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

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Beyond the Binary:
Creating LGBTQ-inclusive Classrooms and Workplaces in STEM

Stephanie Farrell
Rowan University
ASEE
June 8, 2017
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>CAMPUS CLIMATE</th>
<th>WORKPLACE CLIMATE</th>
<th>GLOBAL CLIMATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>29%</strong></td>
<td><strong>62%</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced discrimination/harrassment</td>
<td>Hear homophobic jokes</td>
<td>Countries where homosexuality punishable by death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>30%</strong></td>
<td><strong>52%</strong></td>
<td><strong>79</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously considered leaving</td>
<td>No workplace antidiscrimination protection (US)</td>
<td>Countries where homosexuality is illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>37%</strong></td>
<td><strong>53%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not comfortable in the classroom</td>
<td>Hide LGBT identity at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>52%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement Advancement Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HRC (2014)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HRC (2014)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IGLA</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>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source/Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruiting &amp; Retention</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>Look to Leave</td>
<td>Human Rights Campaign (2014 report)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>Non-LGBT Consideration</td>
<td>Williams Institute (2013 report)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance &amp; Productivity</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Lost Employee Engagement</td>
<td>Human Rights Campaign (2014 report)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8-51%</td>
<td>LGBT Out in Workplace</td>
<td>Out Now Global LGBT 2020 Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>~$9.4 MM</td>
<td>Recruiting Savings</td>
<td>For a US company of 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>~10%</td>
<td>Risk-Adjusted Excess Return</td>
<td>Li &amp; Nagar, Diversity &amp; Performance, MGMT. SCI. 529, 531 (2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anti-LGBTQ bias, discrimination, and hostility in the classroom and workplace have harmful business impacts.
OUT AT WORK

## The learning case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>34%↑</strong></th>
<th><strong>1 million additional STEM graduates by 2022</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (2012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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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NSF EAGER AWARD

PROMOTING LGBTQ EQUALITY IN STEM

Overview
Safe Zone Workshops
Upcoming Online Workshops
Past Online Workshops

Our Leadership Community
Our Research
Resources and Readings

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
Stephanie Farrell
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2018-2019 President, American Society for Engineering Education
diversity@asee.org

For more information visit: http://diversity.asee.org/lgbtq

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References


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.


