

Centrist College Professional Development Seminar on Transgender Students

StudentAffairs.com Case Study 2016

Western Illinois University

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Format of Case Study

Thank you for your consideration of our case study! We are excited to present you with our completed presentation. In an effort to be more technologically savvy and innovative in our approach, we are providing a PowerPoint within a PowerPoint. Throughout this document you will see pictures of the presentation we would give to the Student Services staff at Centrist College. To better understand our thought process, here are a few guidelines:

1. The notes underneath the power point are a summary of what we would mention as each slide is pulled up. The numbers correspond to the bullets on either side for the slides where this is applicable.
2. Utilizing the animation function of Powerpoint, when we discuss specific areas of campus to improve, note that the presenters would only display and discuss the left hand of “Current Practices” portion at first. Then, we would ask the audience for suggestions for best practices to include in the future at Centrist College. We would have someone designated to take notes record all suggestions to be discussed at further committee and taskforce meetings. Afterwards, we would reveal our suggestions. After each slide is completed, we will allow time for questions and discussion on each functional area before moving on.
3. As a presentation team, we would have distributed some material to each staff member to complete previous to attending our presentation. We would have asked them to view this video: <https://vimeo.com/138105439>. This selection features narratives of many transgender students. Our hope is that the staff members will begin thinking about the needs of our transgender students and the experiences they may have during their time at Centrist College.

Assumptions

In order to complete this case study in a critical and thoughtful way, we made a number of assumptions that were not directly mentioned in the prompt. We used these assumptions to guide our presentation.

1. Centrist College is a midsize, public institution with a diverse student population. We also assumed this means Centrist College is state-funded, and has limited funding available to make costly changes. Centrist College uses a semester system.
2. Centrist College does not have a history of widely publicized hate crimes against the trans* community, but also has not intentionally researched or programmed for the trans* community present.
3. The Senior Staff we are presenting to consists of the President, Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, Assistant Vice Presidents, Deans, and Department Directors.
4. Our committee consists of professionals within student services. More specifically, we consist of the Director of Student Services, Director of the Office of Inclusion (OI), Assistant Director of Residence Life, and a professor in the Gender Studies Minor.
5. Our Seminar will last roughly 3 hours. This allows for Safe Space training, elaboration, discussion, and questions. This first seminar will take place in the early part of second semester.
6. The Office of Inclusion, housed under the Division of Student Services consists of two full-time staff, two graduate assistants, and six undergraduate student employees who serve multicultural, women, LGBT*QIA, and first generation populations on-campus. *Spectrum*, an LGBT*QIA student organization, is advised by an OI staff member, and Safe Space Training is hosted in this office.
7. Safe Space is a program offered by the Office of Inclusion. We included a space in our presentation for Safe Space training to last about 45 minutes. This is where our audience will receive a brief overview of inclusive language, pronoun usage, common issues faced by the trans* community, and ways to be an ally on campus.

Seminar 1: Trans* Inclusion



Centrist College
Department of Student Services
Professional Development Series

Welcome! As an initiative set forth by Dr. Fogg, this is the first of many seminars to help our senior staff stay abreast the changing landscape of higher education. This will be a three hour seminar that addresses best practices Centrist can implement to support the trans* student population on campus.

Learning Outcomes:

Participants will...

- ...identify the needs of and issues faced by trans* students on a college campus.
- ...recognize policies and resources available on-campus for trans* students at Centrist College.
- ...create an action plan of specific steps they can take in their practice to develop stronger support systems for trans* students.
- ...determine next steps for best practices at Centrist College as a holistic campus.

We created these learning outcomes to be specific to this seminar, but also so they can serve as a guideline for future seminars in this series. Today, we hope you leave with the ability to identify needs and issues faced by trans* students, recognize resources for them, create an action plan to support our trans* students, and determine the next steps we can take.

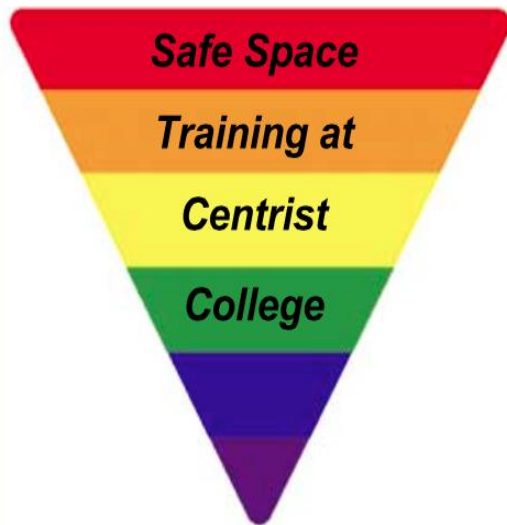
Why is this important to Centrist?

- Trans* population at Centrist
- Trans* issues in the media
- Centrist's non-discrimination policy includes gender identity expression
- Importance of support on a college campus for development and retention



- 1. The population of trans* students at Centrist College is unknown because we do not currently have a way to track that student population. However, multiple situations have been handled on a case by case basis to create accommodations and support for students.**
- 2. Trans* issues are becoming more prevalent in media with Caitlyn Jenner, the Yellow BuzzFeed Series, Laverne Cox, Ru Paul's Drag race, etc. Exposure to this media has begun to change the conversation on our campus, and we want to ensure our staff and faculty are prepared to engage in inclusive and developmental conversations with our students.**
- 3. Centrist's non-discrimination policy includes gender expression. Our policies, practices, and trainings are falling behind on ensuring non-discrimination. Additionally, there is a general lack of awareness around the trans* identity among faculty, staff, and students.**
- 4. Feeling a sense of inclusion is important for students to learn, develop, and be retained on college campuses. At this time support exists for trans* students, but it is not congruent with many of the best practices.**

Safe Space Training with Pat the Pronoun:



**At this time, Safe Space Training will be facilitated by Pat the Pronoun from the Office of Inclusion. This training will give you the tools necessary to engage with the rest of the seminar.*



For this section of the seminar, a professional staff member from the Office of Inclusion will conduct a safe space training. The training is to last roughly 45 minutes. This is where our audience will receive a brief overview of inclusive language, pronoun usage, common issues faced by the trans* community, and ways to be an ally on campus. This training will allow the participants to actively engage with the rest of the seminar.

Common Issues

- Harassment, lack of safety/security on campus
- Lack of understanding from faculty and staff
- No set policies/ procedures/ steps/ processes to meet their needs
- Often transfer/drop out
- Difficulties receiving proper medical care



Research for this presentation was gathered from multiple publications, such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education*, and the *Consortium of Higher Education*. Additional information was gathered from articles and online resources such as the “National Center for Transgender Equality”, *Transgender issues on college campuses*, *New Directions for Student Services*, and *Transitioning to and in college: The experiences of trans* students*. From all of these resources, a list of common issues trans* students face on a college campus have been identified. These common issues can help staff and administration develop best practices, restructure current policy, and implement measures to support the trans* student population at Centrist. These resources were used to guide our future goals established for the presentation.

Administrative Policy and Practice

Current Practices:

- Non-discrimination policy includes gender expression
- Student concerns are handled case by case

Future Goals:

- Procedure to change name and gender on documents & student IDs
- Revise and update all identification forms
- Accessible information and point person



Current Practices:

1. The Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals states that a policy created in support of Trans* students needs to state that the institution should recognize and respect the stated gender identity of the students. Our policy doesn't explicitly state this, but our non-discrimination policy does include gender expression.
2. We do not have explicit policies in any of our functional areas on how to accommodate trans* students. However, when students approach administration, we attempt to accommodate their needs individually. While the solution can be more helpful for the student, this process takes extra time and resources, and requires the student to reach out to develop a solution.

Future Goals:

1. We should develop policy and procedure for students who want to change their name and gender in the university system upon request, without needing documentation from a doctor or therapist. These should include all campus records, including ID cards, listings in electronic/print directories, and admissions files, financial aid, the registrar's office, and the health center. This will hold true to our non-discrimination policy and our statement of supporting each student in their gender identity.
2. We should update all campus forms, surveys, etc. to ensure gender and sex identities are separated. We should remove the question when unnecessary.
3. In 2014, the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals recommended having an easily accessible web page outlining resources, policies, and a specific contact person for trans* support. This can easily go on our Dean of Students page and we should begin to explore who this contact person should be.

Admissions

Current Practices:

- No intention recruitment strategies of LGBT*QIA students
- Forms required for admission require identification based on sex

Future Goals:

- Revise admission documents to allow self identification/gender identity
- Develop intentional and inclusive recruitment strategies for LGBT*QIA students
- Safe Space training for staff and tour guides



Current Practices:

1. There are no current strategies in place to recruit LGBT*QIA students. There is a non-discriminatory policy, which is followed strictly. There is currently no promotion of the LGBT*QIA community in brochures or publications.
2. The currently admissions application require prospective students to identify from a drop down menu of “Male” or “Female”.

Future Goals:

1. Efforts should be made to offer more inclusive applications. Asking if someone is male or female does not recognize the complexity of gender identity, and also does not adequately collect information for roommate assignments. Instead of drop down menus, we should offer fill in the blanks.
2. Guided by the Office of Inclusion, the Office of Admissions can develop strategies to recruit LGBT*QIA students. This can be accomplished by hiring a diverse staff of recruiters and tour guides, using more inclusive language, and representing more of the LGBT*QIA community in recruitment publications.
3. All Admissions staff, professional and student, should be Safe Spaced trained.

Academic Affairs

Current Practices:

- Gender Studies Minor
- Multicultural Credits Gen-Ed

Future Goals:

- Inclusive faculty orientation
- Faculty Professional Development
- Diversify Faculty Recruitment
- Integrate trans* identity into curriculum
- Uni 100 Component



Current Practices:

1. Within our Humanities department we have a Gender Studies minor, and the classes explore gender expression and trans* identities.
2. Our general education curriculum requires three credits over the course of at least two multicultural classes to graduate. Within these classes, students can elect to take courses focused on gender identity and expression, but are not required to. The classes they take may or may not include trans* identity depending on the professor and course chosen.

Future Goals:

1. Develop an aspect of faculty orientation that educates faculty about the trans* identity with focus being on understanding terminology and ways to support trans* students in the classroom.
2. Develop a workshop/professional development seminar that focuses on how faculty should support trans* students in the classroom (not calling out names from a roster, not assuming gender pronouns based on roster names, how to accommodate the request of a student wanting to be called a different name, etc.).
3. Long term plan: actively recruit faculty who are knowledgeable about trans* issues as well as a diverse faculty representing the trans* identity.
4. Work on integrating trans* conceptual material into existing coursework. Request that faculty develop a trans* identity course to be added to the options for the Gender Studies minor, and multicultural credits required to graduate.
5. Create trans* identity educational component to be included in UNI 100 course focusing on informing first year students about trans* awareness.

Residence Life

Current Practices:

- Residence Halls
 - Gender neutral restrooms in communal spaces
 - Work with students on a case-by-case basis
 - Limited singles rooms available
- Professional Staff and RA Training
 - Diversity awareness programming
 - Referrals and resources

Future Goals:

- Develop an inclusive housing policy
- Create an LGBT*QI and Allies LLC
- Educational programming on Trans* issues
- Safe Space training for all staff
- More inclusive housing options
 - single rooms
 - gender-neutral housing assignments
 - co-ed room placement
 - update housing forms to allow self identification



Current Practices:

1. We have gender neutral restrooms in the communal spaces of our halls, but we currently do not have the financial resources to make accommodations on each floor. Also, community bathrooms on some floors do not have private showers, which presents problems when considering remodeling. Residence life holds a few singles each year in case of emergency room switches, which can be used to make accommodations if a student comes with a concern. These singles have private bathrooms which would help create a safe spaces for trans* students. Also, we can relocate students out of certain buildings in which they do not feel comfortable.
2. Our Professional Staff and RAs are trained on diversity awareness and educated on how to refer students for guidance or counseling, but there is no specific training on trans* issues or awareness.

Future Goals:

1. While residence life currently has a non-discriminatory policy, a policy should be written into our policy advocating for our trans* population.
2. Residence Life has a limited number of LLCs, however future plans should be made to create an LGBT*QIA and Allies LLC. This shows a commitment to creating a safe campus community and will offer students who identify an additional housing option.
3. Residence Life can collaborate with the OI to offer intentional programs to our residential communities. This complements the strategic plan of Residence Life to develop a programming curriculum.
4. We can ensure Safe Space training is incorporated to RA training.
5. With plans to bring a new residence hall online in a few years, we can look into building facilities with more singles, private rooms, and/or designed to be co-educational. Also, we can update our housing forms to allow students to self identify, without selecting from drop-down tabs.

LGBT*QIA Specified Support

Current Practices:

- Falls under Office of Inclusion
- No staff solely dedicated to trans* population
- Safe Space Training
- Educational Programs
- Little or no assessment

Future Goals:

- Create a physical safe space for students
- Hire staff with LGBT*QIA population focus
- Specialized training with trans* focus
- Diverse, frequent trans* programs
- Individualized assessments and CAS review



Current Practices:

1. LGBT*QIA specific support is housed under the Office of Inclusion.
2. While no one staff person has a main focus on trans* services and support, all staff members focus on issues related to multiculturalism, intersectionality, and student development.
3. The OI can provide customized Safe Space training to fit different audiences and time spans.
4. The Office of Inclusion has also offered some trans* focused educational programming in the past including Bye the Binary, Gender Identity 101, and film showings of “Boys Don’t Cry” and “Hedwig and the Angry Inch.”
5. Unfortunately, the OI has little assessment from these programs or any other trans* initiatives.

Future Goals:

1. The OI hopes to start a campaign to raise money for a physical space for LGBT*QIA students to utilize for socializing, studying, and learning. This space would ideally be located in the Union near the OI and would be named by students.
2. Although our current budget won’t allow for this, in the future we hope to hire a staff member with a background in Queer Studies or working for an LGBT*QIA community center to serve in the OI. This staff person would work cohesively with the rest of the staff, but dedicate more time to LGBT*QIA students, and more specifically trans* identified students.
3. Although it is great that we offer Safe Space, the OI hopes to create a more trans* specific training that can be requested and presented to department staffs, student organizations, residence hall floors, etc. by the end of the academic year.
4. With that, we hope to increase our number and diversity of trans* focused programs.
5. We want to improve our assessment in a couple of important ways. First, we want to offer evaluations after each program. Second, we hope to have an ongoing, online assessment of various programs offered by the OI. We hope to do a CAS Standards review of the entirety of the OI, including each functional area it houses by the end of Spring 2017.

Student Involvement

Current Practices:

- Spectrum Student Group
- No related Greek Life policy
- Non-discrimination policy
- No LGBT*QIA recognition events
- Lack of trans* representation in programs

Future Goals:

- Encourage Collaboration
- Create a Greek Life policy
- Discourage gender binary enforcing programs
- Implement Lavender Graduation
- More trans* speakers, films, etc.



Current Practices:

1. The LGBT*QIA student group *Spectrum* currently has 30 active student members attending meetings and programs. Currently, they are a primarily social and activist group that hosts films, mixers, and the annual Condom Bingo event during Safe Sex Awareness week.
2. We do not have a specific policy for trans* student involvement in Greek Life.
3. We do have a non-discrimination policy required in each student organization's constitution that includes gender and gender expression.
4. We do not have any existing LGBT*QIA recognition events.
5. There is a lack of trans* representation in programs. Programs like Battle of the Sexes and the multiple pageants currently hosted on campus can even be considered exclusionary for some.

Future Goals:

1. This year, we will promote collaboration between Spectrum and other student organizations.
2. The Student Engagement and Leadership Office will create a trans* inclusive policy to be followed by both sororities and all three fraternities by the end of this school year.
3. Gender binary enforcing programs will be discouraged, and current exclusionary practices will be altered to be more inclusive. Homecoming King and Queen will now be Homecoming Royalty, and winners will be the top two voted students, regardless of gender. Also, pageants must recruit students in a way that accounts for trans* student involvement.
4. Lavender Graduation, an LGBT*QIA recognition event for graduating students held at many other institutions, will be further researched. After consulting students, staff, faculty, and alumni, the Office of Inclusion will consider hosting a Lavender Graduation the following year.
5. Finally, as an institution, we should include more trans* speakers, films, and overall representation in our curriculum and programming initiatives. This can happen in classes, film series, lecture series, and many other ways. We need to encourage our students to be more inclusive with their involvements. However, this should not mean we simply ask trans* students and speakers to educate our community on their experience or ask any of our students to be the voice of all transgender people. Mostly, we need to focus on supporting our whole campus.

Hate Crime Prevention and Response

Current Practices:

- Hate crimes handled by Equal Opportunity Office
 - People are not aware this includes Trans* individuals
- Bystander intervention offered for interpersonal violence but not Hate Crimes

Future Goals:

- Make Reporting process clearer/accessible
- Create a more inclusive bystander intervention program



Current Practices:

1. When we look at our current practices regarding hate crimes in general, they are all handled by the Equal Opportunity Office. Most students are not aware that hate crimes also include LGBT*QIA individuals. In 2013, Beeyman stated hate crimes against gender variant individuals are frequent, but often ignored by media, police, and lawmakers.”
2. Our Bystander Intervention program is focused predominantly on what to do to prevent interpersonal violence on campus as well as how to intervene in sticky situations of perceived interpersonal violence.

Future Goals:

1. We hope to make it clearer that our hate crime policy is inclusive of gender expression, religion, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability status, etc. as well as find a way to make the campus climate one that makes it safe to report trans* hate crimes.
2. While we do not want to take away from the importance of the Interpersonal Violence Bystander Training, it is important that we create or add into that program a section focusing on how to intervene during a hate crime, particularly a hate crime that is motivated by sexual orientation or gender expression.

Health and Sexual Assault Prevention

Current Practices:

- Sexual assault handled through Title IX Coordinator
- Community Advocacy, no campus advocacy
- Counseling staff is not equipped for trans* students
- Insurance policies do not cover Trans* specific needs

Future Goals:

- Ensure policies and reporting are up to date
- Maintain a healthy relationship with community partners
- Train at least one counselor
 - Therapy regarding transitioning
 - Writing letters for hormones
- Develop and publicize a list of area resources



Current Practices:

1. All of our sexual assault reporting goes through the Title IX Coordinator.
2. On campus, we do not have any staff members specifically focused on sexual assault advocacy. We rely on the services that the community Victim Services provides free of charge to any student that may need an advocate at any legal proceeding or proceeding with their case.
3. We currently do not have anyone in our counseling staff that is specifically equipped, certified, or trained to work with trans* students needs regarding transitioning, access to hormones, or navigating gender identity confusion. However, counseling is free for students as available.
4. Our campus insurance, like many campus insurance policies, does not currently cover the transitioning process, surgical proceedings, therapy outside of campus, or hormones.

Future Goals:

1. We need to make sure we have an inclusive and safe process for any reporting. We want to ensure that we are up to date with any language and policies that affect our students.
2. We recognize we may not have the financial means to have a full-time or part-time staff focused on sexual assault advocacy, but we do see this as an important resource. We want to ensure we have a strong relationship with community partners and are giving them any support we can. This means partnering with them and hosting events on campus to ensure that students are aware of it.
3. In the long term, we would like to make sure we have at least one counselor on staff that is trained regarding transitioning, trans* student needs, the hormone letter writing process, etc. Our thought process behind this comes from Beeyman et. al. in 2005 who stated “culturally appropriate counseling can provide a safe, nonjudgmental place for students to explore their developing identities and address college-related challenges. While sharing many of the same developmental concerns as their peers, transgender students may also face culturally specific issues related to their gender-identity development, including coming out to themselves and to family and friends, negotiating gendered environments.”
4. We want to maintain and publicize a list of resources in our area for students who do not have insurance through Centrist College. We want to make sure it is accessible for all trans* students.

In the Words of BuzzFeed



<http://www.buzzfeed.com/christopherguerrero/if-trans-people-said-the-stuff-cisgender-people-say#.rwog8qAYk>

After spending almost three hours discussing policy, procedures, and best practices to support trans* students at Centrist College, we will watch a satirical *Buzzfeed* video. This video illuminates everyday language that can oppress individuals who do not identify as cisgender.

Final Thoughts

- Other goals?
- Questions about how to move forward?
- Volunteers for task force?



1. What else can we do? Can anyone else think of ways to be more inclusive not yet mentioned?

2. After discussing steps for each department, and overall steps to be taken, does any department or office have any questions about how they should move forward to take action to help make our campus a more welcoming environment.

3. Is anyone willing to volunteer to be on a task force to ensure some of these steps are taken and continue to evaluate Centrist's progress on inclusion of trans* students, staff, and faculty? Please take what we have talked about back to your department and students you work with to see if any of them would be interested in serving on the task force. This task force will focus on implementing and tracking the prescribed action plan discussed today.

Follow-Up

An email will be sent out following the presentation to all senior staff member who were or were not in attendance explaining the following long-term plans.

1. The presentation committee hopes to collect a list of volunteers to serve on a task force or committee to ensure the proposed changes will happen in a timely manner. This committee will work specifically on trans* inclusion, and will hopefully include staff and students from a plethora of functional areas. They will appoint a committee chair to report to the Director of Student Services, who will move forward with the next seminar in the professional development series.
2. The committee will be instructed to create action plans for Centrist College that span the rest of the semester, the next year, and 5 years from now. They also will hold functional areas accountable to their individual tasks. Additionally, this committee will meet once a month in person and once a month via email check-ins with progress they are aware of at that point. Before the semester is over, they will construct and distribute a survey to different campus constituents (staff, faculty, students, community partners, etc.) to assess changes in campus climate in relation to trans* inclusion and inclusion of any other populations in future seminars.
3. Beyond the committee, the Office of Inclusion will look at re-evaluating their current responsibilities and practices to accommodate additional trainings, programs, and roles in collaboration with other offices on campus. The Director of Student Services will continue to aid in the budgeting of time, resources, and personnel dedicated to these efforts.

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