell. The Department of Inclusion and Belonging at Cornell is the primary source for assistance if you have questions. In addition, your Human Resource representative or the Benefit Services office at 607.255.3936 can answer questions about benefits.

LGBTQ+ BENEFITS AND POLICIES

Cornell LGBTQ+ Policies
- Equal Education and Employment Opportunity Statement
- Bias Reporting
- Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual and Related Misconduct

Marriage, Domestic Partnership, Parenting

Marriage / Domestic Partnership
Divorce / Dissolution of Partnership
Birth / Adoption / Legal Custody of Child
Adoption Assistance Program
Endowed Colleges
Endowed Benefits for Domestic Partnerships FAQ
Endowed Statement of Domestic Partnership Form - Contract Colleges
Domestic Partner FAQ – Contract College
Summary Chart of Domestic Partner Benefits - Contract College
PS-425 Domestic Partnership Enrollment Application
PS-425.4 Termination of Domestic Partner (pdf)

Transgender Benefits

Endowed health plans cover benefits for transgender and gender noncomforming enrollees. New coverage includes therapy and certain medical procedures related to gender identity confirmation procedures. To learn more, refer to the Schedule of Benefits or Addendum in the Summary Plan Description of your health plan: CPHL, HSA, WCM-PPO.

For contract colleges, employees on the Empire plan should reach out to United Health Care. For those with an HMO, contact the provider directly.

NAME, GENDER MARKER, AND PRONOUN DISPLAY

Changing Your Name in Workday:

- Login to Workday
- Click on the Personal Information icon and then click either Change Legal Name or Preferred Name, as applicable. See complete Workday instructions for updating personal information.
- Important: Remember to click submit when finished.

Adding or Changing Your Pronouns in Workday

- Login to Workday
- Click on the personal information icon, and then again on personal information in the "change" column
- Add or change your pronouns in the section near the bottom.
- Important: remember to follow the included directions to make your pronouns visible.

Changing Primary Name

- Your primary name must match how your name is listed on your Social Security card.
- Once you submit the change, it will route to your local Human Resources representative who will ask for supporting documentation. Cornell faculty and staff must submit a copy of their social security card reflecting their new name to their HR representative. Other forms of identification are not accepted.

Primary or Chosen Name in Office 365

By default, the Office 365 email and calendar system uses your primary first, middle, and last name as entered in Workday. To change the way your name is listed on your Cornell email and calendar, follow the procedures above.

Cornell NetID

Your NetID can be changed only after you have submitted your name change request to Human Resources and they have processed your request. More information.

Gender Marker Change
An employee must go to their local HR person to change their gender marker. No documentation is necessary.

Networking for LGBTQ+ Faculty

LGBTQ+ Colleague Network Group
The mission of the Cornell University LGBTQ+ Colleague Network Group (CNG) is to raise awareness about workplace issues faced by LGBTQIA faculty and staff. The organization provides networking opportunities, a forum to discuss topics of mutual interest and innovative solutions with senior leaders, and supports the recruitment and retention of LGBTQIA faculty and staff.

LGBT+ Families Email List
An interactive e-list which distributes information and resources among Cornell LGBT+ families. To subscribe, contact Work/Life at Human Resources.

LGBT Resource Center Newsletter
This newsletter provides Cornell faculty & staff information about upcoming LGBTQ+ events, programs, and educational workshops taking place on and off campus.

Community Resources

Ithaca LGBTQIA+ Pride
This Facebook group is for the Ithaca LGBTQIA+ communities.

Ithaca is Love Facebook Site
Ithaca is Love is intended to be a virtual safe space for LGBTQIA+ community members and their allies living in and around Ithaca. Members are encouraged to post resources, articles, stories, and personal accounts.

Ithaca Transgender Group
The Ithaca Transgender Group is a confidential, peer-led support group. They welcome anyone identifying under the transgender umbrella.

Planned Parenthood of Greater New York
Planned Parenthood health centers provide education, support, and sexual and reproductive health services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and intersex patients.

Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Ithaca-Cortland
PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans persons, their families and friends by providing an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity.

Ithaca LGBTQ+ Families
A group for LGBTQ+ identified parents and their children to connect socially and support one another in the Ithaca, NY area.

Finger Lakes PULSE
Finger Lakes PULSE's mission is to create a community where lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people are free to be who they are, love who they love, and live without fear of violence, harassment or discrimination.

Ithaca Gay Men's Chorus
The chorus seek to unite, educate, and inspire audiences and members through high-quality choral music sets. Singers of all genders and orientations are welcome.

Southern Tier AIDS Program
A team of dedicated, caring people providing comprehensive HIV/AIDS services in the Southern Tier of New York. They work towards creating a world where HIV transmission is rare and those who are HIV+ lead healthy lives.

The Advocacy Center
The Advocacy Center provides compassionate and trauma-informed services in Tompkins County, NY for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Online Resources for Continued Learning

GLAAD
Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)
Human Rights Campaign
National Center for Transgender Equality
National LGBTQ Task Force
PFLAG
Campus Pride

Glossary

Agender: Someone who identifies as having no gender.

Aromantic: Individual who does not experience romantic attraction toward individuals of any gender(s).

Asexual: Someone who does not experience sexual attraction toward individuals of any gender. Asexuality is an identity and a sexual orientation, different from celibacy. Celibacy is the choice to refrain from engaging in sexual behaviors and does not comment on one's sexual attraction. An asexual individual may choose to engage in sexual behaviors for various reasons event while not experiencing sexual attraction. Asexuality is not a medical condition; sexual attraction is not necessary for a person to be healthy.

Biphobia: The discrimination against or hatred of bisexuals – often related to binary sex and gender systems.

Bisexual: A person attracted to people who identify with their own gender and at least one other gender. This attraction does not have to be equally split between those genders and there may be a preference for one gender over others.

Cisgender: A person whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth align with societal norms (e.g. masculine, male, feminine, female).

Coming Out: For most people who are LGBTQ+, the process of self-acceptance that continues throughout one's life and the sharing of that information with others.

Deadnaming: Referring to a transgender person (who has changed their name) by the name they were assigned at birth. Deadnaming normally occurs for one of three reasons: 1) Someone accidentally deadnames because they are used to using that name. 2) Someone purposefully deadnames to cause distress or because they object to name changes. 3) Someone purposefully deadnames because of their beliefs.

Gay: Individuals who experience same-sex desire, though not all people who act on this desire identify as such or embrace this identity category (e.g. some men who have sex with other men identify as straight. Gay was the preferred name in the 1960s and 70s – to counter the clinical and pathological associations of "homosexual").

Gender: A social construction related to how bodies, expressions, identities, experiences, mannerisms, dress, speech etc. are interpreted, categorized and policed by social norms.

Gender Binary: The division of gender into two distinct and opposite categories (man and woman) and the expectation by society that everyone will identify as either one or the other.

Gender Expression: The way one presents/performs their gender externally (ex. androgynous, feminine, masculine etc.)

Gender Identity: One's internal sense of their own gender (ex. woman, man, genderqueer, trans, etc.)

Gender nonconforming: A person who does not conform to gender-based expectations of society. Examples of individuals that identify as gender variant/non-conforming could be: transgender, intersex, genderqueer, nonbinary, and genderfluid.

Homophobia: The discrimination against or hatred of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior or belief that does not conform to sex-role stereotypes.

Intersex: A person whose combination of chromosomes, hormones, internal sex organs, gonads, and/or genitals differs from the medical categories of male and female. Some intersex individuals identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community, but not all do.

LGBTQQIA+: A common acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual community. The plus is intended to signify inclusion of all other non-cisgender or non-heterosexual identity labels that are included in the LGBTQQIA+ umbrella, but are not listed. In this guide we use "LGBTQ+" to describe these communities.

Lesbian: A woman (cis and/or transgender) who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to other women. Lesbians can identify as gay, queer, and other identity markers.

Misgendering: The act of referring to a person by incorrect pronouns and/or name if a person has changed their name/pronouns.

Nonbinary: An encompassing term to describe gender identities other than woman and man.

Pansexual: A person who is sexually and romantically attracted to all or many gender expressions.

Passing: A person's ability to be viewed as and accepted by others as their gender or sexual orientation. This may be seen in a positive light, i.e., a trans person passing as the gender they identify as, or in a negative light, i.e. a gay man passing as straight to avoid discrimination or ridicule.

Queer:
- an umbrella and inclusive term used to encompass LGBTQ+ communities, including sexual orientation, preferences, habits, and genders.

- an identity used in place of more specific denominators to state non-heteronormative status without specific descriptions of sexual activity, preference or gender;

- A hateful slur reclaimed in the 1960s against a backdrop of AIDS activism as a term of defiant pride. Some people remain deeply uncomfortable with its use. Given the word's charged history, caution should be taken when using this term, especially by those outside LGBTQ+ communities.

Questioning: Someone who is questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Sex Assigned at Birth: A medical term designating a certain combination of gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics, and hormonal balances.

Sexual Orientation: The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes.

Transgender: An individual whose gender identity is different than the one socially expected of them based on sex assigned at birth. This is an umbrella term that can encompass identities such as trans man, trans woman, genderqueer, agender and many more.

Transphobia: The discrimination against or hatred of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity.

Concluding Remarks

We hope this guide highlights the rich history of the LGBTQ+ community at Cornell, and outlines the opportunities and resources available for an inclusive campus where all students, staff, and faculty community and know they belong.

We invite feedback on this guide: feel free to email us at ofdd@cornell.edu or lgbtrc@cornell.edu.

Sources
ASEE Safe Zone Training Information prepared with support from the National Science Foundation under Grant No. EEC 1539140.

Diversity in the Classroom, UCLA Diversity & Faculty Development, 2014.

GLSEN: Developing LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum Resource, 2019.

Created in conjunction with UMaine LGBTQ Services and adapted from University of Georgia.