

UCLGBTIA Student Agenda Survey

Opinions survey conducted by Diversity Matters at the 14th Annual UCLGBTIA Conference & General Assembly @ UC Riverside on February 21-23, 2003.

I. INTRODUCTION

This summary of findings was generated from participant responses to an opinion survey about the “**most pressing Queer Student issue on campus.**” On the first day, participants were asked to generate lists of most pressing Queer Student issues on campus. On the second day, participants were asked to further prioritize their issues. Although participants from non-University of California (UC) Schools attended the conference, the focus of the survey was primarily directed to participants from UC campuses.

II. METHOD

The opinion survey included 146 respondents representing 17 schools. There were 112 participants from 7 UC Campuses and 34 participants from 10 non-UC campuses. Preliminary findings revealed four categories of responses: 1) Queer Student Issues at the Institutional Level (UC System) (18%); 2) Queer Student Issues at the Student Level (27%); 3) Queer Issues at all levels (45%); and 4) Queer Student Issues on Non-UC Campuses (10%).

III. FINDINGS

Below are the top 6 priorities. Please note that percentages reflect top 3 priorities. Priorities of issues included concerns from all categories: institutional level, student level, and all levels.

Education around the intersections of oppression (46%)

Participants expressed concern that the campus community needed to address queer issues as related to other forms of oppression such as racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, heterosexism, and disability issues. These issues were identified among students, staff, administrators, and affinity groups.

Queer studies (30%)

There was overwhelming concern that UC Campuses needed Queer Studies programs and more support on campus. Some participants felt that formal Queer Studies programs would help improve the campus climate.

Overcoming apathy and indifference (28%)

Some participants noted that homophobia and heterosexism exist because the campus community is unaware of Queer issues. Participants believe that others do not get involved as allies because they don't see how Queer issues affect the campus.

Transgender issues (22%)

Most strongly, participants remarked that there is a lack of transgender presence on campus. This includes lack of resources, lack of visibility, lack of outreach, lack of support, lack of education, lack of acknowledgement, and lack of safety to identify as transgender.

Sensitivity training for faculty (20%)

Some participants mentioned that they experienced a lot of homophobia and heterosexism in the classroom. Some issues were related to lack of knowledge about being sensitive to queer individuals, while other issues were related to feelings of discrimination from their professors.

Lack of networking among students (20%)

Participants were concerned that students were not supporting each other. Particularly, some participants noted that student groups do not outreach to other student groups and work together. The community becomes fragmented and some students remain isolated because they don't fit into any of the campus cliques.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Both institutional and student level issues were identified as priorities for UC campuses. In particular, students believed that Queer issues should be addressed within the context of other forms of oppression. Many respondents noted that it is sometimes difficult for Queer individuals to separate their Queer identity from their other identities. Others believed that solidarity with other forms of oppression would be a more effective way of addressing the institutional oppression in general.

As recommended by the facilitator, the next steps are to formulate action steps for each of the issues and to identify issues for student to address.