



LGBTQ INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE



On October 2, 2013, the Center for Ethics Education hosted a discussion with Fordham faculty and teaching fellows on creating LGBTQ inclusive classroom experiences. Our discussion included brief presentations by Fordham faculty from different departments and honest discussion illuminating opportunities for and challenges of creating LGBTQ

curricula and welcoming classroom climate. Below are recommendations and helpful teaching resources that emerged from this very fruitful interdisciplinary dialogue.

LGBTQ Teaching Recommendations

In the Classroom

Let students know we care for all our LGBTQ students and colleagues because we are a Catholic, Jesuit Institution. Many students may come to Fordham erroneously believing that a Catholic, Jesuit institution must be an unwelcoming place for LGBTQ persons. Including LGBTQ materials and conversations into the classroom can help students understand the characteristics of our university mission that embrace principles of social justice and recognize the dignity and uniqueness of each person.

Challenge heterosexist assumptions. Throughout their lives, many LGBTQ students have been given the implicit message that heterosexuality is the norm. In the classroom, the presumption of heterosexuality places an unfair burden on LGBTQ students to silently suffer feelings of exclusion or to “out” themselves. Faculty can reduce that burden by taking a personal inventory of heterosexist assumptions followed by specific actions to demonstrate that we recognize, respect and value students of diverse gender and sexual orientations in the classroom.

Develop inclusive rather than “us/them” terminology. Develop a pedagogical style that avoids using language that implies heterosexist classroom norms. For example, the use of “we” in the following well-intentioned sentence may nonetheless support assumptions of LGBTQ classroom minority status: “Even though it is outside our experience, we need to try and understand the life challenges of persons who are LGBTQ.” An alternative might be “All students benefit from understanding the life challenges of persons who are LGBTQ.”

Weave LGBTQ content and materials throughout the course curriculum. Providing students with a course outline that includes LGBTQ content is one means of explicitly challenging student heterosexist assumptions and misconceptions about the characteristics of a Jesuit education. Whenever possible, disperse LGBTQ readings and discussion throughout the course to avoid creating the impression that LGBTQ course content can only be tangential to the goals and activities of your discipline.



Increase visibility of LGBTQ role models and allies. Visible LGBTQ adult role models are often absent on campus. Whether or not one identifies as LGBTQ, all faculty can be visible as LGBTQ allies through participation in or leadership in creating University sponsored LGBTQ activities that demonstrate how we live out Fordham's mission with regard to respect and caring for LGBTQ students. When LGBTQ topics are less salient to the specific course content, faculty can select readings by or bring in speakers who are openly LGBTQ experts in the course content area.

Create a classroom climate in which the perspectives of LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students are valued. Nurturing respectful dialogue on LGBTQ relevant issues requires faculty sensitivity to the ways in which all students struggle on their path towards development as a whole person. Moving the student body in the direction of LGBTQ inclusiveness requires both the continued affirmation of LGBTQ human rights and dignity as well as sensitivity to straight students who may be struggling with societal and personal biases and misconceptions. Comments in the classroom that stigmatize or hurt LGBTQ students should always be addressed since silence may often be seen as confirmation of such beliefs. Addressing such comments without condemning the student(s) who made them provides faculty the opportunity to foster classroom dialogue that respectfully reflects Fordham's commitment to life-long learning and the principles of social justice.

Master the art of "bumbling". All teachers have experienced times when to our deep consternation we realize we have used a poorly chosen phrase that may have created discomfort or unintentionally exacerbated feelings of exclusion among social minorities. Rather than avoiding LGBTQ topics for fear of saying the wrong thing, faculty can embrace our vulnerability to misstatements and commit to attaining the knowledge necessary to address student misconceptions or discomforts in the next class session. This technique also provides a model for students of openness to others and the value of life-long learning.

In Our Departments

Promote new thinking about course offerings and course content. Many faculty assume that developing new courses and including course content on sexuality and sexual orientation are not acceptable at Fordham. Departments can encourage faculty who wish to do so to propose LGBTQ or Queer Studies courses or revise course content that teaches students about discipline-based contemporary LGBTQ scholarship and cultural issues.

Provide opportunity for discussion and faculty support. Scheduling time during faculty meetings to discuss LGBTQ issues can increase faculty sensitivity and encourage creative suggestions for enhancing LGBTQ departmental inclusiveness. Encouraging peer consultation on everyday classroom issues that may arise can also help lend support for mastering the art of "bumbling".

Provide mentorship for teaching fellows, adjunct instructors and junior faculty. Junior faculty, teaching fellows and adjunct instructors may not be as fully aware that Fordham's commitment to the principles of social justice and to the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each person extends to curricula and course content. Similarly, they may not realize the extent of departmental flexibility for inclusion of LGBTQ content and discussions in class. Departments can allay such concerns through proactively seeking



suggestions for new course offerings as well as displaying openness to inclusion of LGBTQ materials in core courses. Active peer mentoring can also help assuage possible concerns and broaden offerings within the department.

Develop discipline-relevant resource lists. Departments can encourage LGBTQ education and scholarship through the development of LGBTQ readings and resource lists that faculty, teaching fellows and instructors can draw upon for course development. Such a list can also serve to open avenues for students to conduct LGBTQ inclusive undergraduate and graduate research.

Increase faculty and student awareness of LGBTQ Fordham resources. The Center for Ethics Education has assembled a collection of LGBTQ resources (available at www.fordham.edu/LGBTresources) for faculty and instructors, including resources related to general teaching, relevant Fordham organizations, centers, student clubs, and discipline-specific articles and resources on including LGBTQ content across a variety of curricula.

Please visit our website for an online version of these recommendations and a continuously-updated list of recommendations.

https://www.fordham.edu/info/25663/resources_for_ethics_education/6346/lgbtq_inclusive_curriculum_and_classroom_climate

LGBTQ TEACHING RESOURCES

Find teaching resources to assist faculty, teaching fellows, and adjunct instructors in integrating LGBTQ content into the curriculum and foster inclusive classroom and campus climates below. The Center for Ethics Education will periodically update the information and welcomes suggestions and resources from administrators, faculty and students, emailed to ethics@fordham.edu.

FORDHAM RESOURCES

Fordham Office of Multicultural Affairs

Fordham's Office of Multicultural Affairs provides a variety of resources to help facilitate an engaged campus community that proactively explores topics of diversity, including race and ethnicity, gender, culture, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, religious orientation, ability, international concerns, social justice and oppression.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) and Ally Network of Support

The Ally Network of Support (administered by the Office of Multicultural Affairs) is a university-based training seminar open to all Fordham University community members who would like to demonstrate their active commitment to creating a campus environment that is open and welcoming to all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) students and their allies, in keeping with the Jesuit tenet of Cura Personalis (care for the whole person) and the principle that all persons should be treated with dignity and respect which is explicit in Catholic teaching.

Fordham PRIDE Alliance

PRIDE Alliance is a Fordham Rose Hill-based club that is devoted to supporting students as they integrate their sexual orientation into their personhood. PRIDE Alliance



promotes and advocates for an open, accepting environment at Fordham University for all people. PRIDE Alliance is comprised of LGBT members as well as straight allies.

[Fordham Rainbow Alliance](#)

The Rainbow Alliance is a Lincoln Center-based club that aims to support all students as they integrate their sexual orientation into their personhood and promotes an open and tolerant environment at Fordham University for all sexual orientations through education. Rainbow Alliance is comprised of LGBT members as well as straight allies.

[Fordham OUTLaws](#)

The OUTLaws seek to foster a sense of community and pride among the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students at Fordham Law School through social and networking events for law students, including educational lectures and panel discussions on important issues affecting our community and host alumni gatherings. Membership in the OUTLaws is open to all students regardless of sexual orientation.

[Fordham Center on Teaching Excellence](#)

The Center for Teaching Excellence provides the guidance, an environment, and the resources needed to further the art of teaching throughout the university and offers a range of resources for teaching, both inside and outside the classroom. The Center for Teaching Excellence sponsors lectures and workshops on LGBTQ-related curriculum and classroom climate as well as teaching instruction on diversity and related topics.

[Fordham Center for Ethics Education](#)

The Center for Ethics Education provides a broad range of multidisciplinary ethics education opportunities, including degree programs, major lectures and support for ethics research and scholarship. The Center organizes cross-disciplinary seminars to discuss emerging and recent scholarship on ethics and ethics-related topics, promote ethics-based pedagogy and to develop ideas for cross-disciplinary team-taught courses. Finally, the Center features a wide-range of web-based ethics resources for faculty and students and social media platforms to explore ethics-related topics, including bioethics, responsible conduct of research, and responsibilities toward vulnerable populations.

[More than a Monologue: Sexual Diversity and the Catholic Church](#)

Fordham University, with Union Theological Seminary, Yale School of Divinity and Fairfield University, organized a four-part conference on topics related to sexual diversity and the Catholic Church. Topics included "Learning to Listen: Voices of Sexual Diversity and the Catholic Church", "Pro-Queer Life: Youth Suicide Crisis, Catholic Education, and the Souls of LGBTQ People", "Same-Sex Marriage and the Catholic Church: Voices from Law, Religion and the Pews", "The Care of Souls": Sexual Diversity, Celibacy, and Ministry."

[Findings of the Fordham Que\(e\)ry: Report to the Fordham University Community](#)

The Fordham Que(e)ry Report was compiled by FCRH student Jeff Lockhart and included a survey of over 180 LGBTQ students at Fordham. One of the primary aims of the study and report was to better understand the experiences of gender and sexual minority students at Fordham.



GENERAL RESOURCES

[Teaching While Gay](#)

D. Scudera | Chronicle of Higher Education (5/9/13)

Access and Equity for all Students: Meeting the Needs of LGBT Students
California Post-secondary Education Commission (June 2009), Report 09

[Applying the Seven Learning Principles to Creating LGBT-Inclusive Classrooms](#)

M. DiPietro, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Kennesaw State University

[Broadening our Definition of Diversity](#)

T. Haring Smith | Liberal Education (2012), Volume 98

[Delectable Diversity: Gender and Sexuality Studies in General Education](#)

S. Cooper, G. Walton, C. Ivey | California State University, Chico

[Graphing Institutional Change Towards More Inclusive Environments](#)

D. Brauer | LGBTQA Center, University of Vermont

[Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge. Changing Awareness, Changing Attitudes](#)

P. Hornbeck | Conversations on Jesuit Education (Fall 2013), Volume 44, pp. 8-9

[In Dreams Begins Responsibility: LGBTQ Work in Higher Education](#)

S. Subbaraman, LGBTQ Resource Center, Georgetown University

[LGBTQ Campus Climate: The Good and the Still Very Bad](#)

W. Blumenfield, Iowa State University

[Queer's Dual Meanings: Possibilities for Service Learning](#)

D. Donahue, Mills College

Queer Theory's Relevance to Student Learning

N. Davis, Northwestern University

[A Rainbow Over Catholic Colleges: How Georgetown became a Gay-Friendly Campus](#)

K. Spencer | New York Times (7/20/13)

[Safe Zone Dialogues at the University of Alabama at Birmingham](#)

M. Kurata, R. O'Beirne, Elizabeth Casswell | University of Alabama at Birmingham

Stylebook on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Terminology
National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (2012)

Supporting LGBT Students through Mentoring

F.E. Ross | NASPA (full text available from the Center for Ethics Education)

Teaching for Inclusion: Diversity in the College Classroom

Center for Teaching and Learning | University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



[Teaching LGBTQI Issues in Higher Education: An Interdependent Framework](#)

H. W. Hackman, St. Cloud State University

[Transgender Education and Support Resources](#)

Lambda 10 Project

Transgender Issues on College Campuses

B. Beemyn, B. Curtis, M. Davis, & N.J. Tubbs | New Directions for Student Services (2005), Volume 111, pp. 49-60

Classroom Climate Resources *

[Managing Hot Moments in the Classroom](#) (Lee Warren, Harvard University)

[Diversity Experiences in Classrooms](#) (Ohio State University)

[Ground Rules for Class Discussion](#) (Pat Langley, University of Illinois-Springfield)

[Disruptive Students](#) (Handbook for Graduate Teaching Assistants, University of Delaware's Center for Teaching Effectiveness)

Teaching Challenges: Sexual Orientation in the College Classroom (Shelly Bannister, Northeastern Illinois University)

Overcoming Resistance to Learning about Sexual Identity (Diversity Digest)

Campus Climate Resources*

What can an Individual Faculty Member and an Academic Department do to Improve the Campus Climate for LGBT Students? (University of Nebraska-Lincoln)

Assessing the Status of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Students on Campus (Lisa Bernstein, American Association of Colleges & Universities)

[Creating Inclusive College Classrooms](#) (Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan)

*Assembled by the University of Minnesota Center for Teaching and Learning

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC RESOURCES

This section features LGBTQ teaching resources from various disciplines. This list will be continuously updated and the Center for Ethics Education welcomes all faculty suggestions and additions to this list (ethics@fordham.edu).

Science/Pre-Health

LGBT Pioneers in STEM (PowerPoint)

A PowerPoint of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people who impacted on science, technology, math and science and helped change the world.

[Integrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender \(LGBT\) Content into Undergraduate Medical School Curricula: A Qualitative Study](#)

G.M. Sequeira, C. Chakraborti, B.A. Panunti | The Ochsner Journal (2012), Volume 12, pp. 379–382

[Building Boxes and Policing Boundaries: \(De\)constructing Intersexuality, Transgender, and Bisexuality](#)



B. Lucal. *Sociology Compass* (2008), Volume 2, pp. 519-536
(full-text copy available from the Center for Ethics Education)

[Teaching Intersectional LGBT Psychology: Reflections from Historically Black and Hispanic-Serving Universities](#)

K.A. Case & M.K. Lewis | *Psychology and Sexuality*, Volume 3, pp. 260-276
(full text copy available from the Center for Ethics Education)

[Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients](#)

American Psychological Association | *The American Psychologist* (2012), Volume 67, pp. 10-42.

Note: These include guidelines for practice, assessment, teaching and research
(full text copy available from the Center for Ethics Education)

[Society for the Teaching of Psychology: Books, Chapters, and Articles on Sexual Orientation](#)

Society for the Teaching of Psychology

[Confronting Heterosexism in the Teaching of Psychology](#)

J.M. Simoni | *Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Issues: Volume 5. Education, Research and Practice in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Psychology: A Resource* (2000), pp. 74-90
(full text copy available from the Center for Ethics Education)

[Guidelines for Gay/Lesbian/Bi-Sexual Affirmative Educational Practices in Graduate Psychology Programs](#)

M. Biaggio, S. Orchard, J. Larson, K. Petrino, and R. Mihara | *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* (2003), Volume 34, pp. 548-555.
(full text copy available from the Center for Ethics Education)

[APAGS Resource Guide for LGBT Students in Psychology](#)

American Psychological Association for Graduate Students

[Affirm Web Resources](#)

AFFIRM: Psychologists Affirming their Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Family
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health and Medical Education

H. Ng | *Journal of the American Medical Association* (2011), Volume 306, pp. 2326-2327
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender-Related Content in Undergraduate Medical Education

J. Obedin-Maliver, E.S. Goldsmith, L. Stewart, W. White, E. Tran, S. Brenman, M. Wells, D.M. Fetterman, G. Garcia, M.R. Lunn | *Journal of the American Medical Association* (2011), Volume 306, pp. 971-977

Understanding, Designing, and Teaching LGBT Issues

J. Gendro | *Advances in Developing Human Resources* (2010), Volume 12, pp. 352-366

[Addressing Homophobia and Heterosexism in the Mental Health Classroom: An Inter-subjective Framework for Learning](#)

S. Bennett | *Journal of Lesbian Studies* (2002), Volume 6, pp. 133-143



[An Examination of the \(In\)visibility of Sexual Orientation, Heterosexism, Homophobia, and Other LGBTQ Concerns in the U.S. Multicultural Teacher Education Coursework](#)

P.C. Gorski, S.N. Davis, A. Reiter | Journal of LGBT Youth (2013), Volume 10, pp. 224-248

Diversity in the Introductory Classroom

D.S. Collingridge, C.Z. Enns, J.M. Simony, L.A. Whitten | Handbook for Teaching Introductory Psychology, Vol. 2 (2000)

Business/Accounting/Law

[Bringing Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity into the Tax Classroom](#)

A.C. Infanti | Journal of Legal Education (2012), Volume 59, pp. 3-34

Humanities

[Teaching Diversity: What can History Offer?](#)

A. Rutherford | History of Psychology (2013), Volume 16, pp. 1-5

[Fordham Collection: People with a History: An Online Guide to lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans* History](#)

People with a History presents the history of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people and includes hundreds of original texts, discussions, and [soon] images, and addresses LGBT history in all periods, and in all regions of the world.

[The LGBTQ Component of 21st-Century Music Teacher Training: Strategies for Inclusion from the Research Literature](#)

M.L. Garret | Applications of Research in Music Education (2012), Volume 21, pp. 55-62

[Anti-Defamation League: Unheard Voices](#)

A multimedia collection of resources for teaching LGBT history and literature

[Teaching about Homophobia in a High School Civics Course](#)

B.K. Marchman | Theory & Research in Social Education (2002), Volume 30, pp. 302-305