Report of the Working Group on BGLTQ Student Life
Submitted to the Harvard College Community

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Working Group on BGLTQ Student Life

Executive Summary of a Final Report

The BGLTQ Working Group met from late October 2010 to March of 2011, for a total of 11 regular meetings, including a half-day retreat. In order to collect ample data about the nature of the BGLTQ student experience at Harvard College, the group hosted 14 open forums in each of the residential Houses and the Freshman Yard, launched a University-wide survey, met with key stakeholders including specialty tutors, faculty, alumni/ae, and current students, and engaged in a benchmarking study of peer institutions and best practices.

Throughout this comprehensive review, the group interfaced with almost 600 community members including current students, faculty, staff and alumni/ae. The Working Group’s goal was to determine the College's ideal support structures for undergraduates’ BGLTQ identity development processes; to advise BGLTQ student organizations and other BGLTQ related initiatives; to supervise the student-run Queer Resource Center (QRC); to train, advise, and coordinate the activities of the BGLTQ adviser program; and to support educational programming on BGLTQ issues, equity, and identity.

After collecting and analyzing these data, the group made the following five recommendations to the Dean of Harvard College: 1) The establishment of a full-time position, a Director of BGLTQ Student Life, to coordinate all activities related to supporting BGLTQ students, advising BGLTQ student organizations, and enhancing the visibility of BGLTQ issues, 2) The formation of a College-wide BGLTQ Advisory Committee, comprised of students, faculty and staff. 3) Improved coordination of physical and mental health resources specific to BGLTQ student needs as well as increased outreach to this undergraduate population. 4) The establishment of a centralized information website. 5) Finally, the group recommends that the College conduct a thorough review of curricular offerings related to BGLTQ topics.

The Working Group contemplated other recommendations and the final recommendations are not meant to be an exhaustive list; however, the group believes that these five recommendations are the critical components that should be addressed at this time. Indeed, subsequent issues that are addressed within the Working Group’s Final Report will be able to be addressed provided these critical recommendations are first put in place. The Working Group also recommends that the Advisory Committee be charged with continually identifying additional space and resources for growing the community’s visibility in the future. The release of this Report is the beginning of what will be an ongoing process during which Harvard College equips itself to meet the evolving needs of its BGLTQ student community.
BGLTQ Working Group Report to Dean Hammonds

Introduction and need for a Working Group

Students, faculty, staff and alumni who identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, and queer/questioning (hereafter, BGLTQ) have contributed immeasurably to the life of Harvard College. In the last two decades particularly, the College has responded to this growing community by providing resources to effectively serve the needs of this population, such as implementing the Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Supporters adviser program in the Houses and in the Yard in 1996, allocating space for the once BGLSA Resource Center (now the Queer Resource Center) in 1995, providing funding, office space, and advisory support for CONTACT (the BGLTQ-specific peer counseling group) in 1985, and (in recognition of this generation's increasing use of technology) converting paper brochures (“A Community of Equals”) about existing BGLTQ resources to web-based information in 2009. Many have availed themselves of these resources, and have found community and comfort through them as they navigated the joys and challenges of coming out as BGLTQ.

Because of its long and often undocumented history, it is difficult to pinpoint a specific beginning to the many meaningful changes brought about by BGLTQ community organizing at Harvard, but there is no question that students, faculty, staff and alumni/ae have typically created the momentum for positive change at Harvard relative to BGLTQ life. From the founding of the Harvard-Radcliffe Gay Students Association in 1971, to the establishment of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus in 1984, to the advent of the Trans Task Force in 2005, those invested in progress for visibility of BGLTQ life at Harvard have joined together for a common cause, and in so doing, have helped to move both the College and the University as a whole forward in building an inclusive community for all. Through forming meaningful connections with allies, these community organizers have demonstrated resoundingly that the quality of BGLTQ life at Harvard matters to all, not simply those who identify as such.

Thankfully for the entire community, Harvard’s difficult past with respect to BGLTQ student life, including the interrogation and expulsion of fourteen students and faculty in 1920 for homosexual activity described as "appalling and immoral behavior," (Wright, 2005, p. 118) is long behind us. Nonetheless, the struggles of many BGLTQ students around identity, self-acceptance, family pressures, and the distance between home and Harvard are still very real.

The Harvard College Women’s Center (HCWC) was founded in 2006, providing a space for existing leadership development programs and resources related to gender and women’s issues. Though its focus is on meeting the needs of Harvard College women undergraduates, the HCWC strives to be a place that is welcoming to all students, and proudly proclaims that ‘all genders are welcome’ on all of its publicity and marketing materials. Because of this welcoming stance, it was perhaps only natural that the HCWC became an informal ‘second home’ for students and student organizations with a particularly

1 A listing of currently available resources to support BGLTQ student life may be found in Appendix 1 on pages 30-31.
gender-focused mission. Among these are the students and student organizations who are officially, or loosely, affiliated with the BGLTQ student population, such as the Queer Students and Allies (QSA), the Trans Task Force (TTF), GirlSpot (for BGLTQ women), GLOW (the BGLTQ organization focused on the interests of students of color), BAGELS (the BGLTQ student organization for Jewish students), and others. In addition to utilizing the space for smaller-scale events and meetings, members of these communities regularly apply for internship positions on the HCWC staff, and as a result, one or more each year has been selected to work in the HCWC. As a result of the previously-strong connections to these communities on the part of these staff members, BGLTQ students and their student communities, have brought significant energy to the success of the HCWC.

Each semester, student interns from these communities propose, plan, and execute events related to their interests, often featuring prominent BGLTQ scholars and activists. The QSA executive board has sought out informal advising support from the Director of the HCWC many times over the years. This organization, and others affiliated with it, have been regular beneficiaries of Ann Radcliffe Trust grant funding and logistical support for the events that they hold related to women’s issues, both in the HCWC and in nearby campus spaces. The ties that bind the staff and interns of the HCWC, and the student leaders and members of the BGLTQ student population, have thus become increasingly strong and intertwined.

Even as this alliance has emerged, students in the BGLTQ community began to question the lack of dedicated space and resources for BGLTQ student life, and to advocate for increased attention to the College’s support for these issues. As the BGLTQ community has grown, opportunities to raise awareness of the history, culture, and experiences of BGLTQ people have also grown. In the last decade, the proliferation of student-initiated events (such as lectures, panels, social events, and activism campaigns) undertaken by these groups has been impressive, while resources for formal advising, promotion, and coordination of these efforts have been ill-defined and often addressed on an ad-hoc basis.

At the same time, anecdotal reports of BGLTQ students’ needs for greater personal and mental health support have increased, particularly in the last five years. While great strides have been made in creating a society – and a Harvard College community – where BGLTQ students can enjoy full and equal participation with their straight/cisgender peers, obstacles remain, particularly for those who do not have support for their identities within their families of origin. Some students report feeling that the intersection of religion and sexuality can be particularly challenging for many individuals on campus to navigate, and that many people struggle to reconcile their faith and elements of their sexuality or gender identity. Students of color, international students, students from conservative families, and transgender students often experience particularly strong effects of homo-, bi-, and transphobia in society, and often have to negotiate this delicate developmental process without visible role models, either on- or off-campus. This has resulted in the reality of an expanding population, creating and advancing more programs and events, and concomitantly, requiring more support and resources.

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2 *Cisgender* is a term used to denote those who experience alignment between their assigned sex and gender identity, and thus are different from those who identify as trans.
As a result of these interrelated factors, five specific questions emerged, requiring closer examination by the College at this time:

1) What is the most appropriate support structure for individuals facing challenges in their BGLTQ identity development process?
2) What is the most appropriate structure for advising and support for BGLTQ student organizations and initiatives?
3) What is the most appropriate structure for supervision of the student-run Queer Resource Center?
4) What is the most appropriate structure for training, advising, and coordinating the activities of BGLTQ adviser program?
5) What is the most appropriate structure to support educational programming on BGLTQ issues, equity, and identity?

In October 2010, Dean of the College Evelynn M. Hammonds asked Susan Marine, Assistant Dean of Student Life and Director of the Harvard College Women’s Center, and Professor Diana Eck, Co-Master of Lowell House and Professor of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, to coordinate a Working Group of students, faculty and staff to explore these questions and to generate ideas toward their positive resolution. Members of the Working Group would be key stakeholders with direct experience and knowledge about the BGLTQ student community. The Working Group would meet throughout the fall and spring semesters of AY2010-2011, with the goal of making concrete recommendations to Dean Hammonds in spring of 2011.

The members of the Working Group appointed to assume this responsibility are:

**Susan Marine**, **Co-Chair**, (Director, Harvard College Women’s Center and Assistant Dean of Student Life)

**Diana Eck**, **Co-Chair**, (Co-Master of Lowell House; Fredric Wertham Professor of Law and Psychiatry in Society; Master of Lowell House; Department Chair of Sanskrit and Indian Studies; Member of the Faculty of Divinity)

**Emily Miller**, **Staff to the Committee**, (Harvard Divinity School Graduate Student)

**Dorothy Austin**, (Sedgwick Associate Minister in the Memorial Church and University Chaplain; Co-Master of Lowell House)

**Paul Barreira**, (Director, Behavioral Health and Academic Counseling; Associate Professor, Harvard Medical School)

**Kevin Bryant** (Diversity Officer, Harvard University Police Department)

**Marco Chan ‘11** (Co-chair, Queer Students and Allies student organization)

**Karen Flood** (Allston Burr Resident Dean of Dudley House; Lecturer in the Committee on Degrees in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality)

**Miguel Garcia ‘12** (Co-Chair, Gay, Lesbian or Whatever student organization)

**Sara Kimmel**, (Psychologist, Harvard University Health Services and advisor to the BGLTQ adviser program)

**Ian Lekus** (Lecturer in the Committee on Degrees in History and Literature; Senior Non-Resident Tutor of Dudley House)

**Tim McCarthy** (Director, Human Rights and Social Movements Program, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School; Member, Board of Directors of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus, and Lecturer in History and Literature)
Due to the sensitive nature of the questions being considered, it was agreed that the Working Group would conduct its work confidentially. Visitors would be periodically invited to the Working Group meetings, depending on the topic and the nature of data needed to effectively inform the Working Group’s discussions.

**Working Group timeline and outcomes**

The Working Group met twice monthly, from late October 2010 to March 2011, to address the questions outlined above and to formulate a set of recommendations to the Dean of Harvard College for her review. In addition to conducting these meetings, data collection procedures (in the form of both a survey and House-based open forums, and review of pre-existing HUHS survey data) were developed to collect feedback from all interested members of the community. A review and benchmark of our peer institutions’ practices in these areas was created in order to provide appropriate background materials for the Working Group’s consideration.

**Summary of meetings**

The following is a brief synopsis of the sequence of meetings of the Working Group, and topics addressed in each.

**Meeting 1 (10/18/2010):** Dean Evelynn M. Hammonds delivered the charge to the Working Group and provided an overview of the mission. The group spent the rest of the meeting discussing specific areas of focus.

**Meeting 2 (11/03/2010):** The Working Group discussed the compiled “Guide to Existing BGLTQ Resources” and brainstormed ideas for the focus groups and survey.

**Meeting 3 (11/17/2010):** The Working Group discussed the format for the House and Yard open forums and reviewed the packet for forum facilitators. Potential visitors to the committee, or people to whom the group should reach out for input, were also considered.

**Meeting 4 (12/01/2010):** The Working Group met in Thayer to tour the Queer Resource Center and CONTACT offices and to meet student staffers in each of those offices.

**Meeting 5 (12/15/2010):** At this meeting, the Working Group discussed how the institution should respond to bias-related incidents. Paul Barreira presented data from a spring 2010 HUHS survey that depicted traits and vulnerabilities unique to the BGLTQ student population.

**Meeting 6 (01/19/2011):** The Working Group discussed the collated data from the House and Yard open forums and finalized the schedule for the half-day meeting.
**Half-day Working Group meeting (01/30/2011):** At this half-day meeting, the Working Group was visited by BGLTQ tutors and proctors. Following that discussion, the group met with officers of the HGLC. The group concluded the day by breaking into smaller groups to discuss ideas for preliminary recommendations.

**Meeting 7 (02/09/2011):** At this meeting, the Working Group examined the data collected from the survey and discussed how and in what format to make the information available to people outside the Working Group.

**Meeting 8 (02/23/2011):** Professor Brad Epps visited the Working Group to provide his input concerning BGLTQ curricular issues and history, as well as student life issues.

**Meeting 9 (03/09/11):** The Working Group received the draft report from Susan Marine, and met to further discuss the preliminary recommendations.

**Meeting 10 (03/23/11):** The Working Group met once more to finalize recommendations.

**Meeting 11 (4/6/11):** The Working Group will meet with Dean Evelynn M. Hammonds to discuss the recommendations issued in the report.

**Data collection strategy: Introduction**

Because so much of the knowledge about the issues and concerns regarding BGLTQ student life had been generated from anecdotes up to this point, and stemming from a desire to collect as much input as possible from all interested members of the Harvard community, the Working Group decided on five different mechanisms for input from the community. These included: holding open forums in the Houses and Yard, creating an anonymous survey, inviting key stakeholders to Working Group meetings, benchmarking our peer and related institutions, and reviewing data previously collected through the spring 2010 Harvard University Health Services survey regarding the health and well-being of BGLTQ students.

The 14 open forums (one in each of the Houses, and one in the Yard) took place in November and December 2010. Students were invited to attend any or all of the forums, though most students attended the forum in the House or Yard where they lived. These forums provided a space for discussion, brainstorming, and face-time with a representative from the Working Group. Recognizing that not everyone with a stake in the issue would feel comfortable attending a forum and voicing her/his opinions, the Working Group also launched a survey that provided concrete questions about students experiences with BGLTQ life in the College, in addition to spaces for comments and other feedback (see Appendix for the full survey instrument). The survey served to supplement the open forums, but it could also serve as a tool on its own for individuals who could not (or chose not to) attend the forums. In addition to the forum data, the following information was used to inform the recommendations:

- Meetings with key stakeholders such as BGLTS advisers, student staffers of the Queer Resource Center and Contact, Lizzy Elrod (the chair of Girlspot), Craig
Rodgers (a psychologist at the Bureau of Study Counsel), the chair of the Transgender Task Force (Jia Hui Lee), and Miguel Garcia (the co-chair of the student organization GLOW: Gay, Lesbian, or Whatever);

- Perspectives on curricular issues from Former Chair and Professor of WGS Brad Epps, and current Director of Studies in WGS, Caroline Light;
- Benchmark data from our peer institutions about BGLTQ programs and services, and
- Data from the HUHS spring 2010 health survey specific to BGLTQ students.

Naturally, the insights and comments of members of the Working Group figured prominently in the development of a 'picture' of BGLTQ life at Harvard, as well.

Open Forum Introduction

Between November 17, 2010 and December 9, 2010, the Working Group’s undergraduate members (Marco Chan, Emma Wang, and Miguel Garcia) organized and conducted open forums in each of the 13 Houses and one in the Yard. In each case, a BGLTS adviser and a student facilitated while another person took notes. In most of the cases, a BGLTQ adviser in the House/Yard handled the advertising and provided refreshments. The facilitators were provided with a packet of information regarding the aims of the forums, the mission of the Working Group, and a selection of suggested questions -- although it was made clear that these prompts were by no means exhaustive (See the Appendix for the question prompts). Following the forums, the note taker sent the information to Emily Miller, who then collated the data from all of the forums. The collected notes totaled 40-pages; a six-page summary comprising nine subsections was developed. These subsections were: College Environment, Adjustment/Coming Out, Student Community, Resources, Communication, Staff/Faculty, Tutors/House Life, the Classroom, and Social Life. Each of these subsections was divided further into “Concerns, Challenges and Observations” and “Suggestions.”

Open Forum Summary

The environment. Participants at the forums expressed their view that the administration seems to think only BGLTQ students need to know about BGLTQ issues. Students attribute this attitude to a campus-wide apathy. Many of the students expressed discontent with the lack of institutional support; they feel that BGLTQ resources are pushed to the margins and the basements. Students suggested that the annual performance of Sex Signals, the sexual assault prevention program attended by all first-year students, excludes the experience of BGLTQ-identified freshmen, and thus should be modified to be more inclusive. Students also suggested that Harvard include discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity issues in Community Conversations that take place each fall. Students are frustrated with the lack of space in the BGLTQ community for questioning students or students who do not identify as BGL. In addition, students reported pervasive bisexual discrimination across campus and within the BGLTQ community. Students suggested the founding of an intern program for BGLTQ students modeled after the HCWC intern program and the creation of more BGLTQ networking events between the Houses and the Yard. In addition, they would like to see the Registrar’s Office add a space for a student’s preferred name, so that transgender and other gender non-conforming students will be able
to indicate the name they actually use on class rosters and House information. (Note: The FAS Registrar’s Office is working on this).

**Adjustment/coming out.** Students at the forums agreed that their peers who need the most help are also the hardest to reach. Students believe that the College needs to do more for closeted students, including getting rid of the stigma surrounding the closet. Students suggested that we create fewer “in-your-face” resources; that is, that more events should be created which students could attend without “outing” themselves. More support is needed for international students, for whom coming out to family is not an option or for whom coming out puts them in political peril. Coming out as transgender continues to be very difficult at Harvard, and resources for doing so are difficult to identify. Concretely, students would like to see the Financial Aid office doing more to advertise what they can do for students whose parents disavow their relationship with them when they come out, leaving them independent financially.

**Student community.** The students at the forums were disappointed with the lack of a central “umbrella” group or office given the hyper-pluralism of BGLTQ student organizations. In addition, there were concerns about a dearth of specific resources for BGLTQ-identified women. The QSA is seen as a space for gay men, and all BGLTQ student organizations are seen as spaces for students who are comfortably “out.” Some students wish that there were more collaboration with BGLTQ groups at Harvard’s graduate schools. Students in the College would like to see student organizations doing more to recognize, and subsequently validate, bisexuality.

**Resources.** The discussion of resources at Harvard revolved around the shortcomings of the existing QRC, located in a small suite of two rooms in the basement of Thayer Hall. Some students did not know where the QRC is located, and it was perceived to be merely a “Queer Media Center” where students go to check out videos, rather than a comprehensive resource for BGLTQ life. Students said that the Harvard College Women’s Center serves as the unofficial BGLTQ space on campus, but they were concerned about what this communicated to gay men. In addition, forum participants expressed frustration with the fact that there is no full-time staff person to whom they can turn with BGLTQ issues outside of the HCWC and the QRC moved out of the basements. In addition, they believe that students could benefit from a published list of BGLTQ proctors and tutors, and they think that OCS should host a queer-friendly employers event.

**Staff/faculty.** Students believe that informal BGLTQ advisers such as Sara Kimmel, Susan Marine and Tim McCarthy are being stretched too thin. Students said that the administration feels silent and absent, viewing BGLTQ issues as political issues and not rights/health/safety issues. At more than one forum, students said that some type of “coming out” event for BGLT professors and administrators would mean a lot.

The discussion of **tutors/house life** focused on the lack of consistency in terms of BGLTQ support across the houses. Often, Dudley was cited as a safe, integrated space. Students said that some BGLTS# tutors are active in their Houses and serve as great personal and
professional role models. In other cases, students cited tutors as difficult to approach. While BGLTS advisers serve an important function in the Houses, students express concern that their presence absolves all other tutors and proctors of the need to be knowledgeable, sensitive and responsive to BGLTQ concerns. The students expressed the view that all tutors in all houses should be comfortable with BGLTQ issues; they suggested that there be at least one BGLTQ person on staff in each house. The participants at the Yard forum cited a need for more than one BGLTQ specialty proctor in the Yard.

Regarding communication on BGLTQ issues, students would like to see a centralized list of resources that can be made available to prospective BGLTQ and allied students. They would like to see more information on BGLTQ resources at orientation. A more attractive, informative website would make a big difference. They also suggested that Admissions collect numbers on self-identified BGLT students.

In the classroom, students credited WGS with doing a great job of covering issues of sexual orientation, but noted that there is little to no integration of these topics in other departments. Students believe that all teaching fellows and tutors/proctors should go through some type of training to become sensitive to issues of diversity, including gender and sexual orientation. They also would like to see the creation of BGLTQ affinity groups based on concentration, field of interest, or department. They would like more information for BGLT students preparing to go abroad, and they would like to see a space added on course evaluations to comment on the professor's handling of issues pertaining to diversity.

BGLTQ Student Life Survey: Introduction

On January 11, 2011, the Working Group on BGLTQ student life launched a survey using the Harvard poll tool at poll.icommons.harvard.edu. Modeled after the Cabot BGLTS House Life Survey prepared by David Byers and Stephen Vider in spring 2009, this survey contains extensive questions pertaining to the BGLTQ student experience and the perception of BGLTQ student life at Harvard College. On January 21, 2011, Dean Evelynn M. Hammonds sent an email to the undergraduate student body inviting them to participate in the survey. In the weeks that followed, many offices, organizations and individuals encouraged and reminded their constituents to take the survey. In total, 409 people (including students, staff and faculty) completed the survey.

It should be noted that prior to Dean Hammonds’ email, the group began circulating the survey among a few of the student organizations and several individuals who were actively involved in the Working Groups processes. Upon this first launch, it was discovered that we had not provided an adequate variety of responses for a question concerning the poll taker’s sexual orientation. We corrected this oversight, and in doing so, a new URL was created for the updated survey. Results were harvested from both surveys, and the findings reflect a consolidation of the two. The survey tool and raw data from the survey are included in Appendix 2 (pages 32-45).

Survey Summary

Before reporting a summary of the findings, it is important to provide an overview of the population of individuals who took the survey. In order to maintain students’ sense of
confidentiality, only particular demographic variables were measured including gender, class year and House/Yard. For this reason, the survey results do not reveal the almost-certain diversity of perspective from students belonging to different communities including students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, international students and students of differing religions. As we know from research, students from particular backgrounds likely experience stigma identifying as BGLTQ within their communities. Approximately 88% of the respondents identified themselves as current undergraduate students. In addition, 9% identified as staff, 2% identified as Harvard College Alumni/ae, 2% identified as graduate students, 0.75% identified as “Other” and 0.50% identified as Faculty members. (Participants were able to select multiple categories, which accounts for the percentage exceeding 100.)

Of the 409 total respondents, 66% identified as heterosexual, 19% identified as gay or lesbian, 8.31% identified as bisexual, 3% identified as questioning, 2% identified as queer, 2% preferred not to answer and 1% identified as “Other.” In terms of gender identity, 54% of the respondents self-identified as female, 43% identified as male, 0.50% identified as transgender, 0.25% preferred not to answer and 2.25% identified as “Other.” The vast majority of respondents (90%) were not active members of BGLTQ student organizations. The following is a summary of the findings; a complete table of findings can be found in the appendix. In order to understand the specific perspectives of BGLTQ-identified students, their responses were disaggregated from the total and are included, as well as the total responses.

i. Safety to be openly BGLTQ at Harvard College

Roughly 75% of all respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that students at Harvard can openly identify BGLTQ, or as a straight ally, in all areas of student life without worrying about harassment or discrimination from other students based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The majority of respondents used the space for comments to express that although they agree with the statement for the most part, they see room for improvement. One respondent commented: “I agree that you can identify as BGLTQ or as an ally, but rarely does the issue come up - so it's acceptable, yes. But affirmed? Not so much.” Another student commented: “I came out as lesbian during my junior year and everyone was very welcoming and supportive. I have never felt discriminated against, and I haven't observed any discrimination of any other BGLTQ student.” Conversely, another respondent said: “Unfortunately, Harvard is not a perfect world and LBGQTQ students suffer from harassment and discrimination from other students. They also suffer from physical and emotional violence from other students. This is a quiet epidemic that the College has not addressed.”

When the data were disaggregated to isolate responses from BGLTQ self-identified students ($n=137$), there was very little change in the percentage of respondents (roughly 70% for the BGLTQ population) who either strongly or somewhat agreed that students at Harvard can openly identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, queer, or questioning (BGLTQ), or as a straight ally, in all areas of student life without worrying about harassment or discrimination from other students based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The comments demonstrate that some students believe that Harvard is an extremely welcoming place, while others find it to be a generally accepting place with a few exceptions. For the most part,
students who experienced difficulty coming out at Harvard worried because they perceived that their peers might reject them, but in actuality, very few respondents found this to be the case. One BGLTQ-identified student responded: “I think largely Harvard is a very accepting community and definitely better than many others in maintaining a safe community for individuals of all sexual preferences (and race, creed etc). However I think there still exists (albeit to a lesser degree) an ingrained prejudice that, while it largely does not lead to overt harassment and discrimination, affects the overall atmosphere or culture of the institution.”

ii. Impact on student/peer relationships of being openly BGLTQ

Roughly 50% of respondents either somewhat or strongly disagreed that students at Harvard worry that they will lose friends if they identify as BGLTQ on campus. Roughly 25% of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with this statement, while 20% responded that they had no opinion.

One respondent commented: “All people want to be visible, to be seen, to be known, to be acknowledged, to be recognized, to be valued, to be appreciated. LBGTQ students feel the sting of difference. Of course they worry.”

Most respondents qualified their responses to reflect their self-awareness that they cannot speak for others. The vast majority of respondents said that they could understand such a fear, but that they have rarely heard of anyone losing friends for identifying as BGLTQ.

When considering the responses from only self-identified BGLTQ students (n=137), the percentage of respondents who either somewhat or strongly disagreed that students at Harvard worry that they will lose friends if they identify as BGLTQ on campus dipped slightly to 40%. In addition, 37% of BGLTQ respondents somewhat or strongly agreed with this statement. Comments varied from: “I think students have to be very careful of who they share this information with.” to “I certainly didn't worry. I don't think other people do either.”

Roughly 73% of all respondents either somewhat or strongly agreed that they know who to talk to if they became aware of a situation in which a student felt harassed or discriminated against because of her or his gender identity or sexual orientation. Roughly 16% of respondents somewhat disagreed. Among the BGLTQ-identified respondents, slightly fewer (67%) students either somewhat or strongly agreed that they know who to talk to if they became aware of a situation in which a student felt harassed or discriminated against because of her or his gender identity or sexual orientation. More respondents (roughly 27%) either somewhat or strongly disagreed. Resident tutors and Resident Deans were the most oft-cited resource people in the comments section for this particular question, suggesting that they are viewed as positive and supportive resources for students who are coming out.

iii. Student involvement/residence impact of coming out as BGLTQ

When asked if they knew a Harvard BGLTQ student who has moved off campus or transferred to another house or school primarily for reasons related to sexual orientation or gender identity, 34 of the 406 respondents (roughly 8%) said yes.
In the comments section, most students responded that they had not heard of this happening, but that they would not be surprised to learn that it did. One student who did know of someone in this situation commented: “I have a friend who moved off-campus who is gay, and has told me that it’s easier and more socially comfortable for him than living in the Houses. He no longer has fears about getting romantically close to others, about explaining himself to his roommates, or about bringing back possible love interests to his place of residence.”

When asked if they knew Harvard students who have avoided joining a sports team, activity, or House/Yard event because they perceived a potential for heterosexist bias, harassment, and/or discrimination, 62 of the 406 respondents (roughly 15%) replied that they did. One student commented: “Unfortunately, this is one of the few times I have heard the word ‘heterosexist’ used at Harvard outside of WGS.”

In both cases, the percentages doubled when data from only BGLTQ self-identified respondents were examined. When asked if they knew a Harvard BGLTQ student who has moved off campus or transferred to another house or school primarily for reasons related to sexual orientation or gender identity, 16% said yes.

Students cited friends moving to the Dudley co-op for this reason. In another instance, one BGLTQ student commented on how the housing system affects transgender students: “I know transgender students who have moved off campus because of the perceived difficulty of getting gender-neutral housing. That’s not ok - Harvard really needs to step up its game when it comes to providing resources for trans students.”

When asked if they knew Harvard students who have avoided joining a sports team, activity, or House/Yard event because they perceived a potential for heterosexist bias, harassment, and/or discrimination, roughly 30% of BGLTQ-identified respondents said yes. One student commented: “I believe this is VERY true. Final clubs, sororities, some cultural groups, even concentrations (natural sciences) are seen as heteronormative spaces. I have personally made decisions to avoid these groups after some preliminary interactions seemed to confirm this idea (and throughout the years, I have not been given much to believe otherwise).”

iv. Knowledge about existing College BGLTQ resources

Around 50% of all respondents either somewhat or strongly agreed that students at Harvard know how to access support and information (when needed) about issues common for BGLTQ students (for example, about coming out to old friends, educating parents, bias crimes, dating on and off campus and online, related study abroad concerns, sexual health, gender transitioning, housing concerns, gendered locker room and bathroom use, legal and illegal discrimination in employment/education/adoption/marriage/medical care). Roughly 22% of respondents held no opinion, 18% somewhat disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed.

Comments ranged from: “Harvard has gone over the top in letting us know what resources are available,” to “All of these efforts could be improved, especially regarding sexual health and creating safe space.”
When asked if they knew where to go with a mental health question related to BGLTQ life, 60% of respondents said yes and 40% said no. In the comments section of this question, respondents named a variety of campus resources, including the BGLTQ advisers, the Bureau of Study Counsel, CONTACT, Room 13, MHS, UHS, QSA, Thayer basement (the QRC), Sara Kimmel, and the Women’s Center.

When examining their specific responses, roughly 44% of BGLTQ-identified respondents either somewhat or strongly agreed that students at Harvard know how to access support and information (when needed) about issues common for BGLTQ students. Roughly 17% of BGLTQ-respondents held no opinion, 26% somewhat disagreed and 13% strongly disagreed. One BGLTQ-identified respondent commented: “I believe that these resources can be located by Harvard students with a little bit of effort, although again, it seems they are not discussed as openly during freshman week and in general during the beginning of freshman year when students are orienting themselves to campus as they should be.”

When asked if they knew where to go with a mental health question related to BGLTQ life, 68% of respondents said yes and 32% said no, demonstrating that more BGLTQ-identified students are familiar with these resources than in the greater population. The resources most frequently named mirrored the responses from the general population of survey respondents.

v. Need for additional educational programming

Almost 60% of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that Harvard students would benefit from more events (talks, study breaks, movies, discussion groups) related to BGLTQ issues. Conversely, 23% held no opinion, while 18% either somewhat or strongly disagreed. Of the options provided, the most-selected events were campus-wide BGLTQ study breaks, dinner with a BGLTQ activist or social service worker, house BGLTQ events, dinner with a BGLTQ academic and dinner with a BGLTQ journalist or filmmaker.

One respondent commented: “A little bit of knowledge is dangerous, but accurate and complete information is key to attempting to sensitize others to LGBT issues. It would be great if we could have invited talks by people presenting research on the whole concept, basically to answer questions such as 1. Why are people attracted to members of the same sex? 2. Should they consider doing something about it? 3. How does one deal with coming out issues? 4. How does one gauge the political climate regarding LGBT issues? Movie screening would be nice here. They would also help in community-building.”

Roughly 76% of BGLTQ-identified respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that Harvard students would benefit from more events (talks, study breaks, movies, discussion groups) related to BGLTQ issues. In addition, 15% held no opinion, while 9% either somewhat or strongly disagreed.

Pointing out potential hurdles, one BGLTQ-identified respondent commented: “I doubt the turnout would be very good, because closeted gays would consciously avoid the events, and self-conscious gay-fearing heterosexuals would as well, leaving behind the members of BGLTSA and other queer organizations, and some gay-friendly liberal heterosexuals. But for those who can muster up their courage and attend, I strongly agree that they would be
helpful.”

Additional key stakeholder input

i. BGLTS advisers

Since 1996, each House Master has annually appointed up to three tutors to serve as what are known as BGLTS advisers. (In the freshman Yard, in the last several years, the number appointed by Resident Deans of freshmen has varied from one-per-‘sub’-Yard to one for the entire Yard.) These advisers are responsible for serving as resource people to students with questions about BGLTQ life at Harvard, for assisting students who are navigating the coming out process, and for organizing programming to raise awareness of BGLTQ issues in the Houses and the Yard. They play a pivotal role in supporting BGLTQ life at Harvard, and for that reason, the Working Group invited them to speak with us about their experiences. In response to this invitation, David Francis, Stephen Vider, David Byers, Waqas Jawaid, Erika Rickard, Sarah Downer and Laure (Voop) de Vulpillieres visited the Working Group during the half-day meeting on January 30, 2011.

These advisers, each of whom expressed deep concern for their role supporting BGLTQ life, shared poignant concerns about the nature of their work. One participant commented: “[The biggest issues that I can see are] visibility and funding. I have $250 to spend on BGLTQ programming for the entire first year class. Other specialty adviser jobs are to connect students to resources that already exist. We have a non-discrimination policy, but we don’t have a celebration of BGLTQ life.”

The general consensus among the advisers was that they are spread too thin. In addition to being solely responsible for BGLTS issues in the Houses among the tutors, they are asked to do many things that fall outside of their roles as BGLTS tutors. In addition, we discussed the fact that some students who are not ready to come out are more likely to reach out to a tutor who is not the specific BGLTS tutor out of a fear of being “outed.”

When asked whether more resources should be placed in the Houses/Yard or in a more central, campus-wide space, the tutors present agreed that having a strong central resource would actually strengthen House life. One commented: “Our role would be strengthened if we didn’t have to constantly be figuring out if we were replicating services or resources.” Another tutor cited the fact that centralizing information about University-wide events would give the tutors a chance to encourage students to get out of the Houses with them, and at the same time, would cultivate a sense of community.

One adviser said that he sees great advantages to having events that are not explicitly BGLTQ. He noted, “I think it’s often through our programming that we do meet the students. Framing this as either a centralized effort or House-based is differentiating too much. We need to find a way to make them work together. We had a poetry night last night, and a lot of the queer students and non-out students came.”

A lack of institutional memory was cited as one of the most challenging parts of the BGLTS adviser role. The advisers are find themselves having to reinvent the wheel when it comes to providing programming for their students, and they stated that they would like more
direction, and a more cohesive model, which could be better implemented if there were a designated person to centralize and publish information about resources and events.

ii. HGLC Board members

At the half-day meeting on January 30, the Working Group was joined by three past and present officers of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus, the alumnae/i, staff and faculty group that began in 1985: Bob Mack (Harvard College 1971) who was president of the HGLC for five years, and who then served on the board for an additional five years; Rhonda Wittels (Harvard/Radcliffe 1978-’79), who is the current president of the HGLC (and has been for the last three years); and Tom Parry (Harvard College 1974), a former HAA Director who then joined the HGLC and became President.

When asked if/how things had changed over the years, one of the officers commented: “It is night and day. When we first started, there were no out gay administrators at all. They would treat us with a modicum of gentility, but you had a sense they were snickering behind their hands when you left the room. There were some out faculty, but in the administrative group, it was really negative. At the HAA, there were people who were extremely homophobic. Harvard changed as the culture changed. The people in this room and the fact of this meeting are all evidence of the complete change.”

Another, with a slightly different perspective, commented: “I just want to remind us that when I was an undergraduate, we did have a Gay Students Association, we met in Phillips-Brooks House, we had the Radcliffe Lesbians Association. We weren’t totally invisible to the University. The GSA was all guys, but it was a real group.”

All three officers shared some of the history about the HGLC with the group, noting that “The Caucus” formed in 1984 as a result of a growing alumni interest in social issues in different cities. In 1987, the Open Gate was founded to be able to make grants. They described the Open Gate as “the rich uncle.” They also explained that the philosophy of the HGLC has always been, “What do the students want? Then, what do our faculty want? What do the staff want?”

The officers concurred that funding is the HGLC’s key role at this point, through the auspices of the Open Gate Foundation. In terms of sharing responsibility for BGLTQ students with the College, they commented, “I felt from the very beginning that a staffed resource center is an appropriate responsibility for the College to take on.” One confirmed that the Open Gate Fund provided the resources for staffing the Queer Resource Center. Even so, they felt that this was the responsibility of the College and should be assumed as such in the future.

In conclusion, there is a perception among alumni in the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus that there is a need for the College to take on more ownership and responsibility for supporting BGLTQ student life. The officers feel that Harvard needs to move forward in a positive direction, in partnership but without reliance upon the HGLC and Open Gate to support the programs and initiatives needed to support BGLTQ student life at Harvard.
iii. Brad Epps, former chair of the Committee on Degrees in Women, Gender and Sexuality; Professor of Romance Languages and Literature and of Studies on Women, Gender, and Sexuality

On February 23, 2011, Brad Epps, Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures and of the Committee on Degrees in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, visited the Working Group on BGLTQ Student Life. At this meeting, the group focused on BGLTQ curricular issues at Harvard.

Professor Epps began by noting “Harvard has a very small number of courses in BGLTQ Studies compared to other similar universities.” He confirmed that there have been some improvements, but that much more is needed to address students’ proliferating interest in studying BGLTQ history, movements, and theory. He noted that he had worked diligently with a small number of faculty in the 1990s to advance BGLTQ studies, and that reluctance to take up these issues stems more from the faculty than from the students. The Working Group was reminded of the recent success of the Matthiessen professorship--a successful fundraising effort was led to garner alumni/ae support for a one-semester per year visiting professorship in BGLTQ studies. While this effort has been symbolically important, it should be noted that the Matthiessen professorship has not yet been initiated.

The Standing Committee on Degrees in Women, Gender and Sexuality currently convenes a cross-disciplinary group of faculty to pursue collaborations and intellectual exchange across disciplines. Unfortunately, Brad noted, cross-registration between the College and other Harvard schools is currently cumbersome for students, leading to diminished interest in taking courses at other schools. Professor Epps also advocated for greater recognition for ‘activity-based learning,’ which has great potential for meaningful interfacing with BGLTQ studies.

iv. Caroline Light (Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Committee on Degrees in WGS)

Emily Miller, staff to the Working Group, met with Caroline Light, Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Committee on Degrees in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. When asked about her role supporting BGLTQ students, Caroline explained that it was much more common that students came to her to discuss issues of rape and sexual assault than issues of their BGLTQ-identifications or concerns as allies. In all of these cases, Caroline explained that she and the other members of the department are more than willing to have these conversations, but that they usually end up funneling the students to other resources on campus like the OSAPR and the Women’s Center. She said that it would be ideal if there were somewhere BGLTQ-specific to refer students, and she expressed that she feels conflicted about the fact that she sends these students to Susan Marine in the HCWC because she knows that this is not technically part of Susan’s job.
v. Lizzy Elrod (Harvard College 2011, chair of GirlSpot)

Emily Miller met with Lizzy Elrod, the elected leader of the BGLTQ-identified women’s organization (GirlSpot) to discuss what it is like to identify as a lesbian at Harvard, and what changes could help to improve BGLTQ life at Harvard, particularly for women. Elrod suggested improvements of the College’s web presence regarding BGLTQ issues, as well as the web presence of the BGLTQ-related student group, including visibility, ease of access, and comprehensiveness. She stated the need to have more coverage of BGLTQ student life issues in *The Crimson*, featuring the voices and perspectives of openly BGLTQ student leaders. Lizzy also expressed concerns with the heteronormativity of the information presented during first-year opening days regarding sexual assault and abuse (*Sex Signals*), and advocated for making sure this information is more same-sex relationship inclusive.

Lizzy also noted that students generally wish that more BGLTQ-identified faculty, staff, and student leaders alike would come out and be more visible about their identities, so that students who are questioning can see successful, visible role models.

vii. Miguel Garcia (Harvard College 2012, co-Chair of Gay, Lesbian or Whatever (GLOW))

Miguel Garcia, a Junior and co-founder of GLOW (a student group developed in 2010 to serve students of color who are BGLTQ-identified), noted that navigating campus life is difficult for BGLTQ students of color. They do not feel "at home" in organizations like the QSA. Additionally, he believes many queer students of color struggle with the homophobia within some cultural groups, and underrepresentation in larger queer organizations. This had led, he says, to an absence of a supportive community for addressing issues including religion and queer identity, racism in mainstream gay movements, inability to return home for breaks, and identities not represented in other BGLTQ organizations such as "same-gender loving." Miguel adds that the founding of GLOW has at the very least provided a forum for safe dialogue; this, however, Miguel believes, does not suffice in addressing problems of queer students of color at Harvard College. The absence of wide-scale support and acknowledgment of queer students of color, Miguel adds, directly affects the mental health, social life, and academic performance of LGBTQ/Same-Gender Loving students of color. He believes that the utter absence of support has cornered some into unhealthy “coping” habits, including: high-risk sexual activity, drug and alcohol abuse, and most regrettably, suicidal activity/suicide attempts. Miguel recommends the following: increased representation of BGLTQ/Same-Gender Loving faculty and staff, and inclusion in academic courses; increased access to affirming and accurate information about diverse BGLTQ/Same-Gender Loving people of color; allocation of resources specifically for queer people of color, and availability to group "queer sensitivity" training for cultural and racial organizations (by BGLTQ advisers or other qualified college staff). Lastly, Miguel adds that he has never participated or known of an event addressing the intersection of race/ethnicity and transgender identities.
The trans community at Harvard includes students, staff, and faculty who identify as transgender, transsexual, gender non-conforming, and genderqueer. Many trans students are not “out.” It is true that for those who are aware of them, there are a number of resources and policies available that make Harvard a trans inclusive space. In terms of benefits, hormone therapy and top surgery (bilateral mastectomy) is covered through the Harvard University Group Health Plan for students, staff, and faculty. There are a number of gender neutral bathrooms available on campus, although there are not enough. Trans students are also guaranteed access to gender neutral housing in any of the residential houses and first-year dormitories if they are willing to come forward and self-identify. Tutors, proctors, mental health services, and peer counseling resources at Harvard have also been reported as trans inclusive. Many issues, however, remain outstanding for trans members of the Harvard community. Many of Harvard’s spaces are still gender specific and are thus not inclusive of trans individuals. There are not enough gender-neutral bathrooms available. Student organization parties and events still use language that assumes heterosexuality and the male-female binary. Students, staff, and faculty who opt to undergo sex reassignment surgery still do not have certain surgeries covered by Harvard’s insurance plan. Recently, the decision to reinstate ROTC was noted as being in direct violation of Harvard’s non-discrimination policy. Trans students will be significantly excluded from office spaces, athletic facilities, and university funding allocated for the ROTC. To this point, the administration has yet to respond to how the presence of ROTC will be reconciled with the non-discrimination policy.

Emily Miller and Craig Rodgers exchanged emails concerning the role of the Bureau Of Study Counsel in supporting student life at Harvard. Craig had the following thoughts about BGLTQ life, specifically:

“What probably stands out -- as you correctly noted -- is that the Bureau is not BGLTQ-specific. We welcome and cater to all students, including those with concerns, questions, or challenges regarding sexual preference, orientation, gender, etc. In our staff bios on the BSC website, several of us mention "sexuality" and/or "gender" as an area of interest, and we encourage students to read those bios before selecting a BSC counselor. Personally, I've met with plenty of gay, lesbian, bi, and (often) questioning students about those issues and of course other issues that are incidental to their sexual preference/orientation. [Regarding gender, though ... personally, I don't recall ever meeting with a student who self-identified to me as trans.] The same holds true for our student-athletes who use the AAPEX (Athletic, Academic, and Personal Excellence) program. In the AAPEX flyer we distribute, and on the AAPEX website, I make a point of inviting BGL & questioning student-athletes to have those same conversations (see http://aapex.harvard.edu/athletes.html). In addition, in our staff bios on the BSC website, several of us mention "sexuality" and/or "gender" as an area of interest, and we encourage students to read those bios before selecting a BSC counselor.
As far as groups/workshops/outreach are concerned, our general approach at the BSC is to try to accommodate any organization (e.g., QSA, if they made such a request) that asks us to do a group or workshop that fits within the Bureau's mission. For example, the Black Students' Association has invited BSC counselors to join them for meetings, and years ago I was invited to meet with the first-year BGLT group that used to meet weekly in the Yard. You'll notice that the BSC doesn't generally offer "affiliation/affinity" groups/workshops (e.g., a Men's Group, Women's Group, Korean Students' Group -- things like that). Rather, if you look at the BSC's list of groups/workshops, you'll find that our offerings are more topic-focused (vs. population-focused). See [http://bsc.harvard.edu/grpwrk.html](http://bsc.harvard.edu/grpwrk.html). This is ongoing conversation (vs. a "bright-line rule"), though.

**Overview of HUHS Spring 2010 Student Health Survey Data**

Every other spring, Harvard University Health Services administers a comprehensive survey to the entire Harvard College student population about various health experiences and behaviors. Dr. Paul Barreira shared the spring 2010 data \((n=3300)\), specifically the aggregated, anonymous responses of self-identified BGLTQ students \((n=235)\) with the Working Group. While this population expresses much similarity to their heterosexual and cisgender peers in the College, several important distinctions emerged when data regressions were conducted. In summary: The BGLTQ students report significantly higher rates of depression, bipolar disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and panic attacks. In addition, there are higher rates of suicidal thoughts among BGLTQ students, and they do not feel as close to family members or high school friends as their heterosexual classmates.

When asked how they feel their friends at the College care about them, students from the BGLTQ population report this as positively as among the heterosexual population. Relationship struggles that BGLTQ students experience in their home communities and with peers from high school appear to be somewhat mediated by the positive and supportive networks they identify having here at Harvard.

Of concern is the fact that there are higher rates of unwanted sexual CONTACT among BGLTQ students, which Susan Marine noted is consistent with national data regarding BGLTQ students (Waterman, Dawson & Bologna, 1989; Waldner-Haugrad & Gratch, 1997). They are more likely to be in emotionally abusive relationships, but they are no more likely to be in physically abusive relationships than their heterosexual peers. BGLTQ students are more likely to engage in self-injurious behaviors than their heterosexual classmates, and they smoke more cigarettes and drink more heavily as well. On a positive note, BGLTQ students report finding a more supportive community at Harvard than in their communities of origin. Based on another study conducted with Cornell University and eight other institutions around issues of non-suicidal self-injurious behaviors, Dr. Barreira noted that the highest rates of such behaviors are found in questioning and/or bisexual students as opposed to BGLTQ students who are settled in their identities (or heterosexual students). This signals the importance of creating ample and visible opportunities for students to identify trusted others with whom they can discuss their concerns during the coming out process.

In addition to data specific to Harvard College, data from national surveys of BGLTQ-
identified college students is helpful in considering the specific experiences of this population. Experiences with discrimination unquestionably shape students’ needs for support, both from professionals, peers, and family, in coping with and combating mistreatment. In a recent national survey of BGLTQ college students at 100 institutions in all 50 states, BGLQ students were twice as likely to experience a negative campus climate in comparison to their heterosexual peers; 61% (n=1006) of those who had experienced harassment had been a target of a derogatory remark related to their identity, 47% felt they had been deliberately ignored or excluded from some aspect of campus life, and 13% feared for their physical safety (Rankin, Blumenfeld, Weber & Frazier, 2010). Students in the survey who identified as transgender or otherwise gender non-conforming (n=234) were three to four times as likely to experience a hostile campus climate (in the form of derogatory remarks, exclusion, or fears for their physical safety) as those who identify as cisgender.

Benchmark of peer institutions

In addition to looking inward at the services and programs available to those in our own community, the Working Group also felt it was important to look outward -- to survey the landscape of BGLTQ life on other campuses similar to ours. Because many colleges, especially our peers in the Ivy League, founded or expanded their BGLTQ student services in the last decade, it seemed prudent to consider the ways these efforts could wisely inform our recommendations as they pertain to Harvard College.

In order to consider peer institutions of similar size, selectivity, and scope, a group of 13 mostly small to mid-sized liberal arts colleges, including each member of the Ivy League, was reviewed. Institutions were also selected based on their superior ranking in the LGBT-friendly Campus Climate Index. Emily Miller and Susan Marine derived basic information about these institutions from website information, then followed up with those responsible for these programs by email and phone to determine the specifics of structure, personnel, and funding sources.

While each institution examined in this benchmarking study offers BGLTQ services and support in unique ways according to the needs of their student populations, some common themes arose, including the following:

- Each institution’s BGLTQ programs and services are coordinated by a full-time staff member in the Division of Student Affairs or the Dean of the College area.
- Each institution’s BGLTQ programs and services were heavily student-driven, and while offerings varied, all institutions benchmarked conducted oversight of programming for the entire community, coordination of resources, and advising of BGLTQ-related student organizations.
- In roughly half of the fourteen cases, the BGLTQ-specific professional was integrated into a reporting structure that included others doing similar kind of work, particularly women’s and gender centers and multicultural affairs. This demonstrates thoughtfulness around greater integration of students’ interests and concerns in their multiple identity formation processes, and is a preferable alternative to compartmentalization.
For more information on the specifics of each benchmarked institution, please refer to Appendix 4, beginning on Page 47.

Summary of data collection process and major findings

In conclusion, the open forums held in the Houses and Yard, the anonymous survey, the discussions with the key stakeholders, the benchmarking exercise and the HUHS data regarding the health and well being of BGLTQ students combined to inform the perspectives of and decisions made by the Working Group on BGLTQ Student Life at Harvard College.

At the open forums, students explained that expressed support from the administration would mean a lot to BGLTQ-identified individuals and their allies. They noted that stakeholders in the College should work together to reach out to students who do not currently participate in BGLTQ student life at Harvard, as they are also the individuals who need the most support. Students resoundingly expressed a need for a coordinated effort to unify all of the BGLTQ student organizations, programs, and services. Similarly, they would like to see a centralized list of resources, and they recommended that this centralization could be most effectively handled by designation of an official resource person for the BGLTQ community. Students also expressed a desire to see all proctors and House tutors to be trained in handling BGLTQ issues.

The data from the survey suggested that there may be a disjunction between some of the perceptions and the reality at Harvard. The feedback was largely positive, but many survey participants qualified their statements saying that they “would not be surprised” to learn that certain acts of blatant discrimination or harassment were taking place, while at the same time, the vast majority of these respondents said that they had never heard of a specific instance of such harassment or discrimination occurring. When the responses were disaggregated to determine how responses varied between the entire population of respondents and those respondents who self-identified as BGLTQ, the responses were slightly less positive coming from the BGLTQ students, while demonstrating a general level of knowledge and confidence about available resources.

Key stakeholders provided input that informed the course of the Working Group as well. They noted the need for greater coordination of resources, an improved web presence and coordination with social networking interfaces, improved and expanded training and support for BGLTS advisers, and a better balance of resource provision from the College versus the current arrangement with alumni like the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus. More study and reflection on the realities of the curriculum are needed, as Harvard appears to be ‘behind the curve’ in provision of relevant coursework. Regarding the College’s highly skilled and sensitive mental health resources, greater visibility of these resources at both HUHS and the Bureau of Study Counsel would be desirable.

The HUHS Spring 2010 Student Health Survey made it clear to the Working Group that the BGLTQ-identified students, especially those not settled in their identities, are a vulnerable subgroup in the Harvard College student population. Though unresolved, the issue arose as to how to reach out to the students who may not be reaching back, and yet who need a hand
Finally, the benchmarking process showed the group that Harvard is not measuring up to peer institutions and model BGLTQ programs across the country when it comes to BGLTQ student life. One of the major differences that emerged is the fact that almost all of these institutions have a full-time staff member (if not multiple staff members) who respond to BGLTQ student needs, leadership development, and conduct educational programming for the entire community’s benefit. These staff members are vital to ensuring the coordination and visibility of each community’s resources, many of which already exist in Harvard College.

The wide array of data summarized thus provided the Working Group with a clear and informed sense of the many strengths of the College’s offerings, as well as the potential for what is possible to improve BGLTQ life. After synthesizing this information, the Working Group arrived at the following recommendations for the continued improvement of BGLTQ student life at Harvard College.

Recommendations: Introduction

The overall picture painted by the survey data, HUHS health survey data, key stakeholder interviews, and open forums is one of Harvard that for many, offers important support and resources needed for BGLTQ life. For others, significantly those who are not ‘out,’ those who feel excluded from BGLTQ-related student organizations, and those with little or no family or peer support, the need for better coordinated, more visible, and more accessible resources is vital to their sense of safety and belonging in Harvard College.

Recommendation #1: Establishment of a full-time position, Director of BGLTQ Student Life

In surveys, open forums, and in meetings with key stakeholders, the most repeated refrain, and thus the first recommendation, is that the Dean should appoint a full-time Director of BGLTQ Student Life. Many of the criticisms of students and other community members who feel that existing resources are not well-coordinated or comprehensive can be addressed through the addition of an individual -- well-versed in the developmental and intellectual needs of BGLTQ college students -- to bring together the disparate but vital strands of BGLTQ life at Harvard College.

The Director, whose office could be housed near the Queer Resource Center in Thayer Hall or in a similar, student-friendly and accessible space (both to maximize access to the QRC space, and to enable frequent contact between the Director and colleagues at the Harvard Foundation and Harvard College Women’s Center) would have the following responsibilities:

- Oversight of the Queer Resource Center, including training and supervision of staff and development of resources,
- Coordination of educational programs and events related to BGLTQ life, to benefit the entire community,
- Advising of Harvard’s multiple BGLTQ student organizations, including the QSA,
GirlSpot, The Trans Task Force and GLOW,

- Co-supervision (with Sara Kimmel, at HUHS) of the BGLTQ-oriented peer counseling group, CONTACT,
- Training and coordination of the BGLTQ adviser program in the Houses and Yard, and additional training and education for all House Tutors and Yard Proctors,
- Liaising with the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus Board, and the Open Gate Foundation,
- Serving as a ‘first responder’ resource to students experiencing personal challenges related to coming out as BGLTQ,
- Developing resources -- both human and material -- to support the flourishing of awareness about the history, political concerns, and personal development of BGLTQ students and their allies,
- Providing leadership for development of a policy/protocol to respond meaningfully to bias-related incidents involving students who are, or are perceived to be, BGLTQ,
- Coordination of a College-wide ‘safe space’ program, and
- Coordination of programs addressing ‘being BGLTQ after Harvard,’ in conjunction with the Office of Career Services.

Additionally, the Working Group recommends that the Director be affiliated with an academic committee or department, most likely the Committee on Degrees in Women, Gender and Sexuality. The Director would teach one course per year, linking the academic to the co-curricular and creating stable and durable connections for students between their academic study of BGLTQ life and their leadership development within it. The Director will benefit from the support and insights of an advisory board, comprising faculty, staff and students with experience and investment in the BGLTQ College community to date. The advisory board will meet with the Director monthly to shape the development and implementation of a strategic plan for BGLTQ life at Harvard.

If approved by the Dean, this position could be a unique fiscal partnership of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus (HGLC). Historically, the HGLC, a primarily alumni-oriented social and activist organization that is associated with the HAA, has provided informal advising and support – and the lion’s share of financial resources for educational programming and the staffing of the Queer Resource Center through the auspices of the Open Gate Foundation. To capitalize on this tremendously positive historical partnership, the College and HGLC may consider jointly funding the position of Director. Members of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus would in turn serve on the Director’s advisory board, informing the policies, programs and services that are offered through the Office.

The Director would work closely with five to six paid undergraduate, and two paid graduate student interns hired to support the programming and staffing of the QRC, to develop resource materials, and to conduct outreach across campus. This approach is in keeping with the successful models at the Harvard College Women’s Center and the Harvard Foundation.

Recommendation #2: Formation of a College-Wide BGLTQ Advisory Committee

While attending to the coordination and implementation of the many services and programs
dedicated to BGLTQ life, the Director of BGLTQ Student Life will undoubtedly benefit from the support and insights of an advisory board, comprising faculty, staff and students with experience and investment in the BGLTQ College community to date. The advisory board will meet with the Director monthly to shape the development and implementation of a strategic plan for BGLTQ life at Harvard.

The Working Group recommends the following composition for this advisory committee:

- 4-5 members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, including the following: Tim McCarthy, Lecturer on History and Literature and on Public Policy and Program Director at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy; Brad Epps, Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures and former chair of the Committee on Degrees in Women, Gender and Sexuality, and others with a demonstrated commitment to scholarship in BGLTQ studies.
- 4-5 administrators in the College, including the Assistant Dean of Student Life and Director of the Harvard College Women’s Center; Paul McLoughlin, Associate Dean of the College and Senior Adviser to the Dean; Loc Truong, Assistant Director of the Harvard Foundation, and Sara Kimmel, Psychologist at Harvard University Health Services.
- 4-6 undergraduates, including the co-chairs of the Queer Students and Allies (QSA) group, the chair of GLOW, the chair of GirlSpot, and two or more ‘at large’ members, preferably who are not affiliated with these groups.
- 2 members of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus Board of Directors or their designate(s).

This group will meet with the Director on a monthly basis to inform the process of setting goals for the fledgling program, and to assist in shaping an identity, naming priorities, and marshaling needed resources for the Director’s work. The group will also design and conduct an evaluation of the program at the end of the first three years of implementation.

Recommendation #3: Improved Coordination of Physical and Mental Health Resources specific to BGLTQ student needs

Ever since BGLTQ activists organized to have homosexuality removed from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in 1974, thereby eliminating the classification of non-heterosexual identities as mental illness, it has been clear that identifying as bisexual, gay, or lesbian -- or questioning one’s relationship to these identities -- is not a pathology. While ‘gender identity disorder’ is unfortunately still characterized as a mental disorder in the DSM rubric, Harvard has taken an actively affirmative stance in supporting its transgender community members through provision of both mental and physical health treatment to affirm trans individuals’ identities. The developmental and personal challenges faced by BGLTQ students are not signifiers of illness but rather the stressors that face these individuals as they negotiate living in a homo-, bi- and transphobic society.

Measured by national standards, it is important to note that the College’s mental health service is well staffed. The accreditation standards recommend staffing of 1 FTE (full time equivalent) staff to 1200 students; currently, the HUHS and BSC mental health service staffing ratio is 1 FTE to 700 students, not including the BSC. Furthermore the offices of
Alcohol and Other Drug Services and the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response are staffed at a higher rate than most colleges and universities. Student participation in peer counseling and peer education groups is at an all time high: More than 200 students participate in these programs annually. While it is not realistic to expect an increase in staffing, there are new initiatives that would improve both outreach and treatment for the BGLTQ community.

As noted in the summary of HUHS spring 2010 survey data, extensive data collected through surveys and depression screenings indicate the following: BGLTQ students at Harvard College report higher rates of depression, PTSD, anxiety, and general stress than their non-BGLTQ peers. BGLTQ students also report higher rates of unhealthy behaviors including increased smoking, alcohol use, and unwanted to sexual contact. While the BGLTQ community on the whole report better social contacts at Harvard compared to their home environments, there continues to exist a higher level of familial conflict and abusive relationships.

Increase in education both by peers and professionals is needed to better understand the BGLTQ community’s experience in these areas and to work together to improve awareness and access to mental health and counseling resources. In addition, we recommend that MHS and BSC hold workshops on “coming out” and other related topics.

Additional suggestions to improve the provision of both physical and mental health services to BGLTQ students include:

- The addition of sexuality and gender identity, and available services, to the HUHS website,
- Consideration of expertise/experience in BGLTQ mental health for any current and/or future hires,
- Identification of any current MHS clinicians (in addition to Sara Kimmel) who are trained and/or interested in BGLTQ mental health, or willing to be identified as out BGLTQ clinicians,
- Provision of time in their schedules for these clinicians to become involved in BGLTQ mental health outreach in the community in order to expand community trust,
- Training for additional clinician(s) that can perform Sex Reassignment Surgery evaluations required by BCBS policy for transgender patients. (Currently Sara Kimmel is the sole evaluator),
- Provision of yearly trainings for Mental Heath and Medical staff on BGLTQ health,
- Identification of additional Primary Care Physicians who are willing to be identified as and have interest/training in BGLTQ primary care,
- Increased visibility of BGLTQ health issues in HUHS, e.g. with poster campaigns regarding BGLTQ health and inclusion in elevators for coming out day or at other times, and
- Ongoing review of insurance coverage regarding transgender health care needs, to meet current standard of care at peer institutions.
Recommendation #4: Establishment of a centralized information website

A commonly expressed need from those who took the survey and attended the open forums was the extensive -- sometimes even dizzying -- array of BGLTQ-related events and activities happening at the College as well as at other schools and in the local Cambridge and Boston community. Students frequently reported not knowing how to access the most up-to-date information and resources, and each year, student organizations must raise grants funds to be able to hire peers to update their websites. The result is a fragmented and stale listing of events, programs, and sometimes (most problematically) out-of-date resource names and contact information.

While the Office of Student Life has attempted to address this problem by establishing a resource area for BGLTQ information on its website, this is not an intuitive place for students to search for information, and the site does not include information about recent and upcoming events, connections with alumni/ae, or local resources. In order to build community and reduce students’ sense of isolation, a new, updated, and visually appealing website is needed. This resource will serve as a clearinghouse for BGLTQ events across the University, connecting programming across the 'tubs,' including Harvard College, the Radcliffe Institute, and all the graduate schools. The Working Group recommends that Dean Hammonds allocate funding (approximately $10,000) to hire a designer who will be charged with developing a well-designed site, preferably using the university iSite platform, which can be easily modified on a regular basis. The web resource will include:

- Information about events happening across campus and the local area related to BGLTQ history, identity and movements,
- An up to date web listing of all information related to the Director’s office, including bios, contact information, office locations and hours,
- A complete listing of BGLTS House and Yard advisers and their contact information,
- Links to the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus (HGLC) website and the Open Gate Foundation, to facilitate student interactions with alumni/ae,
- Information about, and photographs of, openly BGLTQ (and allies) staff, faculty, and alumni/ae, to provide students with easily recognizable role models within the College,
- Complete and up to date information about all courses available in the FAS and at other schools related to BGLTQ studies,
- Information about accessing services related to BGLT physical and mental health and well-being, and
- Listings of appropriate community resources in Cambridge and Boston.

The site would be designed to optimize the ability to interface with social media tools typically used by students, such as Facebook and Twitter. The site would be colorful, visually appealing, and would represent the wide array of information and resources to support student life at Harvard College.
Recommendation #5: Conduct a thorough review of curricular offerings related to BGLTQ topics

Queer studies, also known as BGLTQ studies or studies of gender and sexuality, has a vibrant history at Harvard, dating back to 2001 when Brad Epps and Heather Love initiated the expansion of women's studies to formally recognize the scholarship and teaching already taking place that focused on BGLTQ studies. Currently, approximately six courses are offered each year in the Committee on Degrees in Women, Gender, and Sexuality that specifically address questions of sexual identity in cultural and historical context, history of social movements related to BGLTQ people and communities, and theories of both individual and communal identity formation and political practice.

Despite the success of BGLTQ studies in the context of the committee on Degrees in Women, Gender, and Sexuality, students and faculty who participated in the open forums and the Working Group meetings noted the striking lack of integration of BGLTQ-related subject matter in other departments and coursework. Even in places where one might expect to see integration, in fields such as anthropology, sociology, and government, course titles that include the words ‘gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender, or queer’ are currently exclusively found in the Committee on Degrees in Women, Gender, and Sexuality. According to Brad Epps, former chair of WGS, this situation has been fomented over time because those who teach these topics are marginalized, in departments across the country as well as Harvard, due to a lack of understanding of the concepts and their vital and central applicability to contemporary life.

As noted previously, the Working Group recommends that the Director may serve as a lecturer in WGS, and in that capacity, will teach one course a year. While this will clearly improve the coordination and communication between the Committee on Degrees in WGS and the co-curricular realm of BGLTQ life, the Working Group is also convinced that the time is ripe for a full, cross-disciplinary analysis of BGLTQ studies at Harvard, toward the goal of identifying additional opportunities -- in the departments, in the general education curriculum, and in other locations -- for students of all genders and sexualities to learn about the diversity of BGLTQ life around the world. To this end, the Working Group recommends that the Dean convene a university-wide forum on queer studies, chaired by Brad Epps and others from WGS, and invite faculty from across the University to come together to consider the future of LGBT studies, identifying new possibilities for increased engagement between students and the curriculum. Additionally, funding should be identified for new course development for courses on gender and sexuality, with an eye on increasing the number of courses that emphasize interdisciplinarity, team-teaching, and activity-based learning. Resources should also be identified for assisting faculty in adapting existing courses to include topical material on BGLTQ studies, and for voluntary workshops to learn about ways to incorporate BGLTQ studies into their coursework. Members of the WGS standing committee have emphasized the concern that compartmentalizing BGLTQ ‘student life’ as separate from BGLTQ ‘academic life’ is an unhelpful and irrelevant distinction in a vibrant landscape such as ours, and supports the Working Group’s suggestion to explore these issues in tandem, as we endeavor together to live, work, and learn seamlessly in our community.

To begin the conversation about BGLTQ life with all members of the community in a
uniform way, it was recommended also that there be inclusion of readings about BGLTQ experience and identity in the annual “Community Conversations” discussion held with members of the incoming class during opening days.

Summary and conclusion

Following six months of extensive data collection, meetings with key stakeholder, careful consideration of the prevailing needs arising from the data, and keeping in mind the limitations in the current fiscal climate, the Working Group on BGLTQ life has created this set of recommendations which it believes will significantly improve the experiences of BGLTQ students at Harvard and as the learning of all about BGLTQ life. The Working Group was pleased to learn that many aspects of BGLTQ life at Harvard College are powerfully effective; many students noted the importance of the support of their peers, their House BGLTS advisers, and other informal advisers in the College as being pivotal to their sense of safety and well-being as a BGLTQ student at Harvard. The College’s current array of services, though not as well coordinated as they will be if these recommendations are adopted, are significant -- indeed, Harvard has earned a rating of 4.5 stars (out of a possible 5) in the CampusPride Index of America’s most LGBT friendly colleges.

While the Working Group is hopeful that the Dean of the College will undertake these recommendations, it also recognizes the importance of collaboration -- particularly with the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus. The HGLC has played a central role in identifying and advocating for resources for the community for the last two decades. Together, the Working Group believes that the College and dedicated alumni/ae support will make improving the climate for BGLTQ students more possible.

This is the first time that a Working Group of students, faculty and staff have convened to consider the needs of the community related to BGLTQ life, and thus, the work of this group should be considered a preliminary step in defining the issues to be addressed and the outcomes to which changes are directed. It is recommended that every three to five years, this plan and its implementation are reviewed, to ensure that Harvard’s rich history -- and even better future -- of support for BGLTQ life is assured. Working together to understand and support the unique needs and rich history of BGLTQ student life at the College, regular assessment of these efforts should mainstay of this community’s effort to continually evolve in support of this community.
LGBTQ Student Groups

The Queer Resource Center (QRC)
Founded in 1998, the QRC is a student-run, HGLC-funded space for students to hold meetings and events. [http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~harvardqrc/](http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~harvardqrc/)

Queer Students and Allies (QSA)
An overarching queer student organization that aims to raise awareness of current issues affecting queer individuals on-campus as well as in society, politics and education. [http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~queer/](http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~queer/)

Transgender Task Force (TTF)
Dedicated to improving the university’s policies and climate with regard to transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, and gender non-conforming people and their allies. [http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/queer/ttf/](http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/queer/ttf/)

Gay, Lesbian, or Whatever (GLOW)
Focuses on intersectionality, particularly the unique experiences of queer students of color as members of multiple marginalized identities.
Contact: garcia9@fas.harvard.edu

BAGELS
Student group for LGBTQ Jewish students and allies (straight, cis-gendered, and non-Jewish). [http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~bagels/](http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~bagels/)

GirlSpot
Female social organization for Harvard women is for those who identify as lesbian, bisexual, bicurious, trans, queer or questioning. [http://girlspot.bravehost.com/](http://girlspot.bravehost.com/)

Women’s Group
Subgroup of GirlSpot. Meeting on a weekly basis. The discussions are oriented more toward personal concerns, feelings and issues. Contact: elrod@fas.harvard.edu

FemSex
A not-for-credit workshop about female sexuality that is run by undergraduates and that meets one night a week for two hours. Contact: meglisz@fas.harvard.edu

Alumnae, Faculty and Staff groups

Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus (HGLC)
Community that serves as a community building and networking opportunity for BGLTQ alumni/ae, faculty, and staff, while encouraging current student groups to work together to coordinate programming. [http://hglc.org/](http://hglc.org/)

The LGBT Faculty/Staff Group
This group, comprised of faculty and staff from across the university, is primarily a support and advocacy group for faculty and staff.

http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k6466&pageid=icb.page23805

**Counseling and Support Resources**

**Mental Health Services (MHS)**
Operated under Harvard University Health Services; it is the largest counseling resource on campus. Not a BGLTQ-specific resource, but many BGLTQ students turn to MHS for support. [http://huhs.harvard.edu/](http://huhs.harvard.edu/)

**CONTACT (Peer Counseling Group)**
A confidential peer counseling group on issues of gender, gender identity and expression, sexuality, sexual orientation, relationships, and other mental health issues. 617-495-8111

**First Year Group (FYG)**
FYG provides a safe, confidential gathering space for first year students; run by Contact.

**BGLTQ Tutors and Proctors**
Each house has 1-2 BGLTQ-designated tutors to whom students can reach out if they are looking for support or resources. They also do programming in each house.

**Academic Resources**

**Committee on Degrees in the Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality**
[http://wgs.fas.harvard.edu/](http://wgs.fas.harvard.edu/)

**Other Resources**

**The Harvard College Women’s Center**
The HCWC, established in 2006, is a center dedicated to promoting awareness of women’s and gender issues, centralizing resources for students and student organizations to achieve their visions, and provides a comfortable and welcoming social space for students.

[http://hcwc.fas.harvard.edu/](http://hcwc.fas.harvard.edu/)
Appendix 2: Working Group Survey Instrument


**BGLTQ Student Life Survey**

*This poll's results will not be available to respondents online.*

The Working Group on BGLTQ student life at Harvard, appointed by Dean Hammonds, is interested in your thoughts. This survey is designed to capture your experiences with bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender and queer/questioning communities at Harvard and the programs and services currently provided. All information will be used only in the aggregate, and no attempt will be made to identify individuals who are taking this survey. The Dean of the College's BGLTQ Working Group greatly values your thoughtful input. Results of this survey will be made available later in the academic year. If you have any feedback about this survey, questions about its use or would like more information, please CONTACT us at BGLTQWG@fas.harvard.edu.

**QUESTION 1:**
What is your affiliation with Harvard University?

Current Undergraduate Student  
Faculty  
Staff  
Harvard College Alumnus  
Graduate Student  
Other (please specify)

**QUESTION 2:**
I identify as (choose one):

Heterosexual  
Gay or Lesbian  
Bisexual  
Queer  
Questioning  
Prefer not to answer  
Other

**QUESTION 3:**
In terms of my gender identity, I am:

Male  
Female  
Transgender  
Prefer not to answer  
Other
QUESTION 4:
Are you an active member of a BGLTQ student organization?

No
Yes - if yes, please list which one(s)

QUESTION 5:
If you have chosen not to participate in BGLTQ student organizations, please explain why:

QUESTION 6:
Students at Harvard can openly identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, queer, or questioning (BGLTQ), or as a straight ally, in all areas of student life without worrying about harassment or discrimination from other students based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
No Opinion
Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

QUESTION 7:
Please comment on the above question here:

QUESTION 8:
Students at Harvard worry that they will lose friends if they identify as BGLTQ on campus.

Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
No Opinion
Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

QUESTION 9:
Please comment on the above question here:

QUESTION 10:
I would know who to talk to if I became aware of a situation in which a student felt harassed or discriminated against because of her or his gender identity or sexual orientation.

Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
No Opinion  
Somewhat Agree  
Strongly Agree

**QUESTION 11:**  
Please comment on the above question here:

**QUESTION 12:**  
I know Harvard BGLTS students who have moved off campus or transferred to another house or school primarily for reasons related to sexual orientation or gender identity.

True  
False

**QUESTION 13:**  
Please comment on the above question here:

**QUESTION 14:**  
I know Harvard students who have avoided joining a sports team, activity, or House/Yard event because they perceived a potential for heterosexist bias, harassment, and/or discrimination.

True  
False

**QUESTION 15:**  
Please comment on the above question here:

**QUESTION 16:**  
Students at Harvard know how to access support and information (when needed) about issues common for BGLTQ students (for example, about coming out to old friends, educating parents, bias crimes, dating on and off campus and online, related study abroad concerns, sexual health, gender transitioning, housing concerns, gendered locker room and bathroom use, legal and illegal discrimination in employment / education / adoption / marriage / medical care).

Strongly Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
No Opinion  
Somewhat Agree  
Strongly Agree
QUESTION 17:
Please comment on the above question here:

QUESTION 18:
Do you know where to go with a mental health question related to BGLTQ life?

No
Yes - if yes, where?

QUESTION 19:
Please comment on the above question here:

QUESTION 20:
I think Harvard students would benefit from more events (talks, study breaks, movies, discussion groups) related to BGLTQ issues.

Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
No Opinion
Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

QUESTION 21:
Please comment on the above question here:

QUESTION 22:
If you strongly or somewhat agree with the previous question, please select all topics from the list below in which you would like to participate.

Dinner with a BGLTQ journalist or filmmaker
Dinner with a BGLTQ activist or social service worker
Dinner with a BGLTQ academic
Training on Transgender awareness
House BGLTQ events
Campus-wide BGLTQ study break
House Committee on BGLTQ issues
Discussion group about BGLTQ life (general)
Discussion group about BGLTQ religious issues
Discussion group about "post-gay" identifications at Harvard
Discussion group about race and the BGLTQ community
Other events you would like to see:

QUESTION 23:
Do you have any additional suggestions for BGLTQ programs at Harvard College? If so, please list them here:
QUESTION 24:
Any final comments on your perception of BGLTQ student life at Harvard as it currently exists? Anything else you believe the BGLTQ Working Group on Student Life should consider or know?

QUESTION 25:
If you are a student, where do you live?

Adams House
Cabot House
Currier House
Dudley House
Dunster House
Eliot House
Kirkland House
Leverett House
Lowell House
Mather House
Pforzheimer House
Quincy House
Winthrop House
The Yard
Off-Campus
I am not a student

QUESTION 26:
If you are a student, in which year are you?

First Year
Sophomore
Junior
Senior
I am not a student
Other (please specify):

Thank you so much for taking the time to answer these questions about BGLTQ student life at Harvard College. Your input is invaluable!
Upon the completion of this poll, the user will be directed to the following URL: http://www.harvard.edu/

Raw Survey Data for All Respondents:

Question 1: What is your affiliation with Harvard University? [check choice(s)]
Total Responses -- 408

Current Undergraduate: 362 (88.73%)
Staff: 37 (9.07%)
Harvard College Alumnus: 9 (2.21%)
Graduate Student: 8 (1.96%)
Other: 3 (0.74%)
Faculty: 2 (0.49%)

**Question 2:** I identify as (choose one): [radio choice]
Total Responses -- 409

Heterosexual: 271 (66.26%)
Gay or Lesbian: 77 (18.83%)
Bisexual: 34 (8.31%)
Questioning: 12 (2.93%)
Queer: 8 (1.96%)
Prefer Not to Answer: 8 (1.96%)
Other: 4 (0.98%)

**Question 3:** In terms of my gender identity, I am: [radio choice]
Total Responses -- 408

Female: 222 (54.41%)
Male: 174 (42.65%)
Transgender: 2 (0.49%)
Prefer Not to Answer: 1 (0.25%)
Other: 9 (2.21%)

**Question 4:** Are you an active member of a BGLTQ student organization? [radio choice]
Total Responses -- 408

No: 366 (89.71%)
Yes: 42 (10.29%)

**Question 5:** If you have chosen not to participate in BGLTQ student organizations, please explain why: [essay]
Total Responses -- 290

**Question 6:** Students at Harvard can openly identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, queer, or questioning (BGLTQ), or as a straight ally, in all areas of student life without worrying about harassment or discrimination from other students based on sexual orientation or gender identity. [radio choice]
Total Responses -- 407

Strongly Disagree: 13 (3.19%)
Somewhat Disagree: 72 (17.69%)
No Opinion: 15 (3.69%)
Somewhat Agree: 203 (49.88%)
Question 7: Please comment on the above question here: [essay]
Total Responses: 266

Question 8: Students at Harvard worry that they will lose friends if they identify as BGLTQ on campus. [radio choice]
Total Responses: 407

Question 9: Please comment on the above question here: [essay]
Total Responses: 225

Question 10: I would know who to talk to if I became aware of a situation in which a student felt harassed or discriminated against because of her or his gender identity or sexual orientation. [radio choice]
Total Responses: 407

Question 11: Please comment on the above question here: [essay]
Total Responses: 226

Question 12: I know Harvard BGLTS students who have moved off campus or transferred to another house or school primarily for reasons related to sexual orientation or gender identity. [radio choice]
Total Responses: 406

Question 13: Please comment on the above question here: [essay]
Total Responses -- 112

**Question 14:** I know Harvard students who have avoided joining a sports team, activity, or House/Yard event because they perceived a potential for heterosexist bias, harassment, and/or discrimination. [radio choice]

Total Responses -- 406

TRUE: 62 (15.27%)
FALSE: 344 (84.73%)

**Question 15:** Please comment on the above question here: [essay]

Total Responses -- 127

**Question 16:** Students at Harvard know how to access support and information (when needed) about issues common for BGLTQ students (for example, about coming out to old friends, educating parents, bias crimes, dating on and off campus and online, related study abroad concerns, sexual health, gender transitioning, housing concerns, gendered locker room and bathroom use, legal and illegal discrimination in employment / education / adoption / marriage / medical care). [radio choice]

Total Responses -- 405

Strongly Disagree: 27 (6.67%)
Somewhat Disagree: 74 (18.27%)
No Opinion: 91 (22.47%)
Somewhat Agree: 146 (36.05%)
Strongly Agree: 67 (16.54%)

**Question 17:** Please comment on the above question here: [essay]

Total Responses -- 164

**Question 18:** Do you know where to go with a mental health question related to BGLTQ life? [radio choice]

Total Responses -- 404

No: 162 (40.10%)
Yes: 242 (59.90%)

**Question 19:** Please comment on the above question here: [essay]

Total Responses -- 122

**Question 20:** I think Harvard students would benefit from more events (talks, study breaks, movies, discussion groups) related to BGLTQ issues. [radio choice]

Total Responses -- 408

Strongly Disagree: 17 (4.17%)
Somewhat Disagree: 55 (13.48%)
No Opinion: 96 (23.53%)
Somewhat Agree: 133 (32.60%)
Strongly Agree: 107 (26.23%)

**Question 21:** Please comment on the above question here: [essay]
Total Responses -- 203

**Question 22:** If you strongly or somewhat agree with the previous question, please select all topics from the list below in which you would like to participate. [check choice(s)]
Total Responses -- 254

- Campus-Wide BGLTQ Study Break: 147 (57.87%)
- Dinner with a BGLTQ Activist or Social Service Worker: 145 (57.09%)
- House BGLTQ Events: 143 (56.30%)
- Dinner with a BGLTQ Academic: 137 (53.94%)
- Dinner with a BGLTQ Journalist or Filmmaker: 131 (51.57%)
- Discussion Group About BGLTQ Life (General): 112 (44.09%)
- Training on Transgender Awareness: 99 (38.98%)
- Discussion Group About "Post-Gay" Identifications at Harvard: 97 (38.19%)
- Discussion Group About Race and the BGLTQ Community: 96 (37.80%)
- Discussion Group About BGLTQ Religious Issues: 91 (35.83%)
- House Committee on BGLTQ Issues: 70 (27.56%)
- Other: 27 (10.63%)

**Question 23:** Do you have any additional suggestions for BGLTQ programs at Harvard College? If so, please list them here: [essay]
Total Responses -- 99

**Question 24:** Any final comments on your perception of BGLTQ student life at Harvard as it currently exists? Anything else you believe the BGLTQ Working Group on Student Life should consider or know? [essay]
Total Responses -- 97

**Question 25:** If you are a student, where do you live? [radio choice ]
Total Responses -- 396

- The Yard: 96 (24.24%)
- Cabot House: 42 (10.61%)
- Quincy House: 30 (7.58%)
- Lowell House: 28 (7.07%)
- I am not a student: 28 (7.07%)
- Eliot House: 26 (6.57%)
- Kirkland House: 21 (5.30%)
- Winthrop House: 21 (5.30%)
- Currier House: 19 (4.80%)
- Adams House: 18 (4.55%)
- Mather House: 16 (4.04%)
Leverett House: 15 (3.79%)
Pforzheimer House: 12 (3.03%)
Dunster House: 10 (2.53%)
Dudley House: 9 (2.27%)
Off-Campus: 5 (1.26%)

**Question 26: If you are a student, in which year are you? [radio choice]**
Total Responses -- 396

Sophomore: 109 (27.53%)
First Year: 95 (23.99%)
Senior: 85 (21.46%)
Junior: 74 (18.69%)
I am not a student: 25 (6.31%)
Other: 8 (2.02%)
Raw Survey Data for ONLY Self-Identified BGLTQ Respondents:

**Sexual Orientation (137 Responses)**
- Gay or Lesbian: 77 (56.20%)
- Bisexual: 33 (24.09%)
- Questioning: 9 (6.57%)
- Queer: 8 (5.84%)
- Prefer not to Answer: 7 (5.11%)
- Asexual: 2 (1.46%)
- Homoromantic: 1 (0.73%)

**Affiliation with University: (151 Responses)**
- Current Undergraduate: 112 (74.17%)
- Staff: 18 (11.92%) Grad Student: 6 (3.97%)
- Alumni: 4 (2.65%)
- Faculty: 1 (0.66%)

**Gender (135 Responses)**
- Male: 80 (59.26%)
- Female: 47 (34.81%)
- Genderqueer: 3 (2.22%)
- Intersex Female: 1 (0.74%)
- Male and Transgender: 1 (0.74%)
- Transgender: 1 (0.74%)
- Other: 1 (0.74%)
- Prefer not to Answer: 1 (0.74%)

**If you are a student, in which house do you live? (117 Responses)**
- The Yard: 30 (25.64%)
- Cabot House: 10 (8.55%)
- Dudley House: 8 (6.84%)
- Kirkland House: 8 (6.84%)
- Leverett House: 8 (6.84%)
- Quincy House: 8 (6.84%)
- Eliot House: 7 (5.98%)
- Pforzheimer House: 7 (5.98%)
- Winthrop House: 7 (5.98%)
- Adams House: 6 (5.13%)
- Currier House: 6 (5.13%)
- Lowell House: 6 (5.13%)
- Dunster House: 3 (2.56%)
- Off Campus: 3 (2.56%)

**If you are a student, in which year are you? (118 Responses)**
- Sophomore: 34 (28.81%)
- First Year: 28 (23.73%)
- Junior: 27 (22.88%)
- Senior: 24 (20.34%)
Grad Student: 4 (3.39%)
Alumna: 1 (0.85%)

**Active in a Student Organization? (135 Responses)**
No: 101 (74.81%)
Yes: 34 (25.19%)

**Yes, which one(s)? (37 Responses)**
QSA: 25 (67.57%)
CONTACT: 3 (8.11%)
Girlspot: 3 (8.11%)
GLOW: 3 (8.11%)
HKS BGLT Caucus: 2 (5.41%)
Resource Task Force: 1 (2.70%)
Women’s Center (2.70%)
Unlabeled: 1 (2.70%)
Dudley Co-Op: 1 (2.70%)

Students at Harvard can openly identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, queer, or questioning (BGLTQ), or as a straight ally, in all areas of student life without worrying about harassment or discrimination from other students based on sexual orientation or gender identity. (135 Responses)
Strongly Disagree: 6 (4.44%)
Somewhat Disagree: 29 (21.48%)
No Opinion: 4 (2.96%)
Somewhat Agree: 66 (48.89%)
Strongly Agree: 30 (22.22%)

Students at Harvard worry that they will lose friends if they identify as BGLTQ on campus. (137 Responses)
Strongly Disagree: 24 (17.52%)
Somewhat Disagree: 33 (24.09%)
No Opinion: 29 (21.17%)
Somewhat Agree: 42 (30.66%)
Strongly Agree: 9 (6.57%)

I would know who to talk to if I became aware of a situation in which a student felt harassed or discriminated against because of her or his gender identity or sexual orientation. (136 Responses) Strongly Disagree: 9 (6.62%)
Somewhat Disagree: 28 (20.59%)
No Opinion: 7 (5.15%)
Somewhat Agree: 42 (30.88%)
Strongly Agree: 50 (36.76%)
I know Harvard BGLTS students who have moved off campus or transferred to another house or school primarily for reasons related to sexual orientation or gender identity. (135 Responses)
False: 113 (83.70%)
True: 22 (16.30%)

I know Harvard students who have avoided joining a sports team, activity, or House/Yard event because they perceived a potential for heterosexist bias, harassment, and/or discrimination. (135 Responses)
False: 94 (69.63%)
True: 41 (30.37%)

Students at Harvard know how to access support and information (when needed) about issues common for BGLTQ students (for example, about coming out to old friends, educating parents, bias crimes, dating on and off campus and online, related study abroad concerns, sexual health, gender transitioning, housing concerns, gendered locker room and bathroom use, legal and illegal discrimination in employment / education / adoption / marriage /medical care). (136 Responses)
Strongly Disagree: 18 (13.24%)
Somewhat Disagree: 35 (25.74%)
No Opinion: 23 (16.91%)
Somewhat Agree: 44 (32.35%)
Strongly Agree: 16 (11.76%)

6 Do you know where to go with a mental health question related to BGLTQ life? (135 Responses)
No: 43 (31.85%)
Yes: 92 (68.15%)

I think Harvard students would benefit from more events (talks, study breaks, movies, discussion groups) related to BGLTQ issues. (136 Responses)
Strongly Disagree: 1 (0.74%)
Somewhat Disagree: 11 (8.09%)
No Opinion: 20 (14.71%)
Somewhat Agree: 39 (28.68%)
Strongly Agree: 65 (47.79%)

If you strongly or somewhat agree with the previous question, please select all topics from the list below in which you would like to participate.
Dinner with a BGLTQ activist or social service worker: 75
House BGLTQ events: 73
Campus-wide BGLTQ study break: 70
Dinner with a BGLTQ academic: 69
Dinner with a BGLTQ journalist or filmmaker: 64
Discussion group about BGLTQ life (general): 52
Discussion group about "post-gay" identifications at Harvard: 51
Discussion group about race and the BGLTQ community: 50
Training on Transgender awareness: 47
Discussion group about BGLTQ religious issues: 43
House Committee on BGLTQ issues: 38
Other: 20
Appendix 3: Suggested Question Prompts Given to Facilitators of the Open Forums

What is your perception of BGLTQ student life at Harvard as it currently exists?

What has been positive? What has been challenging?

Does BGLTQ life in your house feel supportive? Engaging? (Draw a distinction between house life and student organization life.)

What is your impression of BGLTQ student organizations, such as the QSA, Girlspot, and GLOW (gay, lesbian or whatever—a student group specifically for BGLTQ students of color)? Do you participate in these groups as a member/leader? Attend their events? Know others who do?

Was your transition to Harvard impacted by your (or a peer’s) LGBT identity?

Do you experience any complexity regarding other identities that you may have as they relate to your LGBT or ally identity? (for example, being an athlete, or being from a particular culture or religious background?)

What BGLTQ –related resources have you turned to here at Harvard? Why that one/those? What has been effective or ineffective about that resource? What is missing?

How do you feel like you relate or don’t relate to the community of LGBT people and allies at Harvard? (If they feel outside of it, why? Where do you find support, comfort and inclusion? Particularly if it’s not from LGBTQ resources…)

What have we not asked you about? Is there anything that you really want to talk about? (This is where facilitators can pull from the questions, comments, topics that students wrote on the index cards when they walked in.)

If participants seem particularly focused on a negative experience they have had, ask for concrete ways that the experience could have been changed/different/better/reconciled.
Appendix 4: Benchmarked Institutions

Stanford University
Palo Alto, California
Undergraduate Students: 7,000

LGBT Community Resources Center (http://lgbt.stanford.edu)

Website Description: This features a centralized list of all LGBT organizations and programs with links to more information about each. Even more impressive, this website features a calendar of events that is very up-to-date. Each event links to more information -- time, location, CONTACT... You can also click back through previous months to see recent events. The website also has a page called “LGBT Pals,” which lists LGBT friendly faculty and staff, their email addresses, phone numbers, departments and interests. There is another list of LGBT friendly alumni with their graduation year. You can search for alumni by state, you can search al LGBT pals by keyword, and you can search for faculty, staff and LGBT-related classes by department. Finally, there is a link to media resources, which includes a LGBT-CRC Newsletter, LGBT coursework, student writing, artwork and photography, an option to browse books in the library, links to affiliated sites and many more.

The Space: Direct from the site: “Whether you're out and proud, questioning, or allied, the center is a great place to meet other queer and allied students, join one of over 14 LGBT student organizations, chill, study, check email, browse books and magazines, watch DVDs, or learn about campus resources. The center offers a range of programs including CASA (a small-group mentoring program for queer, questioning, and allied frosh) and Safe and Open Spaces at Stanford (a student-run dorm outreach and diversity awareness program)?as well as lecture series, colloquia, seminars, and mini-courses; residence programs; support groups; health education workshops; diversity trainings; social and cultural events; community activities; leadership development retreats; and support for LGBT volunteer student organizations and student-driven initiatives.” The CRC is open Monday-Friday from 12-5 while school is in session. Stanford students can gain 24 hour access to the CRC.

Funding: Funded by Stanford.

Staff: One full time director, Benjamin Davidson.
Multicultural Resource Center (LGBTQ is part of this)
http://www.oberlin.edu/mrc/index.html

Website Description: The LGBTQ center at Oberlin is embedded in a network of other identity centers, and all of their programs and services are described and listed together. There is clearly a great deal of overlap. The MRC is ‘home’ to the various LGBT student groups, and hosts meetings, offers programming, and creates advocacy and action projects. Their focus is community and coalition building, and they provide individual support for students also.

The Edmonia Lewis Center for Women and Transgender People is in a separate building and does not appear to be connected with the MRC directly.

The Space: The Multicultural Resource Center has ample space including meetings rooms, offices and a centralized space, (combines BGLT issues, Latino/a issues, Asian/Pacific American issues, and Africana issues). The Multicultural Resource Center (MRC) serves as a crucial hub for the collaborative support of historically underrepresented communities and works on diversity and inclusion within a social justice context at Oberlin College. Working together with a wide range of stakeholders including faculty, students, alumni, staff, and members of the local community, the MRC is uniquely positioned to create a vision of diversity and multiculturalism that supports educational excellence. The MRC centers the academic and personal needs of historically underrepresented students (students of color, LGBTQ students, international students, first generation, and lower income students) as well as builds intellectual and personal community for faculty, staff, and alumni. At the same time, the MRC also creates important opportunities for the entire campus community to engage with intellectual discourses around diversity and inclusion and to develop critical thinking skills that are crucial for the educational experience of all students. Since its founding in 1995, the MRC has coordinated and supported a diverse array of programming.

Staff: JAC Stringer, full-time, LGBTQ Coordinator. They also have a full time Associate Dean who oversees the work of the center (five coordinators). JAC said, “Our office takes a multicultural and intersectional focus. I am the LGBTQ Community Coordinator. We all have our own specialties, but we all work together. Most of the programming that we do for the LGBT Community focuses on LGBT people of color.” Also: LGBTQ studies program housed in the MRC.

Funding: Funded by Oberlin.

Student Staff: Yes
Amherst College
Amherst, MA
Undergraduate Students: 1,700
School Type: Private

The Amherst College Rainbow Room
(https://www.amherst.edu/campuslife/health/education/rainbow)

Website Description: This site features information about the Rainbow Room, Amherst College and local area resources, past events, queer studies courses and resources, a listing of BGLTQ-related internships, a link to the Alumni links program, and a listing of single user restrooms. It also has a great resource list that describes BGLTQ issues as they relate to study abroad programs.

Staff: Pamela Stawasz, full-time Coordinator of LGBTQIA Student Support and Services

The Space: The Rainbow Room is Amherst’s “LGBTQIA” resource center and is in the basement of Morrow Dormitory. This is the office for Amherst’s Coordinator of LGBTQIA Student Support and Services, and the student-run Pride Alliance. This space also serves as a LGBTQIA Resource Library with books and movies. They have a monthly lunch with LGBTQIA students/faculty/staff in the Rainbow Room. This website also links to area LGBTQIA resources, a DVD library, information on internships, an alumni page called “Out of Amherst,” previous events, queer studies, information on single-user restrooms and a page with links detailing LGBTQIA resources for students going abroad. The hours and upcoming events are located on the main page, and the page makes specific mention of prospective students and tells them who to CONTACT with questions about LGBTQIA life at Amherst.

Student Staff: Not clear from website.
Syracuse University LGBT Resource Center (http://lgbt.syr.edu/)

Website description: On the main page, they provide a student spotlight, a faculty or staff spotlight and an alumni spotlight. There is a calendar of upcoming events, a link to the “You Are Not Alone!” campaign that they hosted on their campus in the fall of 2010, a link to join their Listserv, a link to a comprehensive list of LGBTQ resources on campus, in the local area and on a national level. There is a link to information about reporting bias incidents, a link to services for students new to the LGBTQ community at Syracuse, and individual tabs providing specific information for current students, faculty and staff, alumni and friends, future students as well as parents and families. The Resource Center page has information about hours, location, staff and its mission; in addition, there is CONTACT information and a link to its Facebook group. They are just getting started on providing information for trans students on the site.

Staff: D. Chase James Catalano, Director; Amit Taneja, Associate Director; Lauren Adamski, Program Coordinator; Lauren Hannahs, Graduate Assistant

Funding: Funded by Syracuse University

The Space: A house near campus. It has a living room, a decent amount of “hang out” space and the director’s office is upstairs. Students use the space to hold discussion groups, Pride Union (undergrad group) and Open Doors (grad group) use the space to meet, and students just come in throughout the day and hang out. They host socials and dinners and “Cafe Q” on Thursdays (a social meeting with coffee and cookies).

Student Staff: Yes
Gender and Sexuality Center (http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/gsc/)

Website description: This center is a center for men's and women's issues, LGBT issues and sexual violence prevention. A little more information on the space itself: This website is a wealth of information on all things related to gender and sexuality at Carleton College including event listings, student groups, sexual violence information, peer education, their library resources, and information about signing up for announcements and their newsletter. Also, in the space there is a student LGBT Advisor who provides informal counseling and answers questions.

The Space: They have a drop-in space with couches, an office space for student employees and two other offices -- one for the head of the center and another for the head of sexual violence prevention. It was described as “A comfortable meeting space for related student groups. This space is also available for students to simply hang out or study.”

Staff: Kaaren Williamsen, Director of Gender & Sexuality Center & LGBT Advisor; Kristen Askeland, Administrative Assistant, Intercultural & International Life; Alicia Morrell, Hall Director/Watson & East Side House

Funding: Funded by Carleton College

Student Staff: Yes

Additional Programs/Aspects: Queer Peer Program
This program pairs new students and students in the process of coming out (as BGLTQ or as allies) with a junior or senior at Carleton who will help them learn about queer student life at Harvard. There is an online application for this program.
Center for LGBT Education, Outreach & Services ([http://www.ithaca.edu/sacl/lgbt/](http://www.ithaca.edu/sacl/lgbt/))

**Website description:** This website is great. It includes the center's history, students who are affiliated with the center, event listings, resources and services list, news items, information for allies, alumni links, and lots of photos, documents and blog links. There is a photo gallery called “Out & Proud at Ithaca College” which features photos and names of the out faculty and staff who agree to be pictured including coaches. There is a film on this website for prospective students, information on student organizations, information on volunteering and a photo gallery of the center and BGLTQ life on campus.

**Staff:** Liz Maurer, Program Director at the Center for LGBT Education, Outreach & Services

**Funding:** Funded by Ithaca College

**The Space:** “The Center strives to create a campus that is the best learning, working, and living environment for LGBT people.” The center is located on the lower level of the Hammond Health Center. The center's services include an office staffed by a professional program director, a resource room that offers a welcoming and supportive environment for LGBT people and their allies, resources, information, and referrals on LGBT issues, and campus-wide LGBT-themed educational programs and events.”

**Student Staff:** Yes, volunteer
American University
Washington D.C.
Undergraduate Students: 7,000

GLBTA Resource Center ([http://www.american.edu/ocl/glbta/](http://www.american.edu/ocl/glbta/))

**Website Description:** This is a very attractive and professional website. Both the students and full-time staff are pictured on the site along with brief biographies. There is information for prospective students on housing and the college selection process, information for current students on how to connect with other students, obtain internships and get on the Listserv, information for faculty & staff, alumni and information concerning programming, transgender resources and GLBT studies.

**Funding:** Funded by American University

**The Space:** Matt and Sara are the two full-time staff members. They have their own offices, and then outside of their office is a student workspace and a lounge area with a lending library. Students use the space to watch TV or movies. Student organizations tend to meet elsewhere because the space can only fit about six people.

**Staff:** Sara Bendoraitis, Director of GLBTA Resource Center, Matthew Bruno, Program Coordinator, GLBTA. According to Matt, “Our role is education and advocacy for LGBT people at American. We have major programs, one-time programming and then a workshop series. We house a Safe Space program. We do an LGBT workshop about ‘How to be a better ally’ and we have ‘Trans 101, which is the second workshop. We train students to go into classes and residence halls (as well as a few off-campus venues) to tell their first-hand perspective stories -- usually the student’s coming out story -- when those outside groups request this education. Sara and I also provide informal counseling, but we make it clear that we are not trained counselors.”

**Student Staff:** Yes (six undergrads and a grad student - without whom, Matt said, most of their work would not be possible. They handle most of the logistics.)
LGBTQ Resource Center
(http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/lgbtq/)

**Website Description:** The Sarah Doyle Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Resource Center share staff and resources. This site includes information about events, for prospective students, about their safe zone program and the Renn Mentoring Program (which connects students with out LBGQT faculty and staff). The site also features listings of campus and community resources, alumni connections, information about volunteering at the Center and a map of gender neutral bathrooms on campus. The Center is also home to the Brown Queer Alliance (The umbrella student organization under which all other queer student organizations operate).

**Staff:** Kelly Garrett, Resource Center Coordinator, full-time (10 months)

**Funding:** Funded by Brown

**Student Staff:** Yes

**The Space:** Shared by the Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Resource Center in the Stephen Robert Campus Center at Faunce House (Room 321). The office has a small student lounge that can hold up to 12 people, an administrative assistant office/reception area, and a Coordinator’s office. It is not contiguous with the Women’s Center, but they share administrative staff and collaborate closely on all projects.
LGBT at Columbia (http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/browse/LGBT)

**Website Description:** The official Columbia University LGBT website is unimpressive. The site links to a few pages. One is called CU SpeakOUT which is their version of Safe Space. The second link directs you to the “Columbia Mentoring Initiative,” which tries to pair first year students with peer advisors. Both of these projects are run through the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

*Also, Columbia Queer Alliance (http://cqa1.wordpress.com/)*

This blog is the unofficial hub of information for all-things queer at Columbia. It is much more impressive than the “official” page. There is information on social events, student organization meetings, photos, videos, information on a speaker series... They use the blog as a fun and informative space.

**Staff:** Lea Robinson, LGBTQ Advisor. “Informed by the complex interplay between the cultural and structural, the personal and social, and the individual and institutional, the Office of Multicultural Affairs approaches its work recognizing that diversity, social change and equity must be addressed at multiple, interconnected levels. Modeled in the pairing of a collaborative staff structure and each member's programmatic specialization, internal and external partnerships shape how the OMA works with the University community toward a truly diverse and engaged campus environment.”

**The Space:** An office in Multicultural Affairs

**Funding:** Funded by Columbia

**Student Staff:** Unclear.
LGBT Resource Center ([http://lgbtrc.cornell.edu/](http://lgbtrc.cornell.edu/))

Website Description: This website features all of the basic information (events, resources, information for students, alumni and information about the staff). In addition, there is a link to FAQ Online, a student-to-student mentoring services that is online. It's a sort of chat room for asking/answering questions concerning sexual orientation, LGBT and Cornell.

Staff: Matthew Carcella, Associate Dean of Students and Director of the LGBT Resource Center. Is full-time. “Our mission is to coordinate the efforts of the entire Cornell University community to ensure the inclusion of all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, and to eliminate heterosexism and gender identity oppression. The Resource Center affirms lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender identities and lives, and provides education, outreach, programming, program support, consultation, community development, visibility, and advocacy.”

Additionally, “The Office of the Dean of Students affirms and supports the variety of identities and interests that Cornell students present by sponsoring clubs, events, peer to peer interactions, and other activities that enhance students' well-being and celebrate their differences whether they be cultural, religious, sexual preference, or gender identity. Through many opportunities for student involvement, the Office fosters the concept that individual identities and experiences are respected and that the unique contribution of each Cornell student is valued.”

Funding: Funded by Cornell

Student Staff: Yes
There is no BGLTQ-specific space at Dartmouth

Office of Pluralism and Leadership (http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/lgbtqa/)

**Website Description:** OPAL is Dartmouth’s central resource on gender, culture, race, sexuality and class. The website is not comprehensive, but there is an advisor to LGBT students who wrote a really nice note to current (and especially new) students. She details information about the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, the Gender Neutral Housing Program and student organizations. The site is a little dated.

**Staff:** Pam Misener, Assistant Dean of Student Life and Advisor to LGBT Students. Pam says, “OPAL provides a variety of functions designed to support students' academic success, leadership development, cultural enrichment, and community engagement. OPAL also works to enhance the cultural competency of the Dartmouth community by providing consultation, workshops, and training for campus colleagues and departments.”

**Funding:** OPAL is University-funded

**The Space:** Pam’s office is in the Office of Pluralism and Leadership, on the second floor of the Collis Center (Dartmouth’s student center).
LGBT Center (http://www.princeton.edu/lgbt/)

This website features links to events, information about how to get involved and information about resources on-campus and in the community. The main page features information for prospective students, event information, involvement opportunities, on- and off-campus resources, and testimonials from students. There is information about gender-neutral and single stall restrooms. There is information about the staff and many ways to CONTACT them -- phone, fax, email, AOL IM and Google Chat. Princeton was recently ranked in the Top 20 Campuses for LGBT Students: http://www.princeton.edu/lgbt/community/bestofthebest.html

**Staff:** Debbie Bazarsky, LGBT Center Director; Matthew Armstead, LGBT Center Program Coordinator. “We strive to improve the Princeton University campus climate by coordinating efforts across campus, providing outreach to students, staff, and faculty, and working to ensure the inclusion and integration of LGBT issues campus wide. Our goal is to enhance the Princeton University campus community and to ensure the advancement of our students’ academic pursuits by creating an open and affirming environment void of homophobia, heterosexism, and gender bias.”

**Funding:** Funded by Princeton

**The Space:** A newly renovated center (the funding for which was publicly endorsed by President Shirley Tilghman, to being LGBT resources in line with women’s/race and cultural initiatives) opened its doors in 2006. The space has a student lounge, library/reading area, two office spaces and a reception area, and all spaces are newly renovated, bright, and open.

**Student Staff:** Yes
LGBT Center (http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lgbtc/)

Website Description: This website is sleek and professional. It features a calendar of upcoming events and information on resources. In addition, there is a link to “QSpace,” an online chat room that is open on Mondays and Tuesdays from 8 - 10 PM. (You can participate anonymously or with your Penn email address. There is a mentor program in which students are paired with other students. Recommended reading, the history of the LGBT Center at UPenn: http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lgbtc/about.php

The Space: The center is one large building -- 5,500 square feet. It has two floors and an elevator. On the lower floor, there is a bigger room that is used for main events, and there is a kitchen area that is used for those events. There is also a student lounge on this floor with a TV, and it is used for small meetings. Upstairs, there is a computer lab (mentioned in the other report), and there is also a library. The student who I spoke to this time said that students are coming in and out all day long to use the space. There is an advisory council composed of Penn students, faculty, staff and alumni, which “advises the Center staff and seeks community input regarding programs and services.”

There is also the David Bohnett Cyber Center: This space has 11 computers, two printers, two scanners and wireless. Printing is free, but students must bring their own paper.

Staff: Bob Schoenberg, Director; Erin Cross, Associate Director; Rebecca Schept, Program/Building Coordinator

Funding: Funded by UPenn

Student Staff: Yes
Yale University  
New Haven, CT  
Undergraduate Students: 5,300

Office of LGBTQ Resources: (http://lgbtq.yale.edu/)

Also, Queer Resource Center (http://www.yale.edu/queerpeers/)

Website Description: The website for the Office of LGBTQ Resources is very bare-bones, with a brief welcome message, a calendar (with very few events listed), information about a trans awareness week in November 2010, and a pretty comprehensive list of resources for undergraduate and graduate students.

The Space: The Office of LGBTQ Resources is an office for the Director and small meetings, but is not a center or a hangout space of any kind. There is a Queer Resource Center, which is a small library and meeting space for students to meet with a peer counselor. The peer counselors staff the QRC on Sunday and from Tuesday through Friday from 8 PM - 10 PM.

Staff: The full time Director of the Office of LGBTQ Resources is Maria Trumpler (former Quincy House Resident Dean)

Student Staff: Yes, students staff the QRC from 8-10 PM, Tuesday through Friday and on Sunday. Their primary role is peer counseling

Additional Programs/Aspects:
LGBT Co-op (http://www.yale.edu/lgbt/)
The website has not been updated this year, and appears to represent a Yale student organization (the LGBT Co-Op as opposed to a space or a center). The Constitution of the student organization is included on this website.
References


