Beyond the binary: Building LGBTQ-inclusive classrooms and workplaces in STEM

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A letter to ASEE Prism

September 2013

Is All Diversity Good?

“[…] I have been rather fascinated by diversity articles in Prism and on the website. […] But is diversity in sexual preference good if:

• The behavior takes 5 to 15 years off a person’s life expectancy?
• The behavior proliferates sexually transmitted diseases?
• The behavior promotes a sexually promiscuous lifestyle?
• The behavior is addictive and abusive?

We would do well to teach the truth about the homosexual/lesbian/bisexual/transgender lifestyle.”

—ASEE Member

We have a problem

Anti-LGBTQ bias, discrimination, and hostility in the classroom, workplace, and the world

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Experienced discrimination/harrassment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37%</td>
<td>Not comfortable in the classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62%</td>
<td>Hear homophobic jokes</td>
<td>HRC (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>Hide LGBT identity at work</td>
<td>HRC (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Seriously considered leaving</td>
<td>Rankin (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52%</td>
<td>No workplace antidiscrimination protection (US)</td>
<td>Movement Advancement Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52%</td>
<td>Hide LGBT identity at work</td>
<td>HRC (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79%</td>
<td>Countries where homosexuality is illegal</td>
<td>IGLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Countries where homosexuality punishable by death</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Being LGBT Can Be Punishable by Law

# The business case

## Anti-LGBTQ bias, discrimination, and hostility in the classroom and workplace have harmful business impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>22%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>~$9.4 MM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Look to Leave</strong></td>
<td>Human Rights Campaign (2014 report)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lost Employee Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Human Rights Campaign (2014 report)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruiting Savings</strong></td>
<td>For a US company of 100,000</td>
<td>Out Now Global LGBT 2020 Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>72%</th>
<th>8-51%</th>
<th>~10%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LGBT Out in Workplace</strong></td>
<td>Out Now Global LGBT 2020 Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk-Adjusted Excess Return</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## RECRUITING & RETENTION

- Look to Leave: 22%
- Non-LGBT Consideration: 72%

## PERFORMANCE & PRODUCTIVITY

- Lost Employee Engagement: 30%
- LGBT Out in Workplace: 8-51%

## FINANCIAL

- Recruiting Savings: ~$9.4 MM
- Risk-Adjusted Excess Return: ~10%
## Out at Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Out to everyone</th>
<th>Out to most people</th>
<th>Out to some people</th>
<th>Out to few trusted people</th>
<th>Not out to anyone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The learning case

1 million additional STEM graduates by 2022

President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (2012)

Most viable way to achieve this is to
Increase retention

Key reason for leaving STEM is
Chilly climate

Creating an inclusive climate benefits
ALL students

Diversity is essential to the intellectual and social development of
ALL students


Creating an inclusive climate
30%↑

Employee engagement
Human Rights Campaign (2014)

Diversity increases
Innovation and productivity

Herring (2009)
It’s the right thing to do

On some positions, Cowardice asks the question, “Is it safe?” Expediency asks the question, “Is it politic?” And Vanity comes along and asks the question, “Is it popular?” But Conscience asks the question “Is it right?” And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must do it because Conscience tells him it is right.

Martin Luther King Jr
Project Team

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Chem Eng

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Sociology
NSF EAGER AWARD

Promoting LGBTQ Equality in STEM

Overview | Safe Zone Workshops | Our Leadership Community | Our Research | Resources and Readings
---|---|---|---|---
Upcoming Online Workshops | Past Online Workshops

One STEM, a Rainbow of Branches
Promoting LGBTQ Equality in STEM

ASEE’s Virtual Community of Practice: Promoting LGBTQ Equality in STEM

Exploratory ● Transformative ● Not fundable by any other mechanism
EAGER Grant

- 2 meta-Trainers
- 20 facilitators/advocates increasing inclusion in 20 Colleges
- Safe Zone Workshops on campuses, online, at conferences
- Transformative research to understand STEM culture and identify barriers to inclusion
Engineering Deans*

- 35% are aware of climate issues
- Supportive of inclusion measures
- Perception of faculty support is much lower
- May be untapped allies for LGBTQ inclusion

*47 Engineering and Engineering Technology Deans from US Colleges
LGBTQ Students*

- More likely than women, URM, & non-LGBTQ peers to report a chilly climate
  - Marginalized
  - Not Respected
- Personal consequences
  - Emotional stress
  - Difficulty sleeping
  - Exhaustion

*1,729 students from 8 institutions
“We would do well to teach the truth about LGBTQ people.”
Online Safe Zone workshops

- Launched April 2016
- Level 1, Level 2, Deep Dives
- STEM-oriented Safe Zone training
- Watch parties
Partnerships

AIChE
The Global Home of Chemical Engineers

Dow

ACS
Chemistry for Life®

International Federation of Engineering Education Societies
Community of Practice
Advocacy in departments

- Safe Zone Workshops
- oSTEM Chapters
- Endowed scholarship for LGBTQ students
- Gender-inclusive restrooms
- LGBTQ-STEM speakers
- LGBTQ mentoring
- Alumni network
- Dean’s support for LGBTQ faculty group
- Preferred name policy
- oSTEM website
- Safe Zone watch parties
- Spouse invited to holiday party after 25 years
For more information visit: http://diversity.asee.org/lgbtq

This work is partially supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation EEC-1539140


President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, "Engage to excel: producing one million additional college graduates with degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics," 2012.


