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LGBT Service Agency Survey

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SERVICE AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please return to Felice Yeskel, 99 Berkshire House
by Wednesday, April 10. Thank you.

Agency/Office _____

Person Completing Questionnaire _____

Date _____ Phone # _____

1. Does your agency/office have any special services or programs for lesbian, gay, or bisexual students? Please describe (e.g., type and frequency)

2. What percentage of the students who used your services during the past year would you estimate to be lesbians, gays, or bisexuals?

3. Does your agency/office utilize any special procedures regarding confidentiality, referrals, or record keeping for gay, lesbian, or bisexual students?

4. Has your agency/office made any specific outreach efforts towards gay, lesbian, bisexual students? If so, what kinds of problems and/or successes did you experience?

5. What specific or special needs do you expect that lesbian, gay, and bisexual students have in reference to your services?

6. What, if any, requests for services in this area have you received that you can not meet?

7. What vehicles, mechanisms, etc. does your agency/office utilize to identify needs of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals?

8. What additional or improved campus resources would be helpful to your agency/office in meeting the needs of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals?

9. What staff development or training opportunities are already available for your staff regarding gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues?

10. What additional staff development or training opportunities would be helpful to your staff regarding these issues and how might you encourage their taking advantage of them (e.g., announcements, release time, APRs)?

11. How does the composition of your staff and/or its level of awareness affect your ability to serve the needs of lesbians, gays, or bisexuals?

12. What, if any, educational programs do you provide that facilitate unlearning of prejudice against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals?

13. Additional comments? Thanks again.

Summaries of Agency Responses by Questionnaire Item

1. Does your agency/office have any special services or programs for lesbian, gay, or bisexual students? Please describe (e.g., type and frequency).

Of the 28 agencies responding to this question, twelve agencies answered with a "no" and six agencies gave responses that did not answer question. Ten agencies responded affirmatively, listing the following special services or programs:

Medical Care (UHS) -- HDLV-III antibody testing

United Christian Foundation -- counseling and referral, with special emphasis on reconciling religious beliefs with issues of sexual orientation

Residential Education East -- programming and support

Legal Services Office -- community legal education regarding sexual orientation and the law

Community Health Education (UHS) -- lesbian and gay health issues workshops; sexuality counseling for gays and bisexuals

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Counseling Collective -- peer counseling, referral on a walk-in and call-in basis

Everywoman's Center -- library and resource books for lesbians; workshops on lesbian battering and lesbian safety awareness; counseling and referral

Service Action Team (SAT) -- workshops on gay and lesbian awareness; internalized homophobia

Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Alliance (LBGA) -- lounge space, weekly social hour, dances, Speakers Bureau, peer counseling, rap groups

Oppression and Social Issues Training Project -- grad and undergrad credit courses on heterosexism

While a larger number of agencies now offer special services or programs for these populations compared to two years ago, a careful reading of the responses in Appendix 3 indicates: (1) that smaller and more peripheral Agencies tend to be the ones offering these services and programs and two of these are student organizations (the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual

Counseling Collective, and the Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Alliance rather than University agencies; (2) graduate students are the primary staff in two more agencies (Service Action Team, and the Oppression and Social Issues Training Project); and (3) the frequency of program offerings is low and the scope of services still tends to be small.

Several agencies also indicated that although their services are not specifically targeted to these populations, gay, lesbian, and bisexual students do utilize their services.

2. What percentage of the students who used your services during the past year would you estimate to be lesbians, gays, or bisexuals?

All 28 agencies responded to this item. Sixteen of the agencies reported either that they had no idea of the sexual orientation of the clients served or didn't keep records. Six agencies made estimates based on what they perceived as the national average of 10%, while another 6 gave estimates either based on agency statistics or other knowledge of their clients' sexual orientation, ranging from 5% to 95%.

3. Does your agency/office utilize any special procedures regarding confidentiality, referrals, or record keeping for gay, lesbian, or bisexual students?

Of the 28 agencies responding to this question, only one, Legal Services, indicated that it provides special record confidentiality for these populations. Five of the agencies simply answered no; the remaining 22 agencies also indicated that they did not utilize special procedures, but went on to delineate the confidentiality procedures in place which protect, often under statutory law, the client data that they keep.

4. Has your agency/office made any specific outreach efforts towards gay, lesbian, bisexual students? If so, what kinds of problems and/or successes did you experience?

All twenty-eight agencies answered this question. Fifteen agencies claimed specific outreach efforts aimed at gay, lesbian, and/or bisexual students; twelve had no outreach efforts, and one agency indicated that it deals only with staff.

Of the fifteen agencies that have specific outreach efforts, eight offer information sessions, workshops or educational programming. Only two agencies specifically offer counseling for these populations and these are both student-run organizations (LBGA, Counseling Collective). The outreach efforts of the remaining five agencies include: staff involved in campus-wide committees concerned with this area; participation in awareness programs; helping to plan events; and overall support. Only three of the agencies mentioned outreach in the form of posters, ads in local newspapers, and leaflets in addition to their other efforts. Some of the problems mentioned include: posters torn down shortly after posting; and the high cost of newspaper ads for agencies with small budgets.

5. What special needs do you expect that lesbian, gay, and bisexual students have in reference to your service?

Twenty-five of the agencies provided responses to this question, while three left the item blank. Of the agencies that responded, five answered "none", and one agency seemed to misunderstand the question. All of the other 20 agencies were able to identify some specific needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students, usually in reference to their services. Although the responses, for the most part, were unique to the particular agency, several themes repeated throughout the surveys: the need for sensitivity

on the part of service providers, the need for confidentiality in terms of record keeping, a sense of both psychological and physical safety, and the availability of positive role models. The specific needs mentioned are as follows:

Health Needs

- knowledge about health risks and information on sexually-transmitted diseases
- information about exposure to Hepatitis B virus
- assurance of sensitive practitioners
- assurance of confidentiality

Legal Information and Counseling

- family law, property and cohabitation agreements, federal laws, illness, employment law, military and veteran issues, immigration, consumer issues, First Amendment rights, criminal law, civil rights.
- assurance that police will protect them in nonprejudicial manner
- information about single parenting, day care, stress management

Religious Counseling

- help in reconciling sexual orientation and religious beliefs
- counseling and support regarding "coming out"

Education and Advocacy Regarding:

- rape, battering, incest
- sexual, verbal, and emotional harassment
- violent pornography especially related to lesbians
- advocacy and counseling in cases of sexual violence (need special sensitivity by police and hospital staff)
- additional support groups
- lesbian therapists on staff
- the needs of handicapped gay, lesbian, and bisexual students requiring counselors and advocates who are not only supportive but who are aware of other campus resources for these students' special needs.

- role models among professional and student staff of successful, achieving gay men and lesbians
- role models of non-heterosexist attitudes and behaviors on the part of heterosexual staff and students.

Assistance

- dealing with harassment and understanding the relevant regulations
- reassurance that minority rights deserve protection equal to that afforded the majority -- especially important after a person has been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment
- campus acknowledgement of heterosexism as a form of oppression
- physical space -- comfortable safe place to relax, socialize

6. What, if any, requests for services in this area have you received that you cannot meet?

Of the 28 agencies that returned the questionnaire, five left this question blank or indicated that it was non-applicable and 14 responded that they had no requests for services that could not be met. The other 9 agencies did indicate requests for services that they were not able to meet, including:

- need for gay/lesbian staff who are "out"
- need for pamphlet/brochures regarding legal issues affecting these populations
- provision of Hepatitis B Vaccine free of charge within the Health Plan (no co-payment)
- responding to incidents of gay/lesbian discrimination not covered by Federal or State Statute
- counseling problems that exceeded the experience of peer-counselors
- inability to find a lesbian physician for local referrals
- requests for more advanced workshops on homophobia/heterosexism
- program funding requests that exceed budgets
- client requests for gay/lesbian therapists (agency does not identify therapists by sexual orientation)

7. What vehicles, mechanisms, etc. does your agency/office utilize to identify needs of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals?

Seven of 28 agencies left this question blank or indicated that it was not applicable. Of the 21 agencies who did respond, 8 indicated they have no mechanisms for assessing the needs of the lesbian, gay, or bisexual community. Three of the agencies said they would be responsive if approached, and seven of the agencies indicated that they had solicited this information directly from the lesbian, gay, bisexual community by holding meetings or through participation on a committee dealing with this community. Only four of the agencies utilize formal surveys, workshop requests, or workshop evaluations to gauge the needs of the community.

Of the thirteen agencies who do assess the needs of these populations, the vehicles for assessment ranged widely in degree of formality. Assessment mechanisms include:

- advisory boards
- staff attendance at relevant committee meetings
- workshops designed to surface needs
- formal surveys of workshop participants
- complaint/feedback/request systems
- SCERA and SAREO surveys
- reports from staff who provide programming or other services to these populations
- consulting recent journal literature in this area

In general, few of these 13 agencies utilized any formal assessment techniques. Most relied on informal mechanisms or more generalized feedback systems available to any population.

8. What additional or improved campus resources would be helpful to your agency/office in meeting the needs of lesbians, gays and bisexuals?

Of the 28 agencies that returned the questionnaire, one agency left this question blank and eight agencies answered either "none" or "not applicable". Nineteen agencies did list additional or improved resources, which included:

- working directly with representatives from the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community.
- more information on gay/lesbian issues and services (e.g. resource lists)
- a central office which would serve as a resource and referral center
- two full-time professional staff to work with the People's Gay Alliance, Lesbian Union, and Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Alliance
- networking with other providers and agencies to improve coordination
- more pamphlets and other materials to publicize agency offerings to these populations
- more relevant audiovisual materials
- resource libraries

9. What staff development or training opportunities are already available for your staff regarding gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues?

Of the 28 agencies that returned the questionnaire, one left this item blank, and only one indicated that it had no staff development or training opportunities already available. Of the other 26 agencies:

- Fourteen rely primarily upon internal staff development and training programs such as staff supervision, staff conferences, in-house training programs, and staff retreats.
- Nine agencies indicated that they rely solely upon University-wide resources as those available from the School of Education, the Service Action Team, SCERA, and offerings from Staff Development and Training.
- The remaining three agencies utilize a combination of internal and University-wide training and staff development resources. One agency that specifically provides workshops indicated, however, that the 2 or 3 sessions it had offered were poorly attended.

While almost all agencies indicated a willingness to utilize University-wide staff development and training resources, some questions do exist about their availability and utilization. A check of the offerings of the Staff Development and Training Unit, for example, showed only one workshop in this area for 1984-85, and a call to that Office verified that even this one workshop had been cancelled due to lack of attendance.

10. What additional staff development or training opportunities would be helpful to your staff regarding these issues and how might you encourage their taking advantage of them (e.g., announcements, release time, annual performance reviews)?

Of the 28 agencies that returned the questionnaire, four left this item blank, and four more indicated that this item was not applicable to their agency. Of the 20 agencies who did answer the item, three indicated that they did not need any additional staff development or training opportunities in this area. The remaining 17 agencies provided a range of answers regarding support for training and staff development activities. Fourteen of them were clearly supportive of additional training or development opportunities in this area, although some did mention particular difficulties (e.g., scheduling problems for classified staff, lack of adequate financial resources, etc.). Of these 17 agencies, only five suggested specific staff development and training areas of interest to them:

- Providing support for students "coming out" (particularly to parents)
- Bisexuality, homosexuality and religious stigma; creating staff and faculty support groups; creating student support groups; addressing internalized homophobia.
- Issues of: self-identity; self-worth and assertiveness; political "advocacy"; other "isms" in the Gay Community.
- How to perform quality self-assessments for agencies concerned about their level of responding to gay, lesbian, and bisexual students.

In addition, 7 of the 17 agencies indicated how their staffs would be encouraged to take part in staff development and training opportunities in this area. Among the responses:

- use of release time
- timely, well distributed announcements of training opportunities
- on-site training of entire staff
- use of weekend retreats for training student staff
- verbal announcements and support for opportunities (e.g., at staff meetings)
- try to get explicit University support for on-campus opportunities

11. How does the composition of your staff and/or level of awareness affect your ability to serve the needs of lesbians, gays, or bisexuals?

Twenty-three agencies answered this question, while four agencies left the item blank, and one answered "not applicable". Fifteen agencies answered that their staffs are aware and sensitive to gays/lesbians and bisexuals. Only three agencies indicated that the low level of awareness of staff in their agencies was problematic and needed improvement. The five remaining agencies provided answers to this item which were difficult to categorize and may reflect a problems with the question itself.

12. What, if any, Educational Programs do you provide that facilitate unlearning of prejudice against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals?

Three agencies left this item blank while seven said they provide no programs in this area. One answered "not needed". Most of the responses of the other 18 agencies' fall into three general categories:

- those agencies which provide educational programs for the campus as one of their primary tasks. Training for the staff in these agencies is either implicit or explicit.

- those agencies which focus their responses on the training of their own staff. Their in-house training includes inservice programs, peer review; clinical conferences; programs and workshops; seminars and workshops for students; supervision.
- those agencies that don't provide any educational programs for their constituencies, but were interested in doing so.

13. Additional Comments. See Appendix