Who we are and who we love
are things we all want to be able to share with others,
but for these students there are serious consequences for doing so.

Some are silent, and go about their lives with no one or only a few knowing that fundamental part of their selves they feel forced to keep hidden from the rest of the world.

Others are more open, and risk alienation, ridicule, rejection, harassment, and, even, physical harm.

Listening to LGBTIQQ Students

Listening to
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Questioning
(LGBTIQQ) Students…

"It's been a pleasant experience for the most part. Stressful to be a busy student of course, but beyond that stress it's a good environment to be in.

Professors seem to be very fair to their students and accepting of their background/culture as well.

The openness of the majority of my classes so far have helped me relax and has allowed me to be myself. In being myself I've been able to share my perspective in an open and honest way."
—White/male/gay

"I am bisexual and I find this cause to be important.

I love the campus life. It makes it easy to transition into my new life."
—Female; 18; Caucasian/European

"As for being homosexual, I feel that the students do welcome me with open arms. However, some professors make me feel uncomfortable."
—New to college

"Being a Lesbian is also something I find gives me a unique perspective and I've had nothing but support and acceptance from my fellow peers.

So far, being my first semester, I have enjoyed a very welcoming and diverse campus that I am proud to be a part of. It's very beautiful and has a lot of resources to offer.

The women's resource and pride centers are awesome."
—Hispanic/Female/LGBT/Athlete/21

"I love it, the campus is extremely diverse. There are numerous opportunities to be engaged within school and become social.

Currently living in the dorms and the environment is accepting and welcoming. The classes I have taken has had awesome professors!"
—Mixed/Male/19/LGBT

"it's sometimes challenging. I like that the campus is diverse and welcoming."
—African American Bisexual Female 20 years old

"It is sometimes very difficult to be so far from the mainstream. Overwhelming hetero-normative discourses frame me out in lectures, conversations, campus activities and media representations…. I am treated as irrelevant, intrusive, or at best I am exceptionalized, which further invalidates my experience and contribution. I have to be constantly earning a place at the table.

The erasure, microaggression, and dismissal that I have experienced have served to highlight the empowering experiences that I have had as I challenge the status quo. There are many professors and a lot of students who have responded to me in really positive ways. There are also faculty and staff who are very socially active which helps and encourages me.

I have found most professors to be able to move away from their assumptions if I go to their office hours. I love the PRIDE and Women's Resource Centers and the MCC although I feel that I have to work very hard for acceptance in those spaces. The Psychology Department has been very good as well as the McNair Scholars Program.

My biggest disappointment has been that pushing back against oppressive institutionalized structures in the campus machine have mostly been met with placation and empty promises— And that I see people who push too hard getting thrown under the bus. This is a campus that wants to appear progressive in a PC trendy sort of way but is unwilling to confront bigotry and privilege in ways that center on those most affected."

—Veteran, NonTraditional Returning, FTM, Gender Non-Conforming. (FTM: Someone assigned female at birth who identifies on the male spectrum)

"I love Sac State. With the counselor I used to have, … along with the PRIDE Center, I have learned how to accept me and others. This has made being on campus that much more enjoyable."

—Bisexual, a Christian & a single mom – 32 yo

"Honestly, I feel accepted with most of these perspectives (listed below)….

(What has worked for you here?) My sexuality has worked well because I surround myself mostly with very accepting people."

—male, younger, white, gay, has ADHD, depression, PTSD, ASD, anxiety, bi-polar, and anxiety (I really had the book thrown at me)

"Comfortable feel right at home.

I enjoy my teachers."

—5th year student 23 yrs Mexican African American (Lesbian)

"It's pretty easy being me.

I like my peers and all of the resources available to me such as the counseling services."
—20 yr old, Euro-American, Female, Gay

"The Pride Center and WRC have been a tremendous help and encouragement to me."
—52 year old, Mixed Race Family, Lesbian, Veteran, Christian

"I like it here, these signifiers have not had any significant impact only experiences. Most everything has been lovely. This is a very diverse and accepting campus."
—Latino/white, 22, male, LGBT

"I have really enjoyed the campus, both for its beauty and for the people I have met in my time here so far."
—I am a first time, female student who is a member of the LGBT community as a bisexual. I am 18, almost 19

"My experience is more open than I expected – I am both atheist and bisexual and I have been surprised at how many people share my viewpoint and/or do not mind the lifestyle I chose to live"
—white, 18 year-old, bisexual, atheist female

"It kind of sucks because I like to be sociable but I have been spending more time in my room then socializing and having fun.

What has worked for me is knowing that there is a lot on help on campus and if I need it. I can put it to use whether it deals with health or schoolwork."
—I am an 18 year old, African American, female student. I am bisexual. I am a first year, second generation student. Through this year I have gained and loss many friends.

"I think there are programs that are directed for every sub-minority but there isn't a lot of information on it. It's also hard to find online information about meetings.

The Love Center is interesting. The Cultural Center has a lot of help available. There is a lot of help available. There are many events throughout the year."
—Middle eastern, female, 24, lesbian, (her*, she*)

"I don't feel connected on campus. There is nothing here for me. Essentially, I feel like a Ghost. No one can see me, and if they did they'd probably freak out.

As a black man of trans experience I'd like to share how equality <u>AND</u> justice are both important. I've learned from my transition from female to male that sexism is real. I've learned that the fear of 'The Black Man' is real. It is frustrating that many others cannot see the discrimination that Black folks, women, and transgender folks face on a daily basis. And to be two of those things? That's already a failure when it shouldn't be."

—Black Man of Transgender Experience

"So far, I am enjoying my experience. The staff and teachers are pretty helpful and friendly."

—a Black gay male student in his early 20s

"I'm a full time student, but I also work close to full time, so I'm not spending a lot of time at school other than my classes. I often don't feel any sort of unity or school spirit within the school, it feels a lot like a community college in terms of events…. Since transferring, I haven't really met anyone at school.

I don't feel like anyone on campus really cares to meet anyone else here, but I feel like the professors in my major…are amazing…. Inspiring and intelligent and make me want to learn more/feel like I can pursue anything in the…field."

—White, female, 21, bisexual, depression, transfer student

"I really don't have everyday challenges. I like working on campus."

—a woman, LGBT, black

"I wish there was more educational opportunities involving the LGBT community. Lectures, guest speakers, etc. Not necessarily for me personal, but for the community as a whole.

I am involved with an LGBT fraternity on campus. Delta Lambda Phi which has been amazing."

—LGBT

"I do not feel any negativity towards me based on my gender, race, or sexual orientation. To be specific, my professors this semester know me well enough from past courses that I have a gf and do not treat me any different. I am treated as an equal. They are comfortable enough to even ask how we are or how our weekend went. These professors make me feel even more comfortable in my own skin."

—23 year old female, lesbian, hispanic (Veterans Success Center)

"It is difficult to be myself and be open without being judged. I fear the opinions of my classmates. It's hard and I wish it didn't have to be this way but it is.

I was able to speak on a panel amongst my peers about issues relevant to my identity. I had never felt more included until those moments.

I love my teachers. Most of them are great communicators. They never take sides but make sure to point out negative behavior without causing discomfort.

Lacks unity. There is no community here. I often feel alone, but visiting my teachers really helps put me at ease"

— Transgender person of color

"I feel like this campus is inclusive and I don't get treated different in any circumstance."

—male/LGBT/Afghan/19

"It is very great especially here on campus where I feel welcomed by all and the campus has a nice vibe.

(I like) The <u>beauty</u> of the campus! The students and the staff!

I realized that I am happy here and feel like I am accepted even as a LGBT individual."

—Latino, 19

"I told my parents I'm gay and they threw me out. I expected that but I'm still not prepared for life now. It is a hard to come to class, learn and not know what will happen next in your life."

—25

"CSUS has felt like a 'safe space' for the LGBTQ community."

—29, gay, ethnicity: other

LGBTIQQ Students

A Gallop poll, extrapolating from U.S. Census data, suggests that 4.5 percent of the American people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT), over 11 million adults. When sexual orientation is separated from gender identity in data collection, adult-aged Americans identifying as transgender make up 1.4 million people, 0.6% of the population, according to the Williams Institute of UCLA. California has one of the largest percentages of people who are LGB and transgender. Many researchers, though, believe the more accurate number of LGBT people to be about 10% of the population and, in higher education even higher. The American College Health Association has found that in a sample survey population of thousands (Spring 2019), a little over 80% of students identify as straight/heterosexual, with the following percentages of students describing themselves as:

Asexual: 1.5%
Bisexual: 9.0%
Gay: 2.1%
Lesbian: 1.4%
Pansexual: 1.9%
Queer: 1.3%
Questioning: 1.9%
Another Identity: 0.6%

It is important to understand the background that LGBTIQQ college students likely have had in their education prior to coming to Sacramento State. Below are the results from a national survey of LGBT youth, *The 2017 National School Climate Survey* by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, with specific findings about students in California schools:

The Prejudice Heard

- Nearly all LGBT students in this study (86%) heard the word "gay" used pejoratively (e.g., "that's so gay") or heard other homophobic remarks such as "fag" or "dyke" (74%) by other students. Most LGBT students heard other students make negative comments about how someone expressed their gender (81%), such as someone isn't acting "masculine enough" or "feminine enough," or about transgender people (61%), such as the terms "tranny" or "he/she."
- Some LGBT students even heard biased language from school teachers and staff: 32% reported regularly hearing negative remarks about someone's gender expression and 13% reported regularly hearing school teachers and staff make homophobic remarks.

The Harassment and Assault Experienced

- The majority of LGBT students in this study experienced verbal harassment in the form of name-calling or threats (63% because of their sexual orientation and 56% because of their gender expression).
- Many also experienced physical harassment, such as being pushed or shoved (23% due to sexual orientation and 20% because of gender expression).
- Many also experienced physical assault, such as being punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon (9% due to sexual orientation and 20% due to gender expression).

- Most of the students who were harassed or assaulted in school never reported it to school staff (58%). Some of the reasons given for not reporting incidents to staff were because students felt that nothing would get done or they were fearful of making things worse.
- Of the students who did report the incidents to school authorities, only 38% said that doing so resulted in effective intervention.

The Impact on Education

On a national level, this study shows:

- 34.8% of LGBT students reported missing at least one whole day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and 10.5% missed four days.
- The reported grade point average of LGBT students who were more frequently harassed or assaulted because of their sexual orientation was almost half a grade lower than for students who were less often harassed (3.0 vs. 3.3). Similarly, the reported grade point average of students who experienced LGBT-related discrimination at school was lower than that of their peers (3.1 vs. 3.4).

[Taken from
the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) *2017 Research Brief, School Climate in California (PDF),*
Retrieved from https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/California%20State%20Snapshot%20-%202017%20NSCS_0.pdf
and the GLSEN *2017 National School Climate Survey (PDF),*
Retrieved from https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/GLSEN-2017-National-School-Climate-Survey-NSCS-Full-Report.pdf]

The Consequences to the Student

In addition to all of the prejudice and harassment in the school setting described previously, LGBTIQ students typically have to face discrimination and bias in the world outside of academia, potential estrangement from their non-LGBTIQ friends, and the possible rejection, ridicule, and even physical harm from their families.

Many studies show that, when compared with their peers, LGBT students are more likely to have a significantly higher rate of:

- Poor self-esteem
- Stress
- Depression
- Substance abuse
- Self-harm
- Serious consideration of suicide
- Attempted suicide in the past year
- Suicide deaths are also likely greater in number for LGB students, given the above (but this cannot be said with certainty because reports on cause of death do not usually state sexual orientation and the family may not know or may be reluctant to disclose that information).

(An overview of these studies may be found in the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's 2008 Report,
Suicide Risk and Prevention for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth (PDF),
Prepared for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
Retrieved from http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/SPRC_LGBT_Youth.pdf)

What We Can Do

Some LGBTIQQ students have known their whole lives their sexual orientation and gender identity, while for others, this may be a more recent realization or they are still searching for who they are. All, however, likely know that LGBTIQQ people face homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism, and more in this country at this time.

As staff and faculty, there are things we can do to ensure our campus is a welcoming, inclusive, and safe place for all students to reach their fullest potential.

Be aware.

Getting the terminology right is important and a necessary first step for many. While there is variation in meaning, below are generally agreed upon definitions for terms:

Sex

Biological designation based on chromosomes, sexual anatomy, and hormones. Most are born and then medically proclaimed male or female, but there are some born with biological characteristics of each sex, with intersex the common and preferred term (not hermaphrodite, which is considered offensive). Note the mistaken societal assumption that there is only two sexes possible, meaning a person is either male or female, when that isn't the case for all human beings.

Gender

Cultural creation and perpetuation of norms and expectations for the sexes: what it means to be male or female in a given society at a given time, generally, although some cultures have other gender categories. Sex you typically are born with, but gender is what you learn from that point going forward about how to be masculine or feminine through socialization in our culture.

Gender Identity

How you see yourself in terms of sex. This may mean male, female, both, or neither. Your feelings about who you are may or may not be consistent with biological sex assigned at birth or outward signs of maleness or femaleness. While gender is societal, gender identity is deeply personal. We typically form our gender identity by age three or sooner, but for some it is a longer process. Some people may also vary in their gender identity in different ways and at different times throughout their lives, termed gender fluid.

Gender Expression

How you communicate your gender identity in terms of behavior, appearance, speech, and social interaction, as well as the name you choose. Gender identity is our internal sense of who we are; gender expression is our outward showing or sharing of this.

Sexual Orientation

Who you are attracted to emotionally and/or physically. This includes heterosexuality, homosexuality, asexuality, and bisexuality or pansexuality (the latter term is seen as more inclusive because the former term presumes two genders only).

Cisgender

When your gender identity and expression match the sex you were assigned at birth. "Cis" means "on the same side of;" people whose sex and gender are aligned (on the same side) would be cisgender.

Transgender

When you don't conform to societal gender roles is the broader definition, but more specifically refers to when your gender identity and expression don't match the sex you were assigned at birth. "Trans" means "between or beyond;" people who move between or beyond societal gender roles would be transgender. It is important to note that being transgender does not include sexual orientation, meaning a transgender person may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual or pansexual, or asexual.

Transitioning

The process by which someone who is transgender strives to more closely align with gender identity through changes to name, mannerisms, physical appearance, or dress (crossdresser is the term here, and not transvestite, considered to be a pejorative). Some may seek changes to the body, hormonally and/or surgically (termed transsexual), while some transgender folks may not ever seek or want physical alteration.

Questioning

When you are in the process of understanding and exploring what your sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression might be.

Coming Out

When you share your sexual orientation or gender identity with others. Most fully, it is recognizing, accepting, and announcing sexual orientation and/or gender identity, as well as coping with reaction and possible repercussions. This is a process, sometimes over the span of months, years, or decades, and typically means the decision to share sexual orientation or gender identity with many different people in one's life, including: family members, friends, greater social sphere, work colleagues, members of other groups (interest, religious, community, etc.), and more. It is important to note that a person may be open about being gay, lesbian, or bisexual, but not about being transgender (if the individual is transgender), and vice versa.

LGBTIQQ

The term used to refer to individuals or groups who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, or questioning (with some variation in terms and letters of the acronym, as used by different groups and individuals). Please note that "gay" shouldn't be used when referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people as a whole. The better and more accurate term is "LGBT" or "LGBTIQQ."

Queer

An umbrella term to refer to a person whose sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression doesn't conform to societal norms. Historically, queer was a derogatory term (and, it should be said, may still potentially be taken so by some individuals, especially older folks). At this time, however, queer is increasingly becoming the term used by the LGBTIQQ community, as it is on our campus—especially because it takes so long to say LGBTIQQ, according to the PRIDE Center!

Make no assumptions about "the way things are."

We live in a heteronormative society that assumes that everyone will be attracted to the sex different than their own, that romantic lifelong relationships occur only between men and women, and that people with two parents have a mother and a father. Other common assumptions are that everyone knows exactly who they are in terms of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and that people who are born male will look and sound masculine in behavior, dress, and speaking, while those who are born female will appear feminine in these ways—and that everyone will be one way or the other, and will want to be so and remain so their entire lives. Such assumptions are pervasive in our society, inundating us daily with messages spoken and unspoken about how one is supposed to be (and not be). The cumulative effect on LGBTIQQ people is immeasurable, tearing at one's sense of self and society in countless, continual ways.

Given years of such socialization, we each need to be especially mindful to speak in ways that are much more inclusive of our LGBTIQQ students and work to combat inaccurate societal assumptions. In conversation, for example, this might mean to refrain from use of the term "opposite sex," which implies only two sexes and, therefore, can create a sense of alienation, divide, or invalidation for some LGBTIQQ students. You will also want to guard against the erroneous use of "boyfriend/girlfriend" or "husband/wife" by using the more general terms of "significant other" or "partner" instead, so that students aren't put in a dilemma where they either must correct you (and therefore out themselves) or let that stand (and potentially face the internal struggle of wanting to be honest with you, and true to themselves and their relationships). In speaking to or working with campus groups, including in the classroom, you can avoid references to "ladies and gentlemen" or separating students down male and female lines, to avoid putting transgender students in a potentially tough position. Similarly, phrases such as "he or she" or "him or her" in our spoken remarks or written class or campus materials can be avoided with rewording to eliminate pronoun use altogether or with the more general "they, them, or theirs" to refer to individuals (if Shakespeare, Dickens, Austin, and other literary figures of note used these pronouns in this way, we can, too). You can also use more written, oral, and visual references and examples that encompass different ways of loving, family, and identity.

Make no assumptions about the LGBTIQQ student.

We also live in a society that does not yet fully understand LGBTIQQ people and makes more assumptions in this regard. When we know or think a student is LGBTIQQ, we may have assumptions about who they are, how they live, and what they are like. Again, years of cultural transmission of stereotypes and notions may be at work, and the older we are, the greater the exposure we unfortunately have had. It's important to be aware of any such assumptions or expectations you may have, a necessary first step toward moving past them.

As those working in higher education, we all want the best for our students, and our ability to talk, work, and teach most effectively comes down to, in large part, how we view that person with whom we are talking, working, or teaching. See LGBTIQQ students for all they are. Move beyond the acronym to acknowledge the cultural background, age, and other demographic factors, as well as personal qualities, interests and hobbies, values and dreams, and ways of thinking and believing, that all contribute to their personhood. See LGBTIQQ students as the unique individuals they are, as every student is, and go from there.

Make no assumption that we all share the same privileges.

Those who are heterosexual and cisgender don't often realize the myriad benefits accorded to them in our society—but not to LGBTIQQ people.

Heterosexual privileges include being able to:

- Display pictures in your workspace or mention in conversations in your daily life your significant other without risk of judgment or alienation
- Show affection to the person you love in public without hostility or harm from others
- Live where you want with your partner openly, without rejection or ostracism from the other residents or neighbors or eviction by your landlord
- Raise or adopt children without others questioning your motives or parenting, and have your children receive an education that does not impugn, question, or fail to include your type of family unit or portray your relationship and sexuality as abnormal
- Go wherever you want and not be harassed, beaten, or killed because of your sexuality

Cisgender privileges include being able to:

- Not be questioned, doubted, accused of deceit, or denied service when the box you have checked or sex/gender status on a form or ID is seen as inconsistent with your appearance
- Feel that your validity as a man/woman/human is not based on how well you "pass" as a non-transgender person (in terms of how much surgery you have or how well you adopt the attire and other aspects of appearance of gender presentation to be seen as a man or woman)
- Use public restrooms, gym locker rooms, or store dressing rooms without fear for your safety or worry of threat of confrontation, removal, or arrest
- Receive appropriate care from medical practitioners who are knowledgeable and understanding regarding your sex or gender expression
- Walk through the world without people stopping to gawk, point, whisper, judge, or jeer, without risking hate and violence to you, because of your appearance

Heterosexual and cisgender privileges include being able to:

- See accurate and positive portrayals of people that you identify with in terms of sexuality or gender expression in the media all around you
- Worship at the religious denomination of your choice and know that your sexual orientation or gender expression will not be denounced by its religious leaders
- Know that you won't be fired or denied a promotion at work because of your sexuality or gender expression
- Expect without question that the legal rights, entitlements, or discounts given in your community and country will not be denied or limited to you because of your sexuality or gender expression
- Live freely and fully in accordance with one's true self, without fear of demonization or death, because of your sexuality or gender expression

These are all aspects of life that most take for granted, but are not the reality at all for LGBTIQQ people in this society at this time.

(Adapted from: "30+ Examples of Heterosexual Privilege in the US,"
found at https://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2012/01/29-examples-of-heterosexual-privilege/
And "30+ Examples of Cisgender Privilege,"
found at https://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2011/11/list-of-cisgender-privileges/)

Set their minds at ease.

On campus and in our classrooms, transgender students may face the prospect of dealing with others' uncertainty over their gender identity. Using the student's stated preference in name, as well as pronouns, is a matter of respect for the student's wishes and can prevent uncertainty on the part of their peers. Many LGBTIQQ students will let you know what they prefer, but, in the absence of that, it's usually okay to ask the student, privately. Pronoun preferences include: he or she, as well as gender neutral pronouns such as they or them, "zie" or "ze" (in place of she or he; pronounced "zee") and "hir" (instead of her or his; pronounced "here,") and "pers" (for person). Using the former name of a student is sometimes referred to as "dead-naming," and using the wrong pronoun, "misgendering." These terms are telling in how incorrect name or pronoun use is seen and felt by the student.

In class, there may be an additional consideration. One of the biggest stressors for some transgender students can be that first week or so of the semester when roll call is taken. If a student has changed their name, then having to correct the professor and state a name other than the official one listed on the roll in front of 30 or more students can be intimidating (some students become nervous at the prospect of just saying, "here," much less having to announce a name change and face possible questions as to the reason for this). Students may also find the experience of having to announce in class or after class a different name invalidating (the student sees themselves as someone different than the name stated on the roll, and may have even requested an official name change but the process may be taking time). And if a student self-expresses as a gender not in keeping with the first name on the roll sheet (e.g., student who expresses as a male but whose birth name on the roll is a traditional female name), then calling out this name may present potential awkwardness, embarrassment, or even unintended outing to the whole class, if the student did not want this, and any potential fall-out to the student now in terms of their classmates' perception and treatment. Given these choices, some students may feel forced to remain silent as their former name is called for attendance that first day, and potentially lose their spot in the class. Calling out last names only on that first day of the semester, and asking each student to supply the preferred first name as you go down the list, can prevent this. Passing around a roll sign-in sheet, with the option to provide a preferred name, is a nice solution, too. Alternatively, you can do an icebreaker, where students say their preferred name and pronoun (in addition to other types of information, such as major, year in school, hobbies, favorite television show or movie, etc.). For LGBTIQQ students, stating name and pronoun preference is pretty common; for other students, it is not uncommon; and for all others unfamiliar with this practice, it will likely be an eye-opening learning opportunity.

Understand the real dilemma they face in identifying themselves as LBGTIQQ or not.

Depending on the context (e.g., campus club or group, sports team, classroom), some students may really be struggling with the question of whether to self-identity to others as someone who is LGBTIQQ and the impact this may have. In the back of their heads, they may be wondering: *Should I tell the other(s) or not? If I do, what will their reaction be? Will they still accept me, still like me, keep talking to me? And if I don't and then they find out, will they treat me differently, be upset, or lose trust?*

Students who choose to disclose they are LGBTIQQ know that they face potential rejection, ridicule, and verbal or physical harassment, discrimination, and/or assault. Students who choose not to self-identify know that they'll likely need to continue to squash down and hide their full, authentic self, keep watching what they say, do, sound like, and seem to others—and this takes a great toll and poses its own dangers to the student's psychological and physical health and safety.

Understand just how important your response is to a student identifying as LGBTIQQ.

When a student reveals to you in conversation that they are LGBTIQQ, your reaction may be pivotal to their comfort level and willingness to talk further to you about that or anything else. Your reaction, as a faculty or staff member, may also affect how well the student does in your class or in college life. And in a classroom or group setting, when a student mentions being LGBTIQQ in passing or self-discloses more fully, then that student—and all of the other students—will likely be looking at you, that faculty or staff member, for cues regarding how such a message is/should be received and how much support LGBTIQQ students can expect to receive in the class or out on campus. In all of such instances, private or public, all we do (or don't do) in response sets a tone, sends a message, and shapes the university climate we all share.

In a public setting: How well we manage the surrounding students' responses is also important. The younger generation, statistically, is more accepting of LGBTIQQ people, but that doesn't mean all are wholly accepting or without ignorance. In addition to monitoring the surrounding students' response to create a safe space for the LGBTIQQ student, we might also need to guard against the student being put on the spot with personal questions. It depends on the context, but LGBTIQQ students sometimes encounter questions such as "how does sex work?" or "are you male or female?" They might also be asked about genitals or any surgical status, if a transgender student, or the name given at birth, a particularly sensitive topic.

In a one-on-one interaction: When a student self-identifies as LGBTIQQ, this may be something that simply came up as a natural part of the conversation or the student may just be telling you as a way to be better known. For other students, it may be a much bigger deal if they decide to confide in you. You might be the only one or one of just a very few who know the student is LGBTIQQ. Self-disclosure involves risk, and when a student chooses to disclose that they are LGBTIQQ, and to you, a faculty or staff member, the risk is even greater. The likelihood is that the student probably gave real thought as to whether and how to broach the topic with you. In turn, give your utmost attention to listening quietly and showing whole-hearted openness and support in your eye contact, facial expression, voice, and demeanor. Respond with statements of empathy, and, depending on what is said, ask questions to ascertain that the student feels safe and connected on campus, and to see how they are doing in their personal lives. When the conversation reaches its conclusion, assure the student you are there for them in the future, should they need anything. You might also want to let the student know that you respect every student's right to privacy and what they have discussed with you will remain confidential. And you might thank the student for telling you and note their courage in doing so. Whenever a student confides in you, their self-disclosure is a real gift—they chose to tell *you,* and what they chose to tell you, that they are LGBTIQQ, takes real bravery for some.

Understand just how important your response is to a student who tells you they are questioning.

Students may also choose to share with you that they are struggling to understand if they are LGBTIQ or not, disclose to you that they are questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity, or both.

All of the principles of listening laid out prior can be put to good use in such instances. You will also want to refrain from telling the student who you think they are or what they should do and, instead, simply help them to talk through things, showing faith in the student to find their own answer in their own time.

Be on the lookout.

College is often a time of coming out, which may bring excitement and joy, but also sometimes overwhelming change and stress, adding to the considerable demands of campus life. Whether in the process of coming out, keeping this hidden, or already being open about being LGBTIQQ, these students are at definite risk in terms of their emotional and physical well-being, which can cause academic harm, as well.

Take note of the student who starts to seem disengaged, anxious, or depressed, who may act out or appear exhausted, whose attendance or grades start to slip. The student may simply be experiencing the busy life of a college student—or may have been kicked out of the house by their family, threatened or discriminated against for being LGBTIQQ in the community, or harmed by someone or even themselves for that same reason. You'll never know until you reach out to that student.

Get them help when they need it.

Depending on the specific circumstances, letting the student know that you can see they are going through something, telling them that you are there for them, and asking what they need, can show tremendous support. Some students may need greater support and assistance, and, if so, let them know the campus provides the following assistance:

The PRIDE Center on campus offers support, services, and a safe place to come and hang-out for LGBTIQQ students. The PRIDE Center website also provides a list of resources at the college, in the community, and across the country. You will find a list of the many forms of assistance for LGBTIQQ students the PRIDE Center and other campus services offer at the end of this document.

For students who appear to need or ask for additional help, let them know that the university offers counseling at The Well; they experience higher rates of depression and anxiety than non-LGBTIQQ people, and especially in youth. Show them the Student health and Counseling Services webpage, if possible, and, in some situations, you may need to walk the student over.

Be an ally, advocate, and agent of change.

History shows the presence and societal acceptance of same sex relations dating back to ancient times, where, for example, the noble elite ruling class male in Athens, Greece had a wide variety of legitimate sexual partners for his station, and up to this day same sex relations are socially acceptable in many cultures around the world. The presence of gender variation as an accepted way of being is also true across history and found in cultures to this day, including within our own; many Native American tribes, for example, have established gender categories beyond male and female for individuals, who often hold honored positions within tribal celebrations or groups. But in our society today, LGBTIQQ people continue to face stereotypes and stigma, despite great strides made these past decades for social and political reform.

LGBTIQQ students face potential ignorance, prejudice, and harm in the community and country, but we can each contribute to the climate of inclusiveness, respect, and freedom to be authentic on our campus and beyond.

We can be a strong ally by being there for LGBTIQQ students in all of the ways described previously and more. You can take the PRIDE Center Safe Zone Training to learn more about being an ally. After the training, you will receive a sticker that designates you an ally of LGBTIQQ students, and you can put it somewhere for students to see, such as your office door, laptop, or book bag. That visual statement—that knowledge that you support LGBTIQQ students—can mean so very much. Even when an LGBTIQQ student never once comes to you directly, students notice those stickers and everything else you do in support, and just knowing that they have an ally in you can be tremendously helpful. We can also show ourselves as allies by showing up for LGBTIQQ lectures and events hosted on campus, which are a wonderful way to learn more and celebrate differences. These are open to everyone, and "the PRIDE Center is always excited to see participation from our heterosexual and/or cisgender allies." Your presence makes a strong statement, and all students, but especially those LGBTIQQ, benefit from seeing you there.

We can advocate for LGBTIQQ students by speaking out clearly and constructively against any instance of bias or stereotyping that occurs inside and outside of the classroom or office. All people are deserving of respect, and we are well-positioned, as power-holders at an institution of higher education, to make that clear to the intolerant and educate the ignorant. We also serve as models, in this regard, for the students who want to speak up and out against the prejudice they witness, but don't always know exactly how to do so.

We can also be agents of change. In addition to using the proper terminology and speaking in ways more inclusive of differences, we can include more portrayals of the LGBTIQQ community in our course curriculum and/or other materials we prepare and present in our work for the university. In the classroom, this might mean that you include more LGBTIQQ people, history, events, issues, and examples in what you teach, clips or slides you show, assignments you give, test questions you write, reading you assign, and so on. Such use of diverse material helps LGBTIQQ people to see themselves more in what they are learning and is also better representative of the world, which benefits the instruction of all students.

(With appreciation to all who work with our LGBTIQQ students on campus,
and especially to Chris Kent, PRIDE Center Program Coordinator, for assistance with information.)

Campus Resources

PRIDE Center—
Provides programs, events, access to campus and community resources, a weekly support group, and a place where LGBTQIA students can hang-out and build community. The Center also offers opportunities for learning regarding the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity. Students may come in to learn more or contact the Center to volunteer (people are always needed to help with events or around the Center).

Location: University Union, First Floor Phone: (916) 278-3940
PRIDE Center Website https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/diversity-inclusion/pride-center.html

Office of Inclusive Excellence Preferred Names FAQ Sheet—
Provides information on how students/staff may use a chosen name for a variety of university-related purposes, in recognition that many people prefer names other than their legal one.

Preferred Names FAQs (PDF) https://www.csus.edu/diversity-inclusion/office-inclusive-excellence/_internal/documents/preferred-name-faqs-june-20191.pdf

Counseling (Student Health and Counseling Services)—
Helps students to cope with such things as stress, academic difficulties, cultural adjustment, relationship issues, anxiety, depression, bereavement, post-traumatic symptoms, questioning sexuality and coming out, eating disorders, addiction and alcohol abuse. The privacy and confidentiality of all who use Counseling Services is maintained fully within the bounds of law and professional ethics.

Location of Counseling Services: The WELL, Second Floor Phone: (916) 278-6461
Location of Urgent Care Clinic: The WELL, First Floor
Counseling Services Website https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/counseling/

Students in an immediate crisis should contact 911 or the Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Students with urgent concerns who would like to see someone right away may walk in to receive counseling at the Urgent Care Clinic (WELL, First Floor) any time during its hours of operation or call to speak with the After Hours Nurse at: (916) 278-6461.

Students who want to receive counseling or explore if counseling is right for them may schedule an appointment by calling or coming in Counseling Services, or going online through the Patient Portal. This typically begins with a consultation appointment, where the student can talk about their concerns and receive support and feedback. Many students find that they feel better and their needs are met in just one session. Students who want to continue counseling may choose individual counseling in follow-up single session appointments (to meet their needs in the moment) or short-term individual therapy (more than one session with the same mental health clinician). Students may also join group therapy (with five to ten other students): There is a diversity of groups (including those for men, women, LGBT students, international students, and undergraduate students) and topics (including groups for anxiety, anger management, mindfulness and meditation, creating good habits, coping with loss, improving relationships, and surviving family dysfunction).

One Last Thing

In the last *Campus Climate Survey Report* (Fall 2016), the Office of Institutional Research provides the following findings from a survey to a sample of all students here at Sacramento State:

In their personal experiences…

3.1% of the students responding to this survey reported that they very often or often have personally been harassed or discriminated against on campus based on sexual orientation, and

10.6% very often or often have seen or heard insensitive or disparaging comments, behaviors, or gestures toward others on campus based on sexual orientation.

In their classroom experiences…

19.2% of the students responding to this survey reported that they often or very often discussed issues in their classes related to sexual orientation, and

55.0% felt highly or considerably comfortable discussing and debating issues in their classes related to sexual orientation during the last year.

In their interaction with others and work and learning on campus…

74.5% of the students responding to this survey report feeling highly or considerably comfortable interacting with faculty, staff, and students who are different from them on the basis of sexual orientation.

32.4% have very much/much interest in issues related to sexual orientation, and 7.6% are very much/much actively involved (organizations/events volunteer) in issues related to sexual orientation.

24.0% students say they very frequently or frequently have opportunities for structured dialogue (e.g., workshops, training, seminars, etc.) about issues of sexual orientation within the university, and 22.5% report the same within their major.