

Proposal for Addressing the Needs of
Women and LGBTQ Students
at Northeastern Illinois University

Prepared for: NEIU President's Council
Prepared by: Work Group on the Needs of Women
and LGBTQ Students
Date: May 2, 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ORIGIN OF THIS PROPOSAL

Throughout the Fall 2010 semester, faculty, staff, and students expressed considerable concern that the needs of women and LGBTQ students were not being adequately addressed at NEIU. Several events precipitated this concern: the closure of the Adult and Women Student Programs office; national media attention to several suicides of LGBTQ students, as a result of harassment by other students; and the approval of the Angelina Pedrosa Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs, which includes African/African American, Asian/Global, and Latino/Latin American resource centers, but none specifically for women or LGBTQ students.

In response to these concerns, in January 2011, President Sharon Hahs appointed a Work Group on the Needs of Women and LGBTQ Students. The thirteen members of the work group included representatives from each of the shared governance groups and from a wide range of offices and services that affect students' lives. The members of the work group are listed in this table:

Vicki Byard	Work Group Chair ; faculty representative
Tony Adams	Faculty representative; GLBTQA co-advisor
M. Carter Borho	Student representative; GLBTQA member
Brian Dix	Student representative (appointed by SGA)
Sharron Evans	Director of Student Activities
Sabrina Guth	Civil service representative; Faculty Governance office
Donna Higgin	University police officer
Felicia Keelen	Director of Student Union
Claudia Mercado	Director of Admissions
Roberto Sanabria	President's Office; Affirmative Action officer
Cathy Schacht	Health Services, nurse
Alina Viola	Counseling Office, staff psychologist
Julie Wight	Director of Marketing

President Hahs gave the work group the following charge:

[Consider] "focused ways to address the needs of LGBTQ and women students" and "identify specific needs of these students and propose policy and organizational initiatives to address these needs."

I would remind the group that our "framework" is found in the university values, the statement on diversity, and to a certain extent, the mission and values of the Pedrosa Center. I would also ask that your results provide a range of options, from minimum critical services, to "middle," to "dream" options—whether it be programs, services, or space.

PROCESS USED TO DEVELOP THIS PROPOSAL

The Work Group on the Needs of Women and LGBTQ Students met every two weeks throughout the Spring 2011 semester, in addition to frequent email contact, attendance of special events, extra subcommittee meetings, and ongoing interactions with the wider campus community.

To develop its recommendations, the work group formed four subcommittees:

1. Subcommittee on student needs and recommendations related to a women's student center
2. Subcommittee on women students' needs and institutional recommendations beyond the creation of a women's student center
3. Subcommittee on student needs and recommendations related to a LGBTQ student center
4. Subcommittee on LGBTQ students' needs and institutional recommendations beyond the creation of a LGBTQ student center

All members of the work group served on at least one of these subcommittees; most work group members served on two.

To complete its charge in a timely manner, while still inviting input from the wider campus community, the work group established key deadlines for each stage of the process. There was a deadline for each subcommittee to present its recommendations to the full work group (March 13), a deadline for the work group to consolidate all the subcommittees' recommendations into a complete draft of the proposal that could be circulated to interested parties throughout the university (March 30), a deadline for those parties to provide the work group with their feedback on the draft (April 13), and a deadline for the work group to revise the draft in light of that feedback and then present the revised proposal to the President's Council (May 2).

In an effort to make the proposal as informed and thorough as possible, the work group also engaged in these activities:

- examined the proposal for the Pedroso Center as a model for our own proposal
- researched "best practices" and national assessment standards for women's centers, lgbtq centers, and campus policies affecting women and lgbtq students
- consulted with various offices on campus regarding current practices and the feasibility of certain recommendations
- completed a national campus climate index to evaluate NEIU's current lgbtq-friendliness
- toured and met with students and staff at UIC's diversity centers
- participated in a 90-minute national webinar entitled "LGBTQ Students: Creating a Safe and Welcoming Campus"

The work group also welcomed input from the wider campus community, using strategies such as these:

- installed a suggestion box at the Information Center in the Student Union for eight weeks so that anyone could leave signed or anonymous statements about the needs of women and/or lgbt students and offer specific recommendations (this suggestion box was publicized through a targeted email announcement to the university, through a letter published in the *Independent* newspaper, and through NEIU Facebook postings; 15 submissions were received)
- individually contacted and sought participation from faculty teaching 26 sections of courses related to women, gender, lgbt issues and/or social justice during the Spring 2011 semester, as well as 70 faculty and staff who signed a Fall 2010 letter to President Hahs requesting a women's center and lgbt center
- attended a meeting of the Women's Studies Advisory Board and a separate meeting of the Feminist Collective student organization to solicit their suggestions

- met with three classes (WSP 314-1; JUST 202-1; JUST 202-2), each for an entire class meeting, to discuss with students the work group’s charge and solicit their recommendations
- circulated the draft of this proposal to student organizations, faculty, and staff, to solicit their feedback, which was used to revise the draft’s recommendations

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL’S MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this proposal are organized into three major sections. The first section (pages 9-12) offers recommendations for institutional structures that will ensure the staff and student centers responsible for addressing women and LGBTQ students’ needs are effectively connected with other programs and services on campus. The second section (pages 13-32) offers recommendations for serving the needs of women students. The third major section (pages 33-58) offers recommendations for serving the needs of LGBTQ students.

A synopsis of the recommendations for all three sections appears below. The Work Group asks that the President’s Council enact all of these recommendations. Within the body of the proposal, detailed information is provided that explains how each recommendation should be implemented.

In keeping with President Hahs’ request that the work group propose multiple levels of fulfillment, each of the recommendations for women and for LGBTQ students includes three distinct levels. The headings “Level I,” “Level II,” and “Level III” are used—rather than essential, mid-level, and optimal—because the levels are sometimes distinguished by the significance of need but at other times are distinguished by the sequential nature of the recommendations (i.e., a recommendation at Level I must take place before a related recommendation at Level II can be implemented, even though both are equally significant). Readers should assume that recommendations at a higher level automatically presume the inclusion of all recommendations at lower levels. The Work Group believes all of the recommendations, including those at Level III, are necessary and important and should be implemented as quickly as resources allow.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONNECTING THE NEEDS OF LGBTQ AND WOMEN STUDENTS TO OTHER CAMPUS ENTITIES

- 1. Establish a President’s Advisory Council on Diversity Issues (pages 9-11).**
- 2. Situate the Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Center within the structure of the university so that these centers (and their staff) are closely affiliated with both the Division of Student Life and the Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs (pages 11-12).**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN STUDENTS

- 1. Hire staff whose primary job responsibility is to address the needs of women students (pages 13-16).**
- 2. Provide space for a women’s student center (pages 16-19).**

3. **Provide educational and social programming on women's issues and concerns (pages 19-21).**
4. **Provide resources, support, and facilities for women students who have young children (pages 21-25).**
5. **Ensure that NEIU is a safe campus for women students (pages 25-28).**
6. **Expand and better publicize health care services for women students (pages 28-31).**
7. **Maintain a website that provides information about NEIU policies, services, programs, and facilities for women students, as well as referrals to off-campus organizations that can help women students (pages 31-32).**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVING THE NEEDS OF LGBTQ STUDENTS

1. **Hire staff whose primary job responsibility is to address the needs of LGBTQ students (pages 33-36).**
2. **Provide space for an LGBTQ student center (pages 36-38).**
3. **Provide educational and social programming on LGBTQ issues and concerns (pages 39-42).**
4. **Ensure that NEIU is a safe campus for LGBTQ students (pages 42-45).**
5. **Provide informed and appropriate health care for LGBTQ students (pages 46-47).**
6. **Change the wording of NEIU's non-discrimination policy to list gender identity/expression as a separate entity from sexual orientation and ensure that gender identity/expression is included in all statements of NEIU's non-discrimination policy (pages 48-49).**
7. **Increase the number of gender-neutral bathrooms on campus and publicize their locations (pages 49-51).**
8. **Streamline and publicize the process by which transgender students can change their name in university records (pages 51-53).**
9. **Maintain a website that provides information about NEIU policies, services, programs, and facilities for LGBTQ students, as well as referrals to off-campus organizations that can help LGBTQ students (pages 53-54).**
10. **Provide resources that support the integration of LGBTQ concerns into academic programs (pages 54-56).**

11. Take action to intentionally recruit, retain, and graduate LGBTQ students (pages 57-58).

PROPOSED TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTING ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Because there is currently very little institutional support for the specific needs of women and LGBTQ students at NEIU, it is imperative that the recommendations in this report be enacted as swiftly as possible. The Work Group on the Needs of Women and LGBTQ Students has exerted tremendous effort to research, compile, and present these recommendations in fewer than four months, with no reduction in our other employment responsibilities, because we want the President's Council to have the four months of May, June, July, and August to begin to implement these recommendations, so that some solutions can be in place when the majority of students return to campus for the Fall 2011 semester.

To facilitate the speed with which the recommendations in this report can be enacted, the conclusion of the proposal is a condensed list of the main recommendations made throughout the proposal, alternately organized by the departments/offices that would be responsible for enacting these changes (pages 59-67). Once the President's Council has determined which recommendations to endorse, these final pages can be used to quickly communicate the actions that are needed to the responsible parties. These concluding pages provide strong evidence that making NEIU an inclusive and affirming institution for women and LGBTQ students must be a university-wide initiative; it is not a goal that new student diversity centers can accomplish on their own.

Here are the recommendations that the work group believes are most critical and their suggested deadlines:

Date	Recommended Actions
May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President's Council decides on the recommendations it will endorse and the level at which each recommendation will be fulfilled. • President's Council charges the responsible parties to enact the recommendations that require nominal funds and little time (refer to pages 59-67).
June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President's Council decides on institutional reporting lines for the Women's Center and the LGBTQ Center. • President's Council consults with Facilities Management to identify campus locations for Women's Center and LGBTQ Center and assesses what funds are needed to renovate or construct these spaces.
July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupants of campus offices are relocated and construction/renovation begins on Women's Center and LGBTQ Center. • President's Council, Vice President of Student Life, and Director of Counseling Services assess the feasibility of creating a joint hire for Counseling and Women's Center, to

	<p>meet women students' need for professional counseling services, while maximizing budget and space resources.</p>
August/September 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President Hahs appoints and announces the President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues. • President Hahs appoints search committees for the Director and Assistant Director of the Women's Center and the Director of the LGBTQ Center. • President Hahs uses the "President's Message" section of <i>Insights</i>, the "President's Pen" article in the <i>Independent</i>, the "State of the University" address, and targeted email announcements to disseminate a public response to this "Proposal for Addressing the Needs of Women and LGBTQ Students." The response should identify what recommendations have been endorsed, what actions have already been taken, what actions are imminent, and a projected timeline for actions that will require more time. • Search committees for Director and Assistant Director of Women's Center staff and Director of LGBTQ Center write and publish ads for these positions. • Dean of Students, Pedroso Center directors, Women Studies faculty, Student Activities director, and women-centered student organizations meet to discuss how the programming and service needs of women students will be addressed during the Fall 2011 semester. • Faculty volunteers (Vicki Byard and Gerardo Moreno) collaborate to update the GLBTQA website with information about gender-neutral bathrooms on campus, name change policies, and additional faculty/staff allies. • Director of University Outreach and Equal Employment makes arrangements with off-campus organizations for LGBTQ-related professional development for the University Police, Counseling Office, and Health Services staff.
October through December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search committees for Director and Assistant Director of Women's Center and Director of LGBTQ Center review applications for these positions, conduct interviews, invite finalists to campus, and recommend hires. • If the Women's Center and LGBTQ Center will not be completed by January 2012, President's Council and Facilities Management identify interim office spaces for the staff of these new centers. • President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues develops an online bias reporting form (refer to page 27, item h), informs the university community of its purpose, and implements its use. • Director of University Outreach and Equal Employment

	continues to arrange for one Safe Zone training per semester, until this responsibility can be taken over by the director of new LGBTQ Center.
Spring 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director and Assistant Director of Women's Center and Director of LGBT Center begin their positions in early January.• Women's Center and LGBTQ Centers open in their permanent spaces.• Women's Center and LGBTQ Center Advisory Boards are established, to help establish priorities for addressing the remaining recommendations in this proposal.

PROPOSAL

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES THAT CONNECT THE NEEDS OF WOMEN AND LGBTQ STUDENTS TO OTHER CAMPUS ENTITIES

1. Establish a President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues.

Why This Matters

Within the last ten years, many colleges and universities have initiated a President's Advisory Council on Diversity (or a similarly named committee).¹ At most of these institutions, the diversity council functions as a standing committee that gathers information about campus climate and other factors related to diversity on campus and also proposes recommendations for diversity-related initiatives.

Establishing a President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues is important because it will ensure that diversity—one of NEIU's core values—is affirmed and protected throughout the university, not just within the various diversity centers.

What This Entails

The President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues should have bylaws that govern its operations and should meet at least once a month, more often as needed.

The recommended membership of the President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues includes the following individuals:

- the Vice President for Student Life
- the Dean of Diversity and Intercultural Affairs
- the Director of the Asian and Global Resource Center
- the Director of the Latino and Latin American Resource Center
- the Director of the African American Resource Center
- the Director of the Women's Center
- the Director of the LGBTQ Center
- the Director of the Accessibility Center
- the Director of Outreach and Equal Employment
- a campus representative who is informed about issues that affect undocumented students and can advocate for those students' needs

Additional members might include the Provost (because of how diversity affects students' academic success), representatives from El Centro and CCICS, additional representatives

¹ To offer just a few examples, a President's Diversity Council was initiated at Clemson in 2000, at the University of Michigan in 2003, at Illinois Wesleyan in 2004, at Cornell in 2006, at the University of Chicago in 2007, at Western Illinois University in 2008, and at Cleveland State University in 2009.

from the Division of Student Life (particularly the Dean of Students Office and the Counseling Office), several faculty members (particularly ones from African and African American Studies, Latino and Latin American Studies, and Women's Studies, as well as faculty who have expertise in other types of diversity), and several student representatives (particularly ones who are active in student organizations that relate to diversity).

The recommended charge of the President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues includes the following responsibilities:

- Ensure that university policies, procedures, and practices are compatible with diversity as a core value;
- Develop recommendations for faculty and staff professional development experiences related to diversity²;
- Review the retention and graduation rates of students, analyzed on the basis of race and ethnicity, and propose recommendations for addressing race-based disparities³;
- Study current issues and national trends affecting diversity concerns in higher education and, as appropriate, make recommendations to the President⁴;
- Advise the President on how any future university initiatives should be adapted to accommodate the needs of diverse students⁵;
- Host an annual campus-wide Town Hall devoted to diversity issues, inviting students to share their concerns;
- Collect and review the "bias incident" reports (a recommendation that appears later in this proposal; see page 27, item i) in order to assess the campus climate and determine priorities for maintaining a welcoming campus climate for all students;
- Recommend speakers for the Presidential Lecture Series who would address and celebrate diversity;
- Assist in planning and implementing a forum for faculty and staff who are undertaking diversity-related research, service, or other initiatives to share their work with the wider campus community;
- Solicit applications for competitively funded grants available for campus initiatives related to diversity and then select the recipients of those grants⁶;

² This can include the use of outside consultants who provide specialized training (as recommended elsewhere in this proposal) or faculty institutes on diversity.

³ This data is prepared annually by the Office of Institutional Research and is published on its website. See <http://www.neiu.edu/~isp/Student%20Right%20To%20Know.html>

⁴ An excellent website for this information is "Diversity Web: An Interactive Resource Hub for Higher Education," sponsored by the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and available at <http://www.diversityweb.org/>.

⁵ For example, if dorms are ever constructed on campus, housing policies for transgender students and for students who have children should be discussed prior to the construction, in case special physical accommodations are needed.

- Prepare a report to be submitted to the President’s Council annually, summarizing year’s activities and recommendations of the Advisory Council on Diversity Issues. A copy of the report should also be sent to the library and/or posted online, so it is available to the university community.

2. Situate the Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Center within the structure of the university so that these centers (and their staff) are closely affiliated with both the Division of Student Life and the Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs.

Why This Matters

The Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Center need to have clear institutional reporting lines that ensure the centers are well integrated into the university and receive adequate support. On most campuses, diversity centers are institutionally situated within the Division of Student Life because that is where co-curricular support for students is prioritized. Diversity centers are situated within Academic Affairs less often because while the centers support students’ academic success, the focus of these centers is not primarily academic.

Currently, the Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs, which includes NEIU’s three existing student diversity centers, is organizationally housed within Academic Affairs, whereas most co-curricular services that affect students—among them, the Dean of Students Office, Student Activities, Student Health Services, and the Counseling Office—are housed under the Division of Student Life. This presents a quandary when adding a Women’s Center and an LGBTQ Center to NEIU, because it is important for these new centers to be linked with both the Division of Student Life, as well as with the existing student diversity centers.

What This Entails

The Work Group developing this proposal recommends that the Women’s Center and LGBTQ Center have a strong working relationship with the Pedroso Center—even, if possible, be integral components of the Pedroso Center—and yet report to the Division of Student Life.

The Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Center being proposed here are consistent with the mission of the Pedroso Center: “to celebrate individual differences, promote dialog on topics of diversity and social justice, and share contributions of our multicultural society through workshops, retreats, conferences, and trainings.”⁷ The proposed new student centers should be affiliated with the Pedroso Center because it is important that the university not narrow the definition of diversity so that it encompasses only race and culture. Quite the contrary, prompted by the strategic planning process, in August 2008 the President’s Council published a reflection for the university community that broadly defines diversity to include ethnicity, race, age, gender, language, culture, religion, economic background, sexual

⁶ The University of Cincinnati began to annually fund “diversity incentive proposals” in 2009. Descriptions of proposals that were selected for funding in 2010 can be found here: <http://www.uc.edu/news/NR.aspx?id=11608>

⁷ See <http://www.neiu.edu/~cdia/Home.html>

orientation, and other components of identity, including values, experiences, and intellectual interests.⁸ Because the Pedroso Center is named the “Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs,” it should serve multiple facets of diversity, including gender⁹ and sexual orientation, in addition to culture.

The Pedroso Center is already modeling a creative approach to institutional structures. As its website states, the Center “serves as an umbrella organization connecting many of NEIU’s existing cultural programs and resources together in new ways.”¹⁰ Although the Pedroso Center reports to Academic Affairs, its website attests that the Pedroso Center is “strengthened by a formal partnership with the Office of Student Activities,”¹¹ which is not within Academic Affairs but rather the Division of Student Life. The present recommendation is for the new Women’s Center and new LGBTQ Center to be similarly structured in creative ways. These new centers should be included in the umbrella organization of the Pedroso Center, consistent with their mission as student diversity centers, while also being affiliated with the Division of Student Life.

Of utmost importance in the coordination of the student diversity centers is that all staff members of the centers be trained to address all types of diversity. Many students have complex identities that a single diversity center cannot fully address. For that reason, students can best be served when those who are providing programs and services are well-informed about a broad range of diversity issues—ethnicity, race, age, gender, language, culture, religion, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship status, etc.—not just their own area of specialization.

The staff of all NEIU’s diversity centers—those in the Pedroso Center as well as the Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Center—should engage in frequent, instructive dialogue with each other about the needs of the students they serve. They should share resources, attend as many of each other’s programs and events as possible, and identify strategies for supporting students who experience multiple forms of underrepresentation or identity-based oppression. Similarly, the staff in other offices in the Division of Student Life should assume responsibility for learning as much as possible about how these elements of diversity impact students’ lives.

⁸ This reflection can be found here: http://strategicplan.neiu.edu/diversity_NEIU.html

⁹ In fact, the current “About Us” page of the Pedroso Center website indicates that the Pedroso Center will be associated with Adult and Women Student Programs (which no longer exists, yet the proposed Women’s Center will provide many similar services). See http://www.neiu.edu/~cdia/About_Us.html

¹⁰ See http://www.neiu.edu/~cdia/About_Us.html

¹¹ Again, see http://www.neiu.edu/~cdia/About_Us.html

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN STUDENTS

Recommendations are made at Levels I, II, and III based on both significance of need and timeliness. Readers should assume that recommendations at a higher level presume the fulfillment of all recommendations at lower levels. The Work Group believes all of the recommendations, including those at Level III, are necessary and important and should be implemented as quickly as resources allow.

1. Hire staff whose primary job responsibility is to address the needs of women students.

Why This Matters

Women students face wide-ranging personal and societal challenges that affect their ability to thrive academically. As the recommendations in this proposal attest, NEIU needs to do much more to demonstrate institutional support of women students. Hiring staff to enact the co-curricular programs and services recommended in this proposal will contribute to student success, the first goal of the Strategic Plan.

In addition, committing to these staff hires is a strong manifestation of all of NEIU's values. Investing in these hires demonstrates integrity because it shows a willingness to be accountable to women students, who comprise nearly 60% of the NEIU student body and are thus the largest demographic of NEIU students. This recommendation demonstrates the value of excellence in that the primary duty of these hires would be to support women students' personal and professional development. By providing campus services and referrals to local and national agencies that assist women, these hires would improve women students' access to opportunity. In educating the university community about gender issues and inequities, as well as the diversity among women (ethnicity, race, etc.), these hires would affirm NEIU's value of diversity. The hires would contribute to NEIU's value of community by providing a supportive and nurturing environment on campus for women students. Finally, these hires would provide co-curricular programs and services that bring empowerment through learning, preparing women to be effective leaders and citizens.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Conduct searches for a Director of the Women's Center and an Assistant Director of the Women's Center during the Fall 2011 semester, so that these staff can begin work no later than January 2012, even if a permanent space for the center is not yet available.¹²

¹² In an earlier draft of this proposal that the Work Group circulated to the campus community for feedback, a recommendation was included for an interim hire recruited from a Chicago-area graduate program in women's studies. This person could develop a website and provide services and programming to support women students during the Fall 2011 semester, while a more comprehensive search for a permanent hire took place. This recommendation has been removed because it did not have the support of Women's Studies faculty and the Women's Studies Advisory Board. It is essential, however, that the searches for permanent staff be completed in a timely manner (no later than December 2011), so that the needs of women students currently on campus can be addressed without further delay.

The job ad for these positions should be written in ways that are consistent with the leadership and human resources criteria specified in the “CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Women Student Programs and Services.”¹³ The jobs should be advertised, among other places, on the National Women’s Studies Association website.¹⁴ The search committee should include, among others, representatives from Women’s Studies, the Pedroso Center, the Division of Student Life, the work group that has prepared this proposal, and a relevant student organization (such as the Feminist Collective).

The Director’s responsibilities would be primarily administrative and directed at university-level initiatives:

- Manage the budget and personnel of the Women’s Center when it opens; collect and report data regarding use of the Women’s Center
- Oversee changes to university policies and services to ensure a woman-friendly campus (see the many recommendations in this proposal)
- Serve on the President’s Advisory Council on Diversity (a new council that is recommended elsewhere in this proposal) to advocate for the needs of women students
- Consult regularly with the directors of the three Pedroso Center resource centers, the Behavioral Concerns Team, the Affirmative Action officer, the University Police, Health Services, Counseling Services, the Dean of Students, and the Vice President of Student Life regarding the needs of women students
- Meet regularly with Women’s Studies faculty and the Women’s Studies Advisory Board, to discuss ways that academic and co-curricular efforts can be coordinated to benefit the education of women students
- Secure grants to help fund specialized training and Center programs¹⁵
- Offer professional development on women’s issues on a continuing basis to NEIU faculty and staff
- Serve as a guest lecturer on women’s issues for NEIU courses, upon request
- Maintain a website and online resources for the Women’s Center
- Advocate for women students who are experiencing discrimination or bias on campus
- Coordinate the action plan for any woman student who is in immediate crisis

¹³ Available on NEIU’s U-drive at this location: U:\Student Affairs Assessment Information\CAS_SAG_APP\SAGs\WP\complete.rtf

¹⁴ See job listings here: <http://www.nwsa.org/employ/index.php>

¹⁵ Promising sources of grants for initiatives that impact women students are the Chicago Foundation for Women (<http://www.cfw.org>) and Third Wave Foundation (<http://www.thirdwavefoundation.org>).

- Support the Assistant Director in providing services, referrals, and programs to women students

The Assistant Director's responsibilities would be primarily student-focused:

- Provide direct services to women students on the main campus, on both an individual and group basis
 - Refer women students to off-campus organizations that can also assist them
 - With assistance from the Special Events Facilitator in the Pedroso Center and the Women's Studies Program, plan programs about women's issues for the university community¹⁶
- b. Hire support staff for the Director and Assistant Director, including an administrative assistant, two graduate student assistants, and two undergraduate student workers.

Level II:

- c. Hire an additional female counselor/psychologist, budgeted as a joint appointment for the Women's Center and the Counseling Office, whose clients would be exclusively women students.

The inadequate availability of Counseling Services for women students was one of the most frequent complaints that the Work Group received when talking to faculty, staff and students about women students' needs. However, the Counseling Office has neither the space nor the budget for an additional full-time hire.¹⁷ Hiring a female counselor who specializes in women's issues¹⁸ and whose position is funded by both the Counseling Office and the Women's Center, with the directors of both participating in the search for this hire, and with space for clinical sessions provided in the Women's Center, is a feasible, cooperative solution that would enable women students to have improved access to counseling.¹⁹

¹⁶ These should be offered most often on the main campus, but no less than one event per year should take place at El Centro and at CCICS.

¹⁷ The Counseling Office has been innovative in trying to address its lack of resources. It has, for example, expanded its training program, which allows part-time, unpaid externs who are earning their doctorate degrees in Clinical Psychology to provide counseling services to NEIU students. In addition, the Counseling Office has expanded its post-doc training program. The Counseling Office currently has three full-time clinical positions in the budget, four doctoral student externs (the most it has ever had), and two post-doc clinicians. Nevertheless, because of the high demand for counseling sessions, it has recently needed to implement a policy that places a limit on the number of visits that a student may receive during their years at NEIU.

¹⁸ Women Studies faculty and the Women Studies Advisory Board feel strongly that this counselor should have training and/or experience in counseling women who have been impacted by violence.

¹⁹ This recommendation has been discussed with John Hoeppel, the Director of the Counseling Office. He is supportive of this recommendation, although he would want to ensure that the counselor remains integrated enough into the daily workings of the Counseling Office that she is still able to participate in consultations about cases, supervisions, and in-house training sessions. He suggested that perhaps a small office space down the hallway from the Counseling Office could be allocated for

Level III:

- d. In addition to the hires recommended at Levels I and II, hire an additional full-time or part-time person to assist in providing programming and services to women students once the Women's Center is established. The titles of the Women's Center staff could then be Director of the Women's Center, Coordinator of Women's Programming and Services (equivalent to the "Assistant Director" position described in Level I), Assistant Coordinator of Women's Programming and Services (this new position), and Staff Psychologist for Women Students (the counseling position requested at Level II).

The Assistant Coordinator of Women's Programming and Services would have these duties:

- Assist in providing programming and services for women students, so that with additional staff, more can be offered on the main campus (including some evening services and programs) and the services provided to satellite campuses can be increased
- Serve as a campus-designated advocate for women students who have young children, increasing the resources and services for those students in particular by implementing many of the actions in recommendation #4 (see pages 21-25).

2. Provide space for a women's student center.

Why This Matters

A center designated specifically for supporting women students will provide a centralized location for the many programs and services recommended in this proposal. It will also demonstrate the university's recognition that women students are important contributors to the diversity on campus, and it will help to fulfill goal 5.3 of the Strategic Plan, which calls for "future student service centers." Like the hiring of staff, a women's center is consistent with all of NEIU's values, especially the value of community because it would provide a location on campus where women students can gather for support and mentoring.

this new hire, so that she can remain nearby when appropriate, while also having space designated for counseling women students within the Women's Center.

This recommendation has also been discussed with Women's Studies, the Women's Studies Advisory Board, and the Feminist Collective student organization. They too support this recommendation. They want to ensure that as a joint hire, this counselor does not get assigned to Counseling Office projects or duties that unduly reduce her ability to provide counseling sessions to women students. Also, it should be clearly understood that this counselor will provide private and group counseling sessions to women students only and will do so exclusively in the Women's Center. The appointments for this counselor should be booked through the Counseling Office and should be available to any NEIU female student, not just those who access the Women's Center.

Out of the eleven campuses that have been identified as NEIU's peer institutions, seven have a women's student center²⁰, two others include information on their websites that suggest a women's center is being planned²¹, and only two campuses do not have a women's center²². The recent opening of the Angelina Pedroso Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs sets an important precedent for student centers on campus and makes the need for a women's center on campus all the more apparent.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Relocate offices that are in central locations on campus but that do not provide student-centered services so that a more centralized, visible location can be found for a permanent Women's Center.²³ Ideally, the Women's Center would be in Building B, in close proximity to the Pedroso Center and other vital student services.²⁴

A permanent site for the Women's Center should be chosen by the President's Council, in consultation with Facilities Management, during Summer 2011, so that offices can be relocated and any necessary renovation/construction of the vacated space can occur during the Fall 2011 semester. If at all possible, the Center should be completed by the start of the Spring 2012 semester; if the Center is not completed by the time that staff for the Center are hired, interim space for the staff and the students the Center will serve should be provided (see recommendation "b" on page 18).

At a minimum, the Women's Center space should accommodate these facilities:

- A private office for the Director of the Women's Center, with adequate space for working on projects, meeting with university officials, and conferencing with students in crisis
- An office for the Coordinator of Women's Programming

²⁰ These include Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi, California State University-Dominguez Hills, New Jersey City University, CUNY Lehman College, Auburn University-Montgomery, Indiana University-Northwest, and Chicago State University.

²¹ California State University-Stanislaus lists "re-establishing a women's center" as an option on its Strategic Planning White Paper for "Addressing the Needs of a Highly Diverse Population" (see <http://www.csustan.edu/StrategicPlanning/documents/3-Goal.pdf>). Also, University of Texas-Pan American has received foundation money that it plans to use as seed money for a women's resource center (see <http://coah.utpa.edu/ann4.htm>).

²² These include Purdue University-Calumet Campus and University of Texas at Brownsville.

²³ This is consistent with the "CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Women Student Programs and Services," which recommends that a Women's Center be "located in prominent, visible areas to visually demonstrate the institution's commitment to WSPS [Women Student Programs and Services]." Offices that do not directly meet the needs of students can be moved to more remote campus locations. Another option in relocating offices is to purchase a building in the neighborhood for offices that don't directly serve students, as was done when Human Resources was moved to the Bernard Office Building.

²⁴ Some Women Studies faculty have recommended that the open lounge/vending area in the B-wing be partially enclosed to accommodate one of the proposed centers, or that the President's Council consider an expansion of Building B.

- An office for the joint hire in Women’s Center and Counseling, suitable for private counseling sessions, with comfortable furnishings and sound-resistant walls to ensure confidentiality
 - A reception area and space for the office manager/administrative assistant
 - Work spaces for the graduate assistants and undergraduate student workers
 - An open lounge area where women students can informally gather for peer support. This area should have comfortable furnishings that provide a safe space for women on campus, as well as tables/desks where women can eat and do school work, a TV/DVD, and a few computers.
 - A separate enclosed meeting area that can be used for small group gatherings, without displacing women students who may want to use the lounge area. This meeting area can be used for workshops, group counseling sessions, film showings and webinars, programs such as brown bags and book clubs, etc.
 - A small room for nursing mothers (see page 23, recommendation “e” for more details about this lactation room), also equipped with a changing table
 - Storage facilities
- b. Until a permanent space for the Women’s Center is provided, arrange for interim accommodations that allow staff to provide services for women students. The staff should be provided with campus offices (as was done for the staff of the Pedroso Center during that Center’s construction). The Pedroso Center can be asked to share its student lounge area with women students on a temporary basis, just until the Women’s Center is constructed. Finally, the Women’s Center staff should be assisted in finding campus rooms for programs and events, such as the rooms that can be reserved on the second floor of the Student Union.

Level II:

- c. In addition to the Women’s Center facilities specified at Level I, add these:
- Space for a library of women’s books, movies, and other resources²⁵
 - A kitchenette
 - A larger lounge and meeting room
 - An area designed for the needs of women students who have young children, adequate to fulfill many of the needs specified in recommendation #4 on pages 21-25.

²⁵ Library staff should be consulted about these purchases, to ensure that they complement the university library’s holdings well.

Level III:

- d. In addition to the Women’s Center facilities specified at Levels I and II, add this:
 - o A sizeable area separate from but adjacent to the Women’s Center that could be used as a childcare collective, as described in recommendation #4 on pages 21-25.

3. Provide educational and social programming on women’s issues and concerns.

Why This Matters

As stated in the “CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Women Student Programs and Services,” women’s centers “must provide programs and services that address institutional environment, social justice, campus support services, networking opportunities, and other educational issues of significance to women” (13). The CAS document provides much more detailed guidance about what this programming should include, which is consistent with the recommendations in this proposal.²⁶

The educational and social programming recommended here contributes to the strategic goal of student success, particularly goal 1.5: “improve coordination among student and academic support programs and services with a focus on quality, customer service, and intentional integration with the curriculum.”

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Provide funding for programming that is adequate to accomplish the Center’s missions and goals. At a minimum, the funding must be comparable to the other student diversity centers on campus.
- b. Sponsor annual events on campus such as Take Back the Night²⁷ (a rally, march or candlelight vigil that advocates for an end to sexual violence), RAINN Day²⁸ (a national campaign sponsored by the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network to raise awareness and fight against sexual violence on college campuses), and events for Sexual Assault Awareness Month²⁹ (every April), as well as assist the Women’s Studies Program in planning events for International Women’s Day (every March 8) and Women’s History Month (every March).

²⁶ See pages 12-17 of “CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Women Student Programs and Services,” available on NEIU’s U-drive at this location: U:\Student Affairs Assessment Information\CAS_SAG_APP\SAGs\WP\complete.rtf

²⁷ See planning resources at <http://takebackthenight.org/>

²⁸ See planning resources at <http://www.rainn.org/get-involved/college/rainn-day>

²⁹ See planning resources at <http://www.nsvrc.org/saam>

- c. Sponsor exhibits in the Village Square that promote awareness of women's issues, such as the Clothesline Project³⁰ (women affected by violence express their emotions by writing/drawing on shirts and then raise awareness by exhibiting them on a clothesline) and Silent Witness³¹ (a display of life-size cardboard silhouettes of Chicago-area victims of domestic violence and their stories).
- d. Incorporate activities addressing women students' needs into annual campus events, such as Class Act (an event for new students and their families) and Fall into Fun Week.
- e. Facilitate discussion groups for distinct subgroups of women students (mothers, women in the military, returning adult students, birth moms, survivors of violence, etc.).
- f. Host enrichment programs for women students, such as book clubs, writing groups, brown bags with guest speakers, film showings, and lectures.
- g. Offer workshops on women's issues such as body image and eating disorders, safer sex practices and dating issues³² (including date rape), ways to reduce the risk of sexual assault³³, responding to sexism and sexual harassment, career and family decision-making, money management and financial independence, parenting issues, domestic violence, assertiveness and self-advocacy, legal recourses for discrimination, and student activism and leadership.
- h. Collaborate with existing student organizations for women (such as the Feminist Collective and various sororities) to host programs and events.
- i. Offer workshops specifically designed to educate male students about how to be effective allies for women.³⁴
- j. Develop programs that allow for climate-enhancing interactions between women students, women faculty, and women staff.
- k. Provide online and print information about off-campus support for women, including local and national organizations.

Level II:

³⁰ See planning resources at <http://www.clotheslineproject.org/>

³¹ See planning resources at <http://www.silentwitness.net/>

³² See resources available from the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline at <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>

³³ For suggestions, see <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-prevention>

³⁴ For suggestions, see <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-prevention/men-can-help>

- l. Coordinate a mentoring program for interested women students.
- m. Initiate a blog or online community group for women students, faculty, and staff.
- n. Invite a nationally recognized speaker on women's issues to be part of the Presidential Lecture Series.
- o. Organize a group of students to attend the National Young Feminist Leadership Conference.³⁵
- p. Organize occasional social outings off campus for women students who frequent the Women's Center.
- q. Organize a group of women students and male allies to volunteer at a women's social service organization off campus.

Level III:

- r. Offer an online chat service that allows women students to ask questions anonymously during advertised hours.
- s. Send a bi-weekly or monthly e-newsletter to subscribers, to keep them informed of programs and events, even if they forget to check the Women Center's website.
- t. Host events that include the partners and families of women students.
- u. Host an annual Women's Awards banquet to celebrate the achievements of women in our campus community.

4. Provide resources, support, and facilities for women students who have young children.

Why This Matters

Services, facilities, and support aimed at addressing the needs of student parents have been linked to higher graduation rates.³⁶ In addition, psychological distress has been found to be one of the primary factors that inhibit the academic success of student parents.³⁷ Provisions of quality family-friendly services, programs, and policies on campus that address the

³⁵ For information, see <http://www.feministcampus.org/leadership/>

³⁶ Boswell, T. (2003). Campus child care centres. *ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education*. Retrieved March 22, 2011 from <http://www.ericdigests.org/2005-2/child-care.html>

³⁷ Quimby, J & O'Brien, K. (2006). Predictors of well-being among nontraditional female students with children. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 84, 451-460.

physical, financial, and emotional needs of student parents will enhance their academic success.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Appoint a campus representative charged with advocating for the needs of women students who have young children (see the Level III staffing recommendations for women students on page 16, item “d”).
- b. Apply for a “Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program” grant from the U. S. Department of Education, which subsidizes nearly all child care expenses for low-income students who receive a Federal Pell grant.³⁸
- c. Once substantial subsidies for the childcare needs of students are assured, dramatically increase the percentage of Child Care Center enrollments that are reserved for the children of NEIU students, so that students receive priority over members of the community on the Child Care Center’s waiting list.
- d. Create a website page specifically for students who are parents. Use this page to inform students who are parents about off-campus resources that provide subsidies of childcare expenses,³⁹ food assistance,⁴⁰ temporary financial assistance,⁴¹ and health care for uninsured parents and children.⁴² Also inform student mothers about scholarships reserved for low-income women with

³⁸ Colleges and universities are eligible to receive a grant under this program if the total amount of all Federal Pell grant funds awarded to students enrolled at the school for the preceding year equals or exceeds \$350,000. Approved grants are continued for four years. In recent years, over 150 institutions have received funds annually, and this year, over 16 million dollars in funding is available. In 2009-2010, three of NEIU’s peer institutions were funded: New Jersey City University received \$88,597; University of Texas-Pan American received \$292,554; Chicago State University received \$110,719. In 2009-2010, eleven Illinois institutions were funded. Complete information about this program is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/campisp/>. To read some testimonials of some students who credit their academic success and graduation to this childcare funding, see this University of North Florida website:

<http://www.unf.edu/dept/cdrc/ccampis.htm>

³⁹ Illinois Action for Children provides free assistance in finding affordable childcare to teens 19 and younger living in Cook County through their “Teen Parent Project,” described here:

http://www.actforchildren.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Family_Teen. The Illinois Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) subsidizes childcare expenses for low-income students and workers; see information here:

http://www.actforchildren.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Family_PayChildCare.

⁴⁰ See the Illinois Department of Human Services site for information about WIC and other food assistance programs, found here: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29721>.

⁴¹ See the Illinois Department of Human Services site for information about Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), found here: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=30358>.

⁴² State of Illinois income-based health care assistance programs include the Moms & Babies Programs for Pregnant Women (see <http://www.allkids.com/pregnant.html>), All Kids (see <http://www.allkids.com/>), and Family Care (see <http://www.familycareillinois.com/>).

children.⁴³ Another helpful resource link for this website is *Student Parent Journal*, an online forum that provides worksheets on concerns like time management and budgeting, and a very extensive list of resource links.⁴⁴

- e. Provide space for and install one lactation station that is exclusively reserved for nursing mothers, ideally housed within the Student Union, the Women's Center, or another central location.⁴⁵
- f. Install diaper-changing stations within existing restrooms on the main campus, the El Centro campus, and the CCICS campus.⁴⁶ Also add them to gender-neutral restrooms on these campuses so that fathers can also access these diaper-changing stations. Publicize the locations of these diaper-changing stations on relevant websites and restroom signage.
- g. Provide workshop and educational programming to address parenting issues such as techniques for managing school and family responsibilities, proper nutrition for children, positive discipline techniques, and parenting children with special needs. These workshops can be offered by Child Care Center staff, Health Services staff, Counseling Office staff, Early Childhood Education faculty, and outside consultants.⁴⁷
- h. Develop a childbirth accommodation policy that allows a woman to maintain her student status and access to university resources if she needs to postpone her education prior to, during, and immediately following the birth of a child. The childbirth accommodation policy would inform the student of her right to request an Incomplete for any current courses and her right to submit a written request to Aetna to purchase a 3-month or 6-month student health insurance policy, using the "continuation plan" that is currently available to all students.⁴⁸ In addition, the childbirth accommodation policy would extend the woman's student status for one semester, without requiring enrollment in new courses or student fees. This status would allow the student the ability to

⁴³ See, for example, <http://www.patsyminkfoundation.org>

⁴⁴ *Student Parent Journal* can be found here: <http://www.studentparentjournal.com/>.

⁴⁵ See the following resource on information regarding the rationale, strategies, and benefits of providing this service: http://lifework.arizona.edu/cc/ua_featured_as_a_best_practice_model_for_student_parent_lactation_support. See sample proposal for campus lactation station, including rationale and budget here:

<http://www.nwsa.org/research/downloads/centerdocs/program/UMichDearbornLactation.pdf>

⁴⁶ See sample proposal for campus diaper changing stations, including rationale and budget here:

<http://www.nwsa.org/research/downloads/centerdocs/program/UMichDearbornDiaper.pdf>

⁴⁷ One organization that provides outreach programs and workshops is Tuesday's Child, described here:

<http://www.tuesdayschildchicago.org/program/outreach.htm>

⁴⁸ See details about Aetna's "Continuation Plan" for NEIU students here:

http://www.aetnastudenthealth.com/stu_conn/student_connection.aspx?GroupID=697402. Students must still pay a premium for the 3-month or 6-month coverage, and must write Aetna 31 days prior to the termination of their current coverage.

check out resources from the library and print at the campus computer labs (often necessary when finishing an Incomplete), use Health Services, Counseling Services, and the PE Complex, qualify for discounted tuition rates for any prior children who are enrolled at the Child Care Center, and other relevant entitlements that are typically granted only to those who have student status.

- i. Establish a listserv and/or Facebook group that student parents can join to exchange childcare, arrange play dates, discuss parenting challenges and strategies, and build a sense of community with other parents that can sustain them through their years of college.
- j. Provide more frequent family-friendly social events on campus and indicate on publicity notices the age-level appropriateness of those events.

Level II:

- k. Provide a facility and guidelines for a childcare collective on campus. This could exist in addition to the current Child Care Center, as an affordable alternative for students who do not qualify for childcare subsidies because of their immigration status or their income.⁴⁹
- l. Charter a student organization or club for students who are parents.⁵⁰
- m. Purchase an annual membership to the Higher Education Alliance for Advocates of Students with Children (HEAASC). The membership fee includes access to an interactive listserv with professionals at other campuses who provide services to students with children.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Campus-affiliated childcare cooperatives already exist at Indiana University at Bloomington and at UCLA, even though both universities have other childcare facilities too. The cooperatives are staffed by parents who work pre-determined hours at the co-op and pay a reduced monthly fee (at IU, for example, the required time commitment is 10 hours a week and the monthly fee for full-time childcare is \$175). Both universities provide extensive guidelines to ensure the safety and sustainability of the childcare collective. For information about the two childcare collectives at Indiana University, click on the links to the Knee-High Co-op and Sunflower Co-op found here: <http://www.childcare.indiana.edu/>. A document link to Indiana University's guidelines for its daycare cooperatives can be found at the bottom of this page: <http://www.indiana.edu/~sflower/about.html>. For information about UCLA's childcare cooperative, which is accredited by the National Association for the Education of the Young Child (NAEYC, the same organization that accredits NEIU's Child Care Center), see <http://www.upns.net/>. Then click on the "Parent Handbook" link to view the extensive guidelines in place for this cooperative.

⁵⁰ As examples, see the websites for Bloomsburg University's Student Parents Association at <http://organizations.bloomu.edu/spa/> and New York University's Students with Children Club at <http://www.nyu.edu/clubs/studentswithchildren/>.

⁵¹ More information about HEAASC (including resources, publications, and membership information) can be found here: <http://www.upns.net/>.

- n. Provide lactation stations at the El Centro and CCICS satellite campuses, as well as more than one on the main campus⁵².
- o. Provide childcare services during major campus events. Services can be provided on a drop-off basis, with physical facilities located within the same structure as the event, by teachers' aides employed by the Child Care Center and/or College of Education students.
- p. Provide drop-off/emergency childcare within existing facilities on campus, including evening hours. This can be accomplished by setting aside existing space/rooms on campus (preferably not PE building, as this would require additional licensing) and using Child Care Center staff.⁵³
- q. Introduce, publicize, and maintain a children's clothing and equipment exchange program within the Women's Center or an existing campus office.

Level III:

- r. Provide new programming through Campus Recreation to include after-school activities for children of students.
- s. To reduce the lengthy waiting list of applicants for the Child Care Center, provide space for expansion of the Child Care Center to allow for additional enrollment and drop off services on site. This can be within the planned College of Education building, or adjacent to the existing Child Care Center facility.
- t. Send a campus representative every year to the Student Parent Support Symposium, a national conference hosted by Ohio State University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion to advance support services in higher education for single parents, low-income parents, and families.⁵⁴

5. Ensure that NEIU is a safe campus for women students.

Why This Matters

A 2005 report published by the U.S. Department of Justice provides the disturbing information that "when projected over a now-typical 5-year college career, one in five young

⁵² Some campuses have numerous lactation rooms. For example, see this listing of the sixteen locations at Emory University: http://www.womenscenter.emory.edu/services_resources/Nursing%20Nest/index.html

⁵³ See description of an example of campus drop off/emergency child care services here: http://lifework.arizona.edu/cc/sick_child_and_emergency_back_up_care_program

⁵⁴ For information, see <http://odi.osu.edu/current-students/academic-advancement-services/events/symposium/>.

women experiences rape during college.”⁵⁵ In the vast majority of these rapes, the report indicates, the victim and the assailant know each other, which is why “less than 5 percent of completed and attempted rapes of college students are brought to the attention of campus authorities and/or law enforcement.”⁵⁶ The safety recommendations presented here are designed not only to protect women students while they are on campus but also to educate them about ways to better protect themselves from violence when they are off campus, with the understanding that any experience of violence is certain to impact students’ ability to succeed academically.

These recommendations are consistent with the goal 5.7 of the Strategic Plan, to “ensure that the University community is safe and secure; ... and that plans are in place to continuously monitor and enhance campus security.”

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. At orientations for new students and through an email announcement at the beginning of each semester, instruct students to register for N-Alert notifications, to enter the emergency phone number for university police into their cell phones, and to call the non-emergency university police number if they would like an escort to the parking lot or a neighboring street after dark. Also inform students of the Code Blue emergency phones near the parking lots, which dial the university police department automatically.⁵⁷
- b. On the website for the Women’s Center, provide a map of the locations of the Code Blue emergency phones and information about the safety escort service after dark. If demand for escorts during evening hours exceeds what the university police force can manage, recruit and train student escorts.
- c. Exhibit educational/awareness posters throughout campus about topics affecting women’s safety, such as sexual harassment,⁵⁸ stalking,⁵⁹ and the importance of obtaining verbal consent for sex.⁶⁰ Exhibit these posters at CCICS and at El Centro (in Spanish) too.

⁵⁵ See “Sexual Assault on Campus: What Colleges and Universities Are Doing About It,” available as a pdf document at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/205521.pdf>

⁵⁶ Ibid, pages 2-3.

⁵⁷ During class visits done to develop this proposal, many students indicated that they were not aware of these phones. Also, the Feminist Collective student organization has indicated that not all of the phones work and that police do not always respond, so the operational effectiveness of the Code Blue phones should be assessed and remedied, if necessary.

⁵⁸ Posters produced by the Illinois Human Rights Commission that warn against sexual harassment by professors are already being displayed by the library elevators.

⁵⁹ Posters about how social media and cell phones contribute to stalking can be found at the bottom of this page on the National Center for Victims of Crime website: http://www.ncvc.org/src/main.aspx?dbID=DB_publications127#posters

⁶⁰ The one-page document “Ten Reasons to Obtain Verbal Consent for Sex,” which can easily be converted into a poster, is available at http://www.bernicessandler.com/id58_htm

- d. Provide workshops on women's safety issues at least once a year on both the main campus and at CCICS and El Centro. This could be a joint venture of the Women's Center and University Police.⁶¹
- e. Ensure that when the Behavioral Concerns Team is involved with a student whose behavior affects the safety of a woman student, the Behavioral Concerns Team contacts the director of the Women's Center to serve as that woman student's advocate. Otherwise, the BCT may focus primarily on the offending student without adequately supporting the impacted woman.
- f. Encourage the university police department to have a scheduled, open dialogue with women students at the Women's Center once a year, facilitated by the Director of the Women's Center, so that a good rapport exists between women students and the university police. This would also give women students the opportunity to share with the police any safety concerns they have.
- g. Provide and/or promote self-defense training to women students on the main campus each semester and to women students at CCICS and El Centro at least once a year.⁶²
- h. Include an informational session on campus diversity issues (including sexual harassment and gender bias in the classroom) as part of the orientation given to new faculty and staff hires.⁶³
- i. Develop a form that allows anyone on campus to report an incident of bias or intolerance. Many campuses use these reports to track the climate on campus over time and to respond to problematic incidents when appropriate.⁶⁴ The forms should be submitted to the President's Advisory Council on Diversity,

⁶¹ The Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN) provides an excellent variety of resources for these workshops here: <http://www.rainn.org/get-information>

⁶² At Southern Connecticut University, self-defense training sessions for women are publicized on the Women's Center website and offered regularly through the University Police Department; see <http://www.southernct.edu/universitypolice/policeservices/rapeaggressiondefense/>. As an urban commuter campus, NEIU has a responsibility to ensure that women are safe not only on campus but also as they travel back and forth to school. Federal grants to improve campus safety for women could fund this program; see recommendation "m" on page 28.

⁶³ Superb materials by Bernice Sandler, known as the godmother of Title IX, are available for free at <http://www.bernicessandler.com>. Among the available handouts that would be useful for new faculty are "The Chilly Climate: Subtle Ways in Which Women are Treated Differently at Work and in Classrooms" and "How to Diffuse the Sexual Issue in Mentoring."

⁶⁴ An excellent model of bias reporting exists at the University of Missouri, described here: <http://equity.missouri.edu/bias-reporting/>. Reports can be submitted online by anyone who experiences or observes bias on campus, and there is an option to submit the reports anonymously. The reports are logged to reveal trends that should be addressed, and investigations are conducted when needed.

which would compile an annual report that tallies and analyzes these incidents and develops recommendations for addressing them.

Level II:

- j. Use the “Model Campus Stalking Policy” guidebook developed by the National Center for Victims of Crime to develop a campus policy on stalking.⁶⁵
- k. Plan programs⁶⁶ and events⁶⁷ that focus on men’s role in preventing violence against women.
- l. Train both male and female students on actions that bystanders can take to prevent sexual violence.⁶⁸

Level III:

- m. Apply for a federal grant to improve campus safety for women. The “Grants to Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking on Campus Program” offers grants designed specifically for campus initiatives and is offered through the U.S. Department of Justice. The website indicates that HSIs are given priority when awarding grants.⁶⁹
- n. Create an online education module that teaches female and male students about dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Require all students to complete this module.⁷⁰

6. Expand and better publicize health care services for women students.

Why This Matters

Health concerns and costs can interfere with students’ quality of education and their ability to remain in school. Although NEIU provides counseling and health services, the demand for

⁶⁵ This guidebook contains useful language for defining stalking, lists of stalking behaviors, safety considerations for victims, and sample policies that can be adapted or used in their entirety. It is available as a free download at this website:

http://www.ncvc.org/src/main.aspx?dbID=DB_publications127#posters

⁶⁶ The Illinois Center for Violence Prevention provides resources and links for such a program on its website “StandUp: Men Moving from Standing By to Standing Up,” found here: <http://www.icvp.org/standup.asp>. Additional actions men can take are described here: <http://www.rainn.org/print/87>

⁶⁷ An event often used on campuses is “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes: The International Men’s March to Stop Rape, Sexual Assault & Gender Violence.” More information can be found here: <http://www.walkamileinheroes.org/>

⁶⁸ The book *Engaging Bystanders in Sexual Violence Prevention* is available online in both English and Spanish as a free download at <http://www.nsvrc.org/publications/nsvrc-publications/engaging-bystanders-sexual-violence-prevention>. It includes activities and trainer instructions.

⁶⁹ Detailed information about these grant opportunities are available here: http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/campus_desc.htm

⁷⁰ This has been done at Wayne State University, using funds received from a U.S. Department of Justice Grant (see previous recommendation and footnote). Wayne State has different modules for men and for women; both modules contain information, video clips, and self-testing exercises. Each module takes an hour to complete, is accessible through Wayne State’s Blackboard site, and is a requirement for all first-year students.

these services (particularly by women students) is currently not being satisfied. In addition, according to a survey conducted at NEIU in 2008 by the American College Health Association, 39% of female respondents had not received health information from NEIU on any of the following topics: tobacco and alcohol use, sexual relationships or assault, violence prevention, suicide prevention, pregnancy prevention, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, nutrition, and physical fitness.⁷¹ These findings clearly indicate the need for greater publicity and dissemination of information that could foster women students' health.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Increase the availability of professional counseling services for women, consistent with the staff and space recommendations for serving women students' needs presented on page 15, recommendation "c" and on page 18.
- b. Use print and online media to publicize local and national organizations that provide free health-related educational materials and services for women.⁷² These resources should be publicized in Health Services and on its website, in the Women's Center and on its website, and when appropriate, at campus events.
- c. As is currently done in Health Services, make free condoms available in the Women's Center.⁷³
- d. Intentionally support the reproductive rights of women students by publicizing the birth control counseling and contraceptives available in Health Services. Also, refer students in person and on the websites of Health Services and the Women's Center to the Illinois Healthy Women program that provides free family planning and reproductive healthcare⁷⁴, as well as to organizations that provide abortion funding⁷⁵ and post-abortion counseling.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Data provided by Cathy Schacht, Health Services, as reported in the National College Health Assessment Institutional Data Report 2008.

⁷² Examples of these organizations include the National Women's Health Information Center (<http://www.womenshealth.gov/>), Feminist Women's Health Center (<http://www.fwhc.org/>), the Black Women's Health Imperative (<http://www.blackwomenshealth.org/>), the National Asian Women's Health Organization (<http://www.nawho.org/>), Y-Me National Breast Cancer Organization (<http://www.y-me.org/>), the Jean Hailes Foundation for Women's Health (<http://www.jeanhailes.org.au/>), and Women's Health.com (<http://www.womens-health.com/>).

⁷³ These should include the same options available in Health Services: male condoms, female condoms, dental dams, lubricant and latex-free male condoms.

⁷⁴ See the website at <http://www.illinoishealthywomen.com/hfs3814hw.html> for age and income eligibility, services provided, and enrollment information. The website indicates that this program may be discontinued in March 2012.

⁷⁵ Abortion funds are available from the National Network of Abortion Funds (<http://www.fundabortionnow.org/>), the Chicago Abortion Fund (<http://www.chicagoabortionfund.com/>), and the Third Wave Foundation's emergency abortion fund (<http://www.thirdwavefoundation.org/our-work/emergency-abortion-fund/>).

- e. Notify faculty who teach courses that address women's issues that staff from Health Services are available as guest lecturers on women's health.

Level II:

- f. Support the Counseling Office in providing group workshops in the Women's Center that focus on women's psychological and emotional health needs. The workshops can address topics such as self-esteem and assertiveness, body image, dating and sexual decision-making, responding to harassment, preventing self-injury and suicide, recovering from sexual assault, and recovering from and ending domestic violence.
- g. Support Health Services staff in providing group workshops in the Women's Center that focus on women's health needs. The workshops can address topics such as reproductive health and birth control, safer sex practices and STD's, breast cancer awareness, substance abuse, women's preventative health, eating disorders and nutrition, and stress management.
- h. On the Health Services website, provide the means for students to submit health-related questions and receive an email response.⁷⁷
- i. Through a collaboration of the Women's Center and Health Services, initiate programs that use students to promote and educate their peers about women's health issues.⁷⁸

Level III:

- j. Provide online, video-streamed workshops on women's health concerns that students can view privately and repeatedly at any time.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Exhale: An After-Abortion Counseling Talkline provides free phone counseling during evening and weekend hours, with Spanish speakers available by request on Wednesdays. Speakers of Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Tagalog are also available by request. For more information, see <http://www.4exhale.org>

⁷⁷ Although an email address appears on the bottom of each page of the Health Services website, students may not realize that this service is available unless it is explicitly stated. Also, Health Services should develop guidelines for ensuring that emailed inquiries receive a timely response.

⁷⁸ Although the programs are not restricted to women's health issues, the University of Iowa has programs that involve students as peer educators about health concerns that impact students. Their Red Watch Band and Healthy Ninjas programs are models of student involvement that could be tailored to women's health; see <http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/wellness/student-involvement>.

⁷⁹ As a model, see the excellent materials offered by California State University at Chico, found here: <http://rce.csuchico.edu/online/wellness.asp>. Students can view 30-60 minutes videos, download transcripts and handouts, and complete an online survey evaluating these resources. This would be an exciting project to pursue with a Women's Center grant application.

- k. Expand the Health Services staff to include a nutritionist who can provide individualized nutrition counseling for women.
- l. Form collaborations between the Women’s Center, Health Services, the Counseling Office, and Campus Recreation to create a comprehensive program for supporting women’s health.
- m. Construct and staff a campus wellness center, with significant services dedicated to fostering women students’ health and well-being.

7. Maintain a website that provides information about NEIU policies, services, programs, and facilities for women students, as well as referrals to off-campus organizations that can help women students.

Why This Matters

A comprehensive website that offers resources for women students is an essential means of directing women students to the Women’s Center and to other campus services, as well as to online and local organizations that can assist them. Providing this information virtually allows students to find help quickly and is particularly crucial in times of crisis when campus offices are closed or when the student wishes to remain anonymous. Another function of a comprehensive website of this nature is that it educates faculty and staff about available resources, so they are better able to refer students they work with to appropriate places for support.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Remove all references to the Adult and Women Student Programs from the university website and NEIU phone directory, to avoid misleading students who may think such resources still exist.⁸⁰
- b. Create a NEIU website that can guide women students to campus resources (including Health Services, the Counseling Office, and the Affirmative Action officer) and some off-campus resources (especially national hotlines for violence,⁸¹ a suicide prevention hotline,⁸² and local agencies that assist women in times of crisis), even before a Women’s Center is established. Once created, this website can be publicized through a targeted email announcement to the university community, as well as through a link on

⁸⁰ Although the main page of the former Adult and Women Student Programs directs students to the Dean of Students Office, a search of “AWSP” in the NEIU Google search engine reveals that there are many links to the program that still exist, including ones that date back to 2004 in identifying former staff members.

⁸¹ Examples include the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE, the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) that connects callers to a local rape crisis center at 1-800-656-HOPE, and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474.

⁸² The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-TALK. The number for Spanish speakers is 1-888-628-9454.

the Dean of Students Office website.

- c. Include on the website a link to a page designed specifically for parents, indicating resources and services available for them (see recommendation 4 on pages 21-25 for more details).
- d. Publicize the website, once it is created, through targeted emails to faculty and students. Annually, alert new faculty and new students of the website during their respective orientations.

Level II:

- e. Once the Women's Center is established, the Director should create a more comprehensive website, identifying the Center's programs and services, as well as extensive resources that are available online and off campus. One page of the website should be devoted exclusively to women's safety on and off campus (see recommendation 5 on pages 25-28 for more details).
- f. Include on the website a list of faculty who are willing to advocate for women students as their allies.
- g. Include on the website a calendar of events.

Level III:

- h. Add to the website a section entitled "The Stories of Women on Campus," where NEIU faculty, staff, and students can submit accounts of their experiences as women on campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVING THE NEEDS OF LGBTQ STUDENTS

Recommendations are made at Levels I, II, and III based on both significance of need and timeliness. Readers should assume that recommendations at a higher level presume the fulfillment of all recommendations at lower levels. The Work Group believes all of the recommendations, including those at Level III, are necessary and important and should be implemented as quickly as resources allow.

1. Hire staff whose primary job responsibility is to address the needs of LGBTQ students.

Why This Matters

LGBTQ students face wide-ranging personal and societal challenges that affect their ability to thrive academically. As the recommendations in this proposal attest, NEIU needs to do much more to demonstrate institutional support of lgbtq students. Hiring staff to enact the co-curricular programs and services recommended in this proposal will contribute to student success, the first goal of the Strategic Plan.

In addition, committing to these staff hires is a strong manifestation of all of NEIU's values. Investing in these hires demonstrates integrity because it shows a willingness to be accountable to lgbtq students, who are perhaps the most stigmatized demographic of NEIU students. This recommendation demonstrates the value of excellence in that the primary duty of these hires would be to support lgbtq students' personal and professional development. By providing campus services and referrals to local and national agencies that assist lgbtq students, these hires would improve lgbtq students' access to opportunity. In educating the university community about sexual orientation and gender identity issues and inequities, as well as the diversity among lgbtq students (ethnicity, race, etc.), these hires would affirm NEIU's value of diversity. The hires would contribute to NEIU's value of community by providing a supportive and nurturing environment on campus for lgbtq students. Finally, these hires would provide co-curricular programs and services that bring empowerment through learning, preparing lgbtq students to be effective leaders and citizens.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Conduct the search for a Director of the LGBTQ Center during the Fall 2011 semester, so that this hire can begin work no later than January 2012, even if a permanent space for the center is not yet available.

The job ad for this position should be written in ways that are consistent with the leadership and human resources criteria specified in the "CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs and

Services.”⁸³ The job should be advertised, among other places, on the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals website.⁸⁴ The search committee should include, among others, representatives from Women’s Studies, the Pedroso Center, the Division of Student Life, the work group that has prepared this proposal, and a relevant student organization (such as GLBTQA).

The Director’s responsibilities would be varied. Because the staff recommendation at Level I is for only one LGBTQ specialist (and support staff), some job duties included in the recommendations for Level II and Level III are omitted here (e.g., grant writing, providing services to LGBTQ students at satellite campuses, teaching a course), job duties such as event planning and changes to university policies/services will require greater assistance from other offices, and expectations for programming and student services will necessarily be less extensive than recommended throughout the LGBTQ section of this proposal.

The Director’s duties would include:

- Manage the budget and support staff of the Center; collect data regarding use of the LGBTQ Center
- Serve as consultant for other offices that would change university policies and services to ensure an LGBTQ-friendly campus (see the many recommendations in this proposal)
- Serve on the President’s Advisory Council on Diversity (a new council that is recommended elsewhere in this proposal) to advocate for the needs of LGBTQ students
- Consult regularly with the directors of the three Pedroso Center resource centers, the Behavioral Concerns Team, the Affirmative Action officer, the University Police, Health Services, Counseling Services, the Dean of Students, and the Vice President of Student Life regarding the needs of LGBTQ students
- Offer Safe Zone training on a continuing basis to NEIU administrators, faculty and staff
- Provide professional guidance to administrators and staff in how to respectfully acknowledge and affirm LGBTQ students in public forums
- Serve as a guest lecturer on LGBTQ issues for NEIU courses, upon request
- Maintain a website and online resources for LGBTQ students

⁸³ Available on NEIU’s U-drive at this location: U:\Student Affairs Assessment Information\CAS_SAG_APP\SAGs\LGDATP\complete.rtf

⁸⁴ See job listings here: <http://www.lgbtcampus.org/jobs/>. Additional sample position descriptions can be found here: http://architect.lgbtcampus.org/position_descriptions. Sample interview questions can be found here: http://architect.lgbtcampus.org/interview_questions.

- Advocate for LGBTQ students who are experiencing discrimination or bias on campus
 - Coordinate the action plan for any LGBTQ student who is in immediate crisis
 - Provide services to LGBTQ students on the main campus
 - With assistance from the Special Events Facilitator in the Pedroso Center and the Women’s Studies program, plan programming for LGBTQ students and the university community on the main campus
- b. Hire support staff for the Director, including an administrative assistant/office manager, two graduate student assistants, and two undergraduate student workers. The support staff requested here is larger than in Level II and Level III below because hiring just one Director would mean that many tasks would need to be delegated to these support staff.

Level II:

- c. Hire two key personnel for the LGBTQ student center: a director and an assistant director.

The Director’s responsibilities would primarily entail administrative duties and campus outreach. It would include all of the responsibilities identified in Level I above, with these changes:

- The final two bulleted items designated for the Director in Level I above—services to students and programming for students and the university community—would instead be delegated to the Assistant Director
- The Director would provide more frequent Safe Zone training as well as more advanced Safe Zone training for those who have completed the initial program
- The Director would also secure grants to enhance the Center’s programs and services and to help fund specialized training on LGBTQ issues (for university police, health services staff, counseling staff, etc.)⁸⁵

The Assistant Director would primarily be responsible for student services and programming. Because the work of the Center would be done by two staff members, the services and programs could be more extensive and more frequent. Thus, the Assistant Director of the LGBTQ Center would have these duties:

- Provide services to LGBTQ students on the main campus

⁸⁵ Links to grants for LGBTQ-related initiatives can be found at <http://www.lgbtfunders.org>. Particularly promising and generous funders are Chicago Community Trust (<http://www.cct.org>), The Kresge Foundation (<http://www.kresge.org>), and the Arcus Foundation (<http://www.arcusfoundation.org/socialjustice>).

- Plan and carry out frequent programming for LGBTQ students and the university community on the main campus and once a semester at the El Centro and CCICS campuses.
- d. Hire support staff for the Director and Assistant Director, including an administrative assistant/office manager, a graduate student assistant, and an undergraduate student worker.

Level III:

- e. Hire three key personnel for the LGBTQ student center: a director, an assistant director, and a webmaster/events coordinator.

With three staff members, the assistant director and webmaster/events coordinator could collaborate to offer more extensive and more frequent services and programs on the main campus and satellite campuses. Also, because of the increased employment of specially trained staff, the director or assistant director could, on a rotational basis, teach an Introduction to LGBTQ Studies course.

- f. Hire support staff for the Director, Assistant Director, and Webmaster/events coordinator, including an administrative assistant/office manager, a graduate student assistant, and an undergraduate student worker.

2. Provide space for an LGBTQ student center.

Why This Matters

According to Campus Pride's "2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People" report, which presents the findings of a survey with over 5,000 respondents representing all 50 states and all Carnegie Basic Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education, "LGBT individuals [are] the least accepted group [on campus] when compared with other under-served populations and, consequently, are more likely to indicate deleterious experiences and less than welcoming campus climates."⁸⁶ The report further states, "Most telling is the research indicating that LGBTQ students are more likely to have seriously considered leaving their college or university. While the likelihood of leaving for all students, regardless of sexual identity, decreased with each year of study, the differences between LGBTQ and heterosexual students widened, with LGBTQ students considering leaving more often."⁸⁷

An LGBTQ Center serves an important role in fostering an affirming environment for lgbtq students and enhancing awareness of lgbtq issues and concerns. It provides a centralized location for offering the many services and programs recommended in this proposal. It will also demonstrate the university's recognition that lgbtq students are important contributors

⁸⁶ Quoted from page 9 of the executive summary of the report, available at <http://www.campuspride.org/Campus%20Pride%202010%20LGBT%20Report%20Summary.pdf>

⁸⁷ Ibid, page 6.

to the diversity on campus, and it will help to fulfill goal 5.3 of the Strategic Plan, which calls for “future student service centers.” Like the hiring of staff, an lgbtq center is consistent with all of NEIU’s values, especially the value of community because it would provide a location on campus where lgbtq students can gather for support and mentoring.

According to the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals website, there are currently 176 lgbt student centers on college campuses in the U.S.⁸⁸ Nine of these centers are on Illinois campuses.⁸⁹ None of the eleven campuses that have been identified as NEIU’s peer institutions currently have an lgbt student center⁹⁰; therefore, an lgbt student center would distinguish NEIU as a leader among its peers in its service to lgbtq students.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. The space for the LGBTQ Center does not need to be as large as the Women’s Center because it will likely have fewer staff and fewer staff offices. Yet square footage is not the foremost consideration in locating the LGBTQ Center. Students are likely to view this center’s location in relation to the other student diversity centers as symbolic. Like the Women’s Center, the LGBTQ Center would ideally be located in Building B, in close proximity to the Pedroso Center and other vital student services.⁹¹ It should not be the sole diversity center located elsewhere because that might imply that LGBTQ students are less valued than students whose diversity is based on race, ethnicity, or gender. At the same time, LGBTQ students who are closeted or “questioning” of their sexual orientation may prefer a location where they can arrive and depart from the center somewhat discretely. Therefore, placing the LGBTQ Center in a very high-traffic location would not be desirable. A viable solution is to locate the LGBTQ Center inside the Pedroso Center (if space permits) or in another room in the midst of the Building B, some distance from the computer lab and exit to the Science Building.

A permanent site for the LGBTQ Center should be chosen by the President’s Council, in consultation with Facilities Management, during Summer 2011, so that offices can be relocated and any necessary renovation/construction of the vacated space can occur during the Fall 2011 semester. If at all possible, the Center should be completed by the start of the Spring 2012 semester; if the Center is not completed by the time that staff for the Center are hired, interim space for the staff and the students the Center will serve should be provided (see recommendation “b” on page 38).

⁸⁸ For a complete listing, see <http://www.lgbtcampus.org/directory/>

⁸⁹ These include Columbia College Chicago, DePaul, Northern Illinois, Northwestern, Southern Illinois, U of Chicago, UIC, UI-Springfield, and UIUC.

⁹⁰ Nearly all of NEIU’s peer institutions, however, do have lgbtq programming, events, Safe Zone training, and/or student organizations.

⁹¹ Some Women Studies faculty have recommended that the President’s Council consider an expansion of Building B.

At a minimum, the LGBTQ Center should accommodate these facilities:

- A private office for the Director of the LGBTQ Center, with adequate space for working on projects, meeting with university officials, and conferencing with students in crisis
 - A reception area and space for the office manager/administrative assistant
 - Work spaces for the graduate assistants and undergraduate student workers
 - An open lounge area where LGBTQ students can informally gather for peer support. This area should have comfortable furnishings that provide a safe space for LGBTQ students on campus, as well as tables/desks where they can eat and do school work, a TV/DVD, and a few computers.
 - A separate enclosed meeting area that can be used for small group gatherings, without displacing students who may want to use the lounge area. This meeting area can be used for workshops, group counseling sessions, film showings and webinars, programs such as brown bags and book clubs, etc.
 - A gender-neutral restroom (within or near the Center)
 - Storage facilities
- b. If LGBTQ Center staff are hired prior to the opening of the LGBTQ Center, the staff should be provided with interim office space, an invitation to share the student lounge space of another existing diversity center, and assistance in finding campus rooms for programs and events, such as the rooms that can be reserved on the second floor of the Student Union.

Level II:

- c. In addition to the LGBTQ Center facilities specified at Level I, add these:
- An office for the Assistant Director of the Center
 - Space for a library of LGBTQ books, movies, and other resources⁹²
 - A kitchenette
 - A larger lounge and meeting room

Level III:

- d. In addition to the LGBTQ Center facilities specified at Levels I and II, add this:
- An office for the webmaster/events coordinator

⁹² Library staff should be consulted about these purchases, to ensure that they complement the university library's holdings well.

3. Provide educational and social programming on LGBTQ issues and concerns.

Why This Matters

As stated in the “CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs and Services,” LGBTQ centers “must promote academic and personal growth and development of LGBT students, assure unrestricted access to and full involvement in all aspects of the institution, and serve as a catalyst for the creation of a campus environment free from prejudice, bigotry, harassment and violence, [one that is] hospitable for all students” (12). The CAS document provides much more detailed guidance about what this programming should include, which is consistent with the recommendations in this proposal.⁹³

The educational and social programming recommended here contributes to the strategic goal of student success, particularly goal 1.5: “improve coordination among student and academic support programs and services with a focus on quality, customer service, and intentional integration with the curriculum.”

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Provide funding for programming that is adequate to accomplish the Center’s missions and goals. At a minimum, the funding must be comparable to the other student diversity centers on campus. Although the percentage of students served by this Center may be smaller than the percentage of students served by other NEIU diversity centers, the need for Safe Zone training and educational/awareness programming is extensive, creating the need for comparable budgetary resources.
- b. Sponsor annual awareness events on campus, such as National Coming Out Day⁹⁴ (every October 11th), International Transgender Day of Remembrance⁹⁵ (every November 20th), and the National Day of Silence⁹⁶ (every April, on a specific day that varies annually).
- c. Incorporate LGBTQ-related activities into annual campus events, such as Class Act (an event for new students and their families) and Fall into Fun Week.

⁹³ See pages 13-18 of “CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs and Services,” available on NEIU’s U-drive at this location: U:\Student Affairs Assessment

Information\CAS_SAG_APP\SAGs\LGDATP\complete.rtf

⁹⁴ This day is sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign as a day for celebrating coming out and for raising awareness of the LGBTQ community. For more information, see <http://www.hrc.org/ncod/>

⁹⁵ This day is a memorial to those who have been murdered due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice. For more information, see <http://www.transgenderdor.org/> and http://www.hrc.org/issues/transgender_day_of_remembrance.asp

⁹⁶ This day is sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) as a student-led day of action that protests the bullying and harassment of LGBTQ students. Students take a day-long vow of silence to symbolically represent the silencing of LGBTQ students. For more information and an organizing manual, see <http://www.dayofsilence.org/>

- d. Facilitate discussion groups for distinct sexual orientations and gender identities (gay men only, lesbians only, bisexuals only, transgender students only) as well as for under-represented LGBTQ populations (LGBTQ students of color, LGBTQ students interested in faith and spirituality, etc.).⁹⁷
- e. Host enrichment programs for LGBTQ students, such as book clubs, writing groups, brown bags with guest speakers, film showings, and lectures.
- f. Offer workshops on LGBTQ issues such as coming out, responding to homophobia and hate crimes, family issues, dating issues and safe sex practices, legal recourses for discrimination, and student activism and leadership⁹⁸.
- g. Offer workshops on aspects of student life that present unique challenges for LGBTQ students, such as participating in study abroad programs, internships, and entering the job market.⁹⁹
- h. Collaborate with the GLBTQA student organization to host programs and events.
- i. Offer workshops specifically designed for allies of LGBTQ students, which provide information on how to be an effective ally.¹⁰⁰
- j. Provide online and print information about off-campus LGBTQ support, including local and national organizations.
- k. Develop programs that allow for climate-enhancing interactions between LGBTQ students, LGBTQ faculty, LGBTQ staff, and the allies of them all.

Level II:

⁹⁷ As examples, see the descriptions of LGBTQ discussion groups at the University of Chicago (<http://lgbtq.uchicago.edu/involved/qgroups.shtml>), which are facilitated by undergraduate and graduate students (<http://lgbtq.uchicago.edu/about/index.shtml>).

⁹⁸ See the “Leadership & Activist Development Training Series” offered at Western Michigan University as a model, described here: <http://www.wmich.edu/lbgt/programs/trainingseries.html>

⁹⁹ The “CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Programs and Services” indicates that career services is a necessary program of LGBTQ centers and should include “resume development, information on LGBT friendly employers, employer mentoring programs for LGBT students, and information on LGBT issues in the workplace” (page 15). Excellent career resources for LGBTQ students can be found on the Northern Illinois University website here: <http://www.niu.edu/careerservices/weblinks/interest/glb.html>

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, resources such as “Action Tips for Allies of Trans People” at <http://web.mit.edu/trans/tipsfortransallies.pdf> and the many “Be an Ally and a Friend” resources developed by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), available at <http://www.glaad.org/ally>

- l. Organize a series of campus events (panels, films, information tables, etc.) related to LGBTQ issues that would take place over multiple days or weeks, such as “Trans Awareness Week”¹⁰¹ and/or “Pride Month.”¹⁰²
- m. Coordinate a mentoring program for incoming LGBTQ students.¹⁰³
- n. Initiate a blog or online community group for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff.
- o. Invite a nationally recognized speaker on LGBTQ issues to be part of the Presidential Lecture Series.
- p. Organize a group of LGBTQ students to attend the Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender and Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC), hosted by a different college in the Midwest every February.¹⁰⁴
- q. Organize occasional social outings for LGBTQ students off campus.
- r. Organize a group of LGBTQ students and allies to volunteer at a LGBTQ social service organization off campus.
- s. Organize a group of students who are willing to speak about what it is like to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and an ally to classes or other groups that may request such a panel, and then publicize the availability of these student speakers.¹⁰⁵

Level III:

¹⁰¹ See descriptions of similar programs at Towson University (<http://www.towson.edu/lgbt/annualevents/transgender.asp>), San Jose State University (<http://www.sjsu.edu/transweek/2010.fall/events.html>), and University of Missouri (<http://diversity.missouri.edu/promos/tweek2010.pdf>).

¹⁰² See descriptions of similar programs at Western Illinois University (http://www.wiu.edu/news/newsrelease.php?release_id=6465), Lawrence University (http://www.lawrence.edu/dept/student_dean/multicultural_affairs/calendar/juneheritage.shtml) and College of the Sequoias (<http://www.coscampusonline.com/features/pride-club-celebrates-pride-month-at-cos-1.1724203>).

¹⁰³ At the University of Chicago, undergraduate LGBTQ students who wish to be mentored are matched with an LGBTQ graduate student, faculty member, or staff member. Both mentees and mentors complete an online application form that ensures successful matches are made. The application forms for this program are helpful models and can be viewed here: <http://lgbtq.uchicago.edu/mentoring/>.

¹⁰⁴ According to an article on the Human Rights Campaign website, this three-day conference attracts more than 1,500 students each year (<http://www.hrcbackstory.org/2010/03/what-happens-when-1500-lgbt-and-allied-students-get-together-mblgtacc/>). The 2011 conference was sponsored by the University of Michigan, and the 2012 conference will be sponsored by Iowa State University. The 2012 conference will mark the twenty-year anniversary of this conference.

¹⁰⁵ Western Michigan University has a “SpeakOUT” program that can serve as a model; see <http://www.wmich.edu/lbgt/programs/speakOUT.html>

- t. Host an annual “Coming Out Monologues” event. Modeled after “The Vagina Monologues,” this is a community-based theater project that encourages performers to write and present monologues about LGBTQ experiences.¹⁰⁶
- u. Offer an online chat service that allows students to ask LGBTQ-related questions anonymously during advertised hours.¹⁰⁷
- v. Send a bi-weekly or monthly e-newsletter to subscribers, to keep them informed of programs and events, even if they forget to check the LGBTQ Center’s website.¹⁰⁸
- w. Host events that include the partners and families of LGBTQ students.
- x. Host an annual LGBTQ Awards banquet to celebrate the achievements of LGBTQ individuals in our campus community.
- y. Offer LGBTQ educational workshops to businesses and off-campus entities that request this service.¹⁰⁹
- z. Propose a bid for NEIU to jointly host the Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender and Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC) with UIC or another Chicago-based school in an upcoming year.¹¹⁰

4. Ensure that NEIU is a safe campus for LGBTQ students.

Why This Matters

To be able to focus on their education, LGBTQ students need to be assured that they are in an environment where they are physically and psychologically safe. Yet many LGBTQ people experience verbal abuse, physical abuse, and/or sexual abuse, solely because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. According to FBI statistics, 1,297 hate crime incidents based on sexual orientation were reported in 2008 (the most recent statistics available), making sexual orientation the basis of 16.7% of the reported hate crimes that year.¹¹¹ The place to begin in providing a safe campus for LGBTQ students is with Safe Zone training that educates members of the university community about LGBTQ people’s experiences. It is also important, though, if hate crimes occur, that NEIU be prepared to respond appropriately.

¹⁰⁶ More information and sample scripts can be found here: http://architect.lgbtcampus.org/coming_out_monologues#

¹⁰⁷ Northern Illinois University offers this program using trained peer respondents. For more information, see <http://www.niu.edu/lgbt/resourcecenter/programs/q-connect/index.shtml>

¹⁰⁸ The University of Chicago’s LGBTQ Center sends an e-newsletter weekly. Archived examples are available here: <http://lgbtq.uchicago.edu/pubs/shoutout.shtml>.

¹⁰⁹ Western Michigan University provides this service for businesses, churches, and other community organizations, in addition to campus departments; see <http://www.wmich.edu/lbgt/programs/GITP.html>

¹¹⁰ Conference hosts are selected two years in advance, based on bid proposals. The effort of hosting this conference can be surmised by an account written by organizers of the 2009 MBLGTACC at Indiana University, available here: <http://www.outhistory.org/wiki/MBLGTACC>.

¹¹¹ Data obtained from Human Rights Campaign website, available here: http://www.hrc.org/issues/hate_crimes/13850.htm

These recommendations are consistent with the goal 5.7 of the Strategic Plan, to “ensure that the University community is safe and secure; ... and that plans are in place to continuously monitor and enhance campus security.”

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Provide individualized, prompt crisis intervention for LGBTQ students in conjunction with other campus services and off-campus organizations.¹¹²
- b. Provide specialized training on working with LGBTQ students to all university police. This training should include LGBTQ-sensitivity training, as well as guidance in how to file a report as a hate crime/incident. This training should be done by police officers trained in LGBTQ issues.¹¹³
- c. On the LGBTQ Center website and the University Police website, provide information about what students should do if they are a victim of a hate crime.¹¹⁴
- d. On both the LGBTQ Center website and the Counseling Office website, provide a link to the Center on Halsted’s Anti-Violence Project, which provides free and confidential crisis counseling, information and referrals, and legal advocacy to victims of violence and discrimination. This program also operates Illinois’ only 24-hour crisis line specializing in violence-related crisis intervention for persons who are LGBTQ and/or HIV positive or living with AIDS.¹¹⁵
- e. Ensure that students who use the LGBTQ Center are never asked to identify their sexual orientation and that their rights to self-disclose this information are respected.

¹¹² During the work group’s tour of UIC’s Gender & Sexuality Center, we learned that UIC assists with emergency housing needs of LGBTQ students who become unexpectedly homeless when they come out to their families. We recommend that NEIU provide that assistance for LGBTQ students also. The Broadway Youth Center (affiliated with the Howard Brown Health Center) offers extensive services for LGBTQ youth 24 and under who experience homelessness or housing instability, including emergency housing, clothing vouchers, furniture, free laundry services and other basic needs; see http://www.howardbrown.org/hb_services.asp?id=50. In addition, the voicemail of the Director of LGBTQ Services should provide an emergency contact number for LGBTQ students facing crisis when the office is closed (The Trevor Project offers a 24-hour, 7-days-a-week, toll-free crisis line for LGBTQ youth at 866-488-7386).

¹¹³ There are two Chicago-based associations of police officers that can be contacted for this training: The Lesbian and Gay Police Association (LGPA) and the Gay Officers Action League (GOAL). Information about both can be found here: <http://www.goalchicago.info/>

¹¹⁴ This information is available on the Human Rights Campaign website, found here: http://www.hrc.org/issues/hate_crimes/14765.htm

¹¹⁵ More information about this program can be found here: <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/cohavp.html>. The phone number for the 24-hour Anti-Violence Project crisis line is 773-871-CARE (2273).

- f. Provide ongoing Safe Zone training for all NEIU employees who are interested and provide the option of displaying Safe Zone signs to those who complete the training. When first available, this training should be offered on a monthly basis. It can be offered less often as the need decreases, but it should always be offered a minimum of once a semester.¹¹⁶
- g. Require all members of the President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues, all employees of the Pedroso Center, all employees of the Women's Center, and all key personnel in Student Life to complete Safe Zone training.¹¹⁷ This training should be adapted for Student Life personnel to emphasize the impact of students' intersecting identities (the intersection of sexual orientation and gender identity with race, class, religion, disability, and age).
- h. Publish online the list of campus employees who consent to being identified as allies so that the LGBTQ-friendliness of the campus is visible and so that LGBTQ students (especially those who are prospective and incoming students) can easily identify allies.¹¹⁸
- i. Include an informational session on campus diversity issues (including sexual orientation and gender identity) as part of the orientation given to new faculty and staff hires.
- j. Ensure that the LGBTQ student center and student organization receive advance notification whenever possible of any scheduled campus visit by a group that condemns homosexuality, so that LGBTQ students and their allies have time to organize a response.¹¹⁹ Following the presence of such a group on campus, administrators should also issue a response that confirms the university's value of diversity and of LGBTQ students specifically.
- k. Develop a form that allows anyone on campus to report an incident of bias or intolerance. Many campuses use these reports to track the climate on campus

¹¹⁶ Roberto Sanabria has agreed to continue to arrange for Safe Zone training until LGBTQ Center staff have been hired and can take over this responsibility. Also, staff from UIC's Gender & Sexuality Center have offered to train NEIU faculty and staff to be Safe Zone trainers.

¹¹⁷ These personnel should include, at a minimum, the VP of Student Life, the Dean of Students, the Director of Campus Recreation, the Director of Career Services, the Director of the Counseling Office, the Director of Student Activities, the Director of Health Services, the Associate VP/Dean for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs, and the three directors of resource centers in the Pedroso Center.

¹¹⁸ Northern Illinois University's "Ally Finder" website is an ideal model because it allows students to search for campus employee allies by department or by building and for student allies by major. It also includes a profile for each ally, with contact information and the option to post a completion to the statement "I am an ally because ..."

¹¹⁹ One example of a group that blatantly condemns homosexuality and visits campus annually is H.O.M.E. (Heterosexuals Organized for a Moral Environment). Examples of the homophobic hate literature they distribute on campuses can be found on their website here: <http://home60515.com/>. For suggestions on organizing a response, see "How to Handle Hate Preachers on Campus" at <http://www.campuspride.org/hatepreachers.asp>

over time and to respond to problematic incidents when appropriate.¹²⁰ The forms should be submitted to the President’s Advisory Council on Diversity, which would compile an annual report that tallies and analyzes these incidents and develops recommendations for addressing them.

Level II:

- l. Encourage the university police department to have a scheduled, open dialogue with LGBTQ students at the LGBTQ Center once a year, facilitated by the Director of the LGBTQ Center, so that a good rapport exists between LGBTQ students and the university police.
- m. Track the participation of individuals who complete Safe Zone training to determine the breadth of representation for various departments and offices on campus. After the first year or two of training, contact departments and offices that have had no one participate to encourage at least one person representing that department or office to complete the training.
- n. Give attendees of Safe Zone trainings the option of signing up to receive occasional follow-up emails, containing timely information that helps them to be better allies for LGBTQ students.
- o. Empower students to create a safer campus by training them on how to verbally respond to bigoted comments. These workshop sessions should be a collaborative venture hosted by all of NEIU’s student diversity centers, with food provided to encourage student attendance, and with time allotted for small group role-playing. Materials for these workshops are available online.¹²¹

Level III:

- p. Develop and offer multiple levels of Safe Zone training, so that those who have completed a basic Safe Zone training can receive more advanced training.¹²²

¹²⁰ An excellent model of bias reporting exists at the University of Missouri, described here: <http://equity.missouri.edu/bias-reporting/>. Reports can be submitted online by anyone who experiences or observes bias on campus, and there is an option to submit the reports anonymously. The reports are logged to reveal trends that should be addressed, and investigations are conducted when needed.

¹²¹ See, for example, the 90-page handbook entitled “Speak Up: Responding to Everyday Bigotry” prepared by the Southern Poverty Law Center and downloadable for free at <http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/publications/speak-up-responding-to-everyday-bigotry>. The final page of this handbook lists additional resources, all available online.

¹²² Western Michigan University offers three levels of Safe Zone training: a general overview for those who have little experience with LGBTQ individuals; a more advanced course for those who have more experience with LGBTQ individuals or who have completed the initial training; and a more specialized seminar that focuses on a particular concern, such as legislation affecting LGBTQ individuals. Although this model could be seen as overlapping with what workshops could provide, the advantage of calling this all “Safe Zone training” is that it encourages allies to continue learning more. For information, see <http://www.wmich.edu/lbgt/programs/SOC.html>

5. Provide informed and appropriate health care for LGBTQ students.

Why This Matters

LGBTQ students, like all students, need adequate health care services so that they can focus on their education. Often, though, LGBTQ individuals are fearful of obtaining health care because they have experienced discrimination when seeking health care in the past. According to a 2009 national survey conducted by Lambda Legal of nearly 5,000 LGBT people and people living with HIV, more than half of the respondents reported experiencing at least one of the following types of discrimination when seeking health care: “being refused needed care; health care professionals refusing to touch them or using excessive precautions; health care professionals using harsh or abusive language; being blamed for their health status; or health care professionals being physically rough or abusive.”¹²³ Such experiences can make LGBTQ people reluctant to seek medical care, which “can in turn result in poorer health outcomes because of delays in diagnosis, treatment or preventive measure.”¹²⁴ In addition, “overall bias and stigma in our society . . . can result in unwillingness for LGBT people and people living with HIV to disclose to clinicians personal information that can be essential to proper diagnosis and/or treatment.”¹²⁵ These findings indicate the need for all “health professionals to undergo significant cultural competency training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and HIV status.”¹²⁶

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Ensure that the Counseling Office staff always includes at least one counselor, fellow, or extern who specializes in LGBTQ issues. Publish this individual’s name and specialization on both the Counseling Office website and the LGBTQ center’s website.
- b. Provide specialized training on LGBTQ counseling needs for all staff in the Counseling Office.¹²⁷
- c. Provide specialized training on LGBTQ health issues for all staff in Health Services.¹²⁸ Special emphasis should be placed on safe sex practices for all

¹²³ “When Health Care Isn’t Caring: Lambda Legal’s Survey on Discrimination Against LGBT People and People Living with HIV,” page 5. Full report available at http://data.lambdalegal.org/publications/downloads/whcic-report_when-health-care-isnt-caring.pdf

¹²⁴ Ibid, page 12.

¹²⁵ Ibid, page 12.

¹²⁶ Ibid, page 6.

¹²⁷ In Fall 2011, the Adler School of Professional Psychology will be establishing a Center for LGBTQ Mental Health, which can serve as a resource for this training. Another resource are the mental health professionals at the Center on Halsted.

¹²⁸ Currently, one staff member of Health Services attends an AIDS conference annually and Health Services staff are informed about STD prevention. However, understanding other health care needs of LGBTQ students require further professional

genders and sexual orientations, HIV-related healthcare and counseling, and respectful health care for transgender persons.¹²⁹

- d. Distribute up-to-date printed information on LGBTQ health concerns and provide print and online information about off-campus medical facilities specializing in LGBTQ health.¹³⁰ This information should be available in Health Services and on its website, in the LGBTQ Center and on its website, and when appropriate, at campus events.
- e. As is currently done in Health Services, make free condoms available in the LGBTQ Center.¹³¹

Level II:

- f. Encourage the Counseling Office to offer group sessions for LGBT students, focusing on topics such as coming out, responding to homophobia, suicide prevention, improving family relationships, and personal growth.
- g. Encourage Health Services to have a scheduled, open dialogue with LGBTQ students at the LGBTQ Center once a year.¹³² This outreach can facilitate Health Services staff in understanding the health-related concerns of LGBTQ students and can help inform LGBTQ students of resources available to them in Health Services.

Level III:

- h. Host a health fair in the Village Square, which would include representatives from community organizations devoted to LGBTQ health.¹³³

development. The best local resource for this training is Howard Brown Health Center, one of the largest LGBTQ health organizations in the country. Howard Brown provides educational seminars for medical providers and should be utilized to fulfill this recommendation. For more information, see this website: http://www.howardbrown.org/hb_services.asp?id=27. Another provider of workshops and presentations to health providers about LGBT health is the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgendered Health that is part of the Chicago Department of Public Health; for more information, see <http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/lgbt.html>.

¹²⁹ According to the Lambda Legal survey (see footnote 123 above), “transgender and gender-nonconforming respondents reported facing barriers and discrimination as much as two to three times more frequently than lesbian, gay or bisexual respondents” (page 6).

¹³⁰ Chicago-area medical facilities specializing in LGBTQ health include Howard Brown Health Center, the Center on Halsted, TPAN (Test Positive Aware Network), and the Chicago Women's Health Center.

¹³¹ These should include the same options available in Health Services: male condoms, female condoms, dental dams, lubricant and latex-free male condoms.

¹³² The GLBTQA student organization should be notified of this event.

¹³³ Currently, NEIU hosts an annual “Health and Wellness Fair” but it includes only resources available on campus. This recommendation is for a health fair that would include off-campus resources. The organizations listed previously in footnote 130 could be invited.

6. Change the wording of NEIU’s non-discrimination policy to list gender identity/expression as a separate entity from sexual orientation and ensure that gender identity/expression is included in all statements of NEIU’s non-discrimination policy.

Why This Matters

The Illinois Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination throughout the state on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Because of this law, transgender persons have guaranteed legal protection from discrimination at NEIU. However, the language of the law as written by the Illinois General Assembly and transmitted by the Illinois Department of Human Rights is imprecise, and NEIU should not reflect that imprecision in the wording of its policy. NEIU’s non-discrimination policy should be communicated more accurately and consistently so that no student, employee, or guest of NEIU is unsure of his/her legal protection.

Until very recently, whenever gender identity has been explicitly included in NEIU’s non-discrimination policy, this wording has been used: “...sexual orientation (including gender identity), ...”¹³⁴ This wording is problematic because it erroneously equates gender identity with sexual orientation. In fact, sexual orientation and gender identity are distinct classifications; there is no necessary correlation between a person’s gender identity and that person’s sexual orientation, any more than there is between a person’s gender identity and that person’s race, religion, or any other classification. A more accurate way to include gender identity in the policy is to list it separately; it can appear after sexual orientation but should not be listed parenthetically as if it is a subcomponent of sexual orientation. “Gender identity/expression” is the preferred wording because it provides protection from discrimination for transgender people as well as people whose gender expression is non-conforming.

A second concern with statements of NEIU’s non-discrimination policy is that often gender identity is not explicitly mentioned because printed policies and procedures have not been updated.¹³⁵ This omission can create the impression that NEIU is not institutionally committed to protecting the rights of transgender people, even though state law requires us to do so. Including gender identity/expression in all statements of NEIU’s non-discrimination policy ensures that the policy is consistently communicated and better portrays NEIU as a welcoming institution that is committed to prohibiting discrimination against all people.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

¹³⁴ As an example of a non-discrimination policy that explicitly includes gender identity as a parenthetical element of sexual orientation, see the 2010 Student Handbook, page 40.

¹³⁵ As an example of a printed non-discrimination policy that does not explicitly mention gender identity, see the cover page of the 2010-2011 Academic Catalog.

Change the official statement of NEIU's non-discrimination policy to include gender identity/expression listed separately from sexual orientation.¹³⁶

Level II:

Ensure that the non-discrimination policy is updated in all online forms immediately and in all printed forms whenever a new print job is ordered.

Level III:

Update the non-discrimination policy in all online and print forms immediately, regardless of printing costs, so that there is consistency in all statements of the policy.

7. Increase the number of gender-neutral bathrooms on campus and publicize their locations.

Why This Matters

Gender-neutral bathrooms are extremely important for gender-nonconforming and transgender people for several reasons. If a person's gender appears somewhat ambivalent, there is a high likelihood that the person will be harassed by others who are using the same restroom facility. A male-to-female transgender person may be perceived as a threat in a women's restroom, and other women using the restroom may publicly confront that person, humiliating her and adding to the anxiety she feels whenever she uses a public restroom. Female-to-male transgender persons are often even more unsafe because they may be assaulted by other men if their gender identity is questioned.

In addition to serving the needs of gender-nonconforming and transgender individuals, single-stall gender-neutral bathrooms also serve the needs of other populations, such as parents with young children, people who have disabilities and may need assistance in a restroom, etc. These bathrooms can be fitted with wall-mounted changing tables so that they simultaneously fulfill a recommendation made on page 23 in this proposal for addressing the needs of students who are parents.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Create a webpage that identifies NEIU resources for transgender persons¹³⁷ and include information on that page about the locations of the current

¹³⁶ Roberto Sanabria has discussed this articulation of the non-discrimination policy with the Director of the Illinois Department of Human Rights and has determined that this new wording is consistent with the legal protections ensured by the State of Illinois. Roberto has already begun to change the wording of NEIU's non-discrimination policy accordingly.

¹³⁷ See UIC's transgender resource page as a model: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/quic/gsc/transgender.html>. Note that bathrooms are identified in the left column of this page.

gender-neutral bathrooms on campus.¹³⁸ This website would make the information readily available to students who may need it, without publicizing the locations so broadly that people who might harass transgender students would be automatically notified.

- b. Construct a single-stall, gender-neutral restroom in or near the new LGBTQ student center.
- c. Change the signage on the single-stall women's restroom in the E-Building mezzanine hallway to indicate that this is a gender-neutral restroom.¹³⁹

Level II:

- d. Adopt a policy that requires all extensively renovated and newly constructed buildings to include at least one gender-neutral bathroom.¹⁴⁰

Currently, all four gender-neutral bathrooms are in buildings that do not contain classrooms, so they do not provide adequate access for students who may have little time between classes. The construction of a new College of Education building and the planned renovation of Brommel Hall (the Science Building) provide excellent opportunities for adding gender-neutral bathrooms to buildings where classes meet.

- e. Provide at least one gender-neutral restroom at each satellite campus.
- f. Provide a gender-neutral changing/locker room and restroom in the Physical Education Complex.

Level III:

¹³⁸ Currently there are four single-stall gender-neutral bathrooms on campus. Two are right next to each other by the Counseling Office. A third is in the lower level of the H building, west of the central mailroom; it is accessed most easily by the elevator that is just north of the Fine Arts Center Gallery. The fourth is above Beck's bookstore, in the hallway of the E Building mezzanine.

¹³⁹ Although there is already a gender-neutral restroom in this hallway, once the location of gender-neutral restrooms on campus is publicized, their use is likely to increase. Because this location is the most central of the gender-neutral restrooms on campus, it would be useful to have two here in close proximity. The only reason that one of these bathrooms is designated for women only appears to be because there is no urinal present; however, that does not prevent this from being labeled a gender-neutral bathroom. The website that identifies the location of gender-neutral restrooms will include a description of the facilities and location of each. No change is needed to make this restroom gender-neutral except for new signage, so this is a very cost-effective recommendation.

¹⁴⁰ Currently, all four gender-neutral bathrooms are in buildings that do not contain classrooms, so they do not provide adequate access for students who may have little time between classes. The construction of a new College of Education building and the planned renovation of Brommel Hall (the Science Building) provide excellent opportunities for adding gender-neutral bathrooms to buildings where classes meet. The policy recommended here has already been adopted by American University, Kent State University, Ohio State University, the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Washington State University. Source: <http://www.transgenderlaw.org/college/guidelines.htm>

- g. Add gender-neutral bathrooms at additional locations on campus, including the library and the Student Union.

8. Streamline and publicize the process by which transgender students can change their name in university records.

Why This Matters

Transgender students who transition often change their first name so that it accurately reflects their gender. If this change in name occurs during college, puzzling inconsistencies can exist between a person's name, their university records, and their physical appearance. The student can feel anxious about presenting a university ID, utilizing a university service, or even attending class, for fear that name and gender discrepancies might arise that could lead to public humiliation or harassment. University records can also be problematic for transgender alumni who need a transcript that reflects their name and gender accurately, so that they will not be outed or discriminated against when applying for jobs or seeking admission to graduate and professional schools. While NEIU has a process by which students can change their name in university records, that information is often not widely publicized, and the name change is often not applied to all university records simultaneously.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. On a webpage devoted to the needs of transgender students, explain the process a student can use at NEIU to change their name in all of their university records and obtain a new student ID.¹⁴¹ Also display a facsimile of the name change form, so that students know in advance precisely what information will be requested.¹⁴² Name change procedures should also be explained on the Records Office's website.
- b. Streamline the name change process so that when a name change form is processed in Enrollment Services, it triggers a change in all other NEIU records.

Currently, the name change form for students is dispersed to Enrollment Services, the Graduate College (if a graduate student), Administrative Information Systems (if the change necessitates an email change), and Student Employment (if a student aide or work study). As indicated on the Records Office website, separate records may be maintained by the following offices:

¹⁴¹ UIC's Gender & Sexuality Center is one example of an LGBTQ Center that provides this information online, as well as links to the necessary forms. See <http://www.uic.edu/depts/quic/gsc/transgender.html>

¹⁴² Students will not be able to complete the forms online because they must show two documents that reflect the new name when they submit the form (one must be a social security card, court document or marriage certificate). Students are likely to feel more comfortable if they can see the form in advance, however, because they will know that they are not asked to provide an explanation of the reason for their name change.

Academic Development, Non-Traditional Degree Programs, Dean of Students, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business & Management, Placement, Financial Aid, and Office of Student Life. Another office that has separate records, not indicated on this list, is Alumni Relations.¹⁴³ Academic departments may also have separate records from the records kept by the Colleges.

This recommendation requires Enrollment Services to disperse name change information to all other offices that have separate records and requires the Colleges to alert the pertinent departments or programs that have separate records. This makes a name change a one-stop procedure and relieves the student from needing to repeatedly request a change of records due to a personal and sensitive matter.

- c. Inform all students who complete the name change form that their former name will still be present on some screens of Banner, but it will not be visible on NEIUport. Routinely inform students that they may request that their former name be deleted from their SSN in Banner so that only their current name will be displayed when anyone conducts a search of records by SSN in Banner.¹⁴⁴
- d. Require that offices send a confirmation notice to the student once the university record changes have been completed.¹⁴⁵
- e. Notify alumni of their ability to request a re-issued diploma that displays the student's correct name for a nominal fee.¹⁴⁶ This service should be publicized online on the LGBTQ Center page, as well as on the websites of the Records Office and Alumni Relations.

Level II:

- f. Revise the name change form so that students can check whether they wish to have their former name removed from Banner. This recommendation requires a revision of the current name change form but is an improvement of recommendation "c" above.

¹⁴³ Some NEIU alumni are currently students in graduate or professional certification programs at NEIU, so their name change as a current student should be used to update the alumni database too.

¹⁴⁴ Transgender students are entitled to respect and privacy regarding the disclosure of their gender identity and transition process. When systems are flawed in ways that risk that privacy, students have a right to know what personal information is being shared and with whom.

¹⁴⁵ This confirmation is particularly helpful for alumni who request transcripts and must otherwise order and open an extra, to ensure the name is correct before they send an unopened transcript to a potential employer or graduate school.

¹⁴⁶ These requests are processed by the Graduation Evaluations Office. The current fee is \$11.

Level III:

- g. Allow students to state a preferred name in university records without court documentation of a legal name change.¹⁴⁷

9. Maintain a website that provides information about NEIU policies, services, programs, and facilities for LGBTQ students, as well as referrals to off-campus organizations that can help LGBTQ students.

Why This Matters

A comprehensive website is an essential means of directing lgbtq students and their allies to the LGBTQ Center and to other relevant campus services, as well as to online and local organizations that can assist them. In addition, a dedicated website provides an online presence of NEIU as a welcoming campus. Providing information online is particularly important for assisting LGBTQ students who are closeted, those who are uncertain of their sexual orientation and wish to remain anonymous, and those who may be in crisis when the LGBTQ Center is closed. Another function of a comprehensive website of this nature is that it educates faculty and staff about available resources, so they are better able to refer students they work with to appropriate places for support.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Enhance the website of the GLBTQA student organization as an interim website for LGBTQ students on campus, until the Director of the LGBTQ Center is hired.¹⁴⁸ The site should guide LGBTQ students to campus resources (including Health Services, the Counseling Office,¹⁴⁹ and the Affirmative Action officer) and to local and national off-campus organizations (especially those that assist LGBTQ individuals in times of crisis). Until there is an LGBTQ minor, the site can also identify courses that are related to LGBTQ issues.
- b. Include on the site a link to a page designed specifically for transgender students, indicating the locations of gender-neutral bathrooms (see

¹⁴⁷ The cost of a court-sanctioned legal name change is currently \$453 in Cook County (includes filing fee, publication fee, certified copy, and birth certificate fee). Because of this high cost, not all transgender students who wish to change their name can afford to do so legally. Some schools, such as the University of Michigan, allow students to use a preferred name on course rosters and in university records without legally changing their name first. See <http://www.itcs.umich.edu/itcsdocs/r1461/>.

¹⁴⁸ Geraldo Moreno and Vicki Byard will collaborate to create this website, so that this information can be available to LGBTQ students in Fall 2011.

¹⁴⁹ If any Counseling Office staff member specializes in LGBTQ issues, as shown on the Counseling Office staff's webpage, that person should also be named on this site.

recommendation 7 on pages 49-51) and procedures for changing one's name in campus records (see recommendation 8 on pages 51-53).¹⁵⁰

- c. List faculty and staff allies on this site, so that students will be assured that there are safe zones on campus, even before an LGBTQ Center exists.

Level II:

- d. Once the LGBTQ Center is established, the Director should create a more comprehensive website, identifying the Center's programs and services, as well as extensive resources that are available online and off campus.
- e. Include on the website a calendar of events.
- f. Maintain on the website an updated list of faculty and staff who are willing to serve as allies for LGBTQ students.¹⁵¹
- g. Add to the website an "Allies' Toolkit," with resources for supporting LGBTQ students.¹⁵²
- h. Include on the site links to Chicago-area LGBTQ organizations that tailored to specific races, ethnicities, and/or religions.¹⁵³

Level III:

- i. Use the website as a forum where LGBTQ faculty, students, and staff can openly share their experiences online. This creates a welcoming climate by indicating that the lives of LGBTQ persons are not silenced on campus.¹⁵⁴

10. Provide resources that support the integration of LGBTQ concerns into academic programs.

¹⁵⁰ As an example of such a webpage, see this thorough site for transgender students at the University of Chicago:

<http://trans.uchicago.edu/>

¹⁵¹ The Northern Illinois University website is an exemplary model. By using drop-down menus on an "Ally Finder" page, students can search for allies by department or by building. See <http://www.niu.edu/lgbt/webapplications/allyfinder/>. When a search is performed, the results show a list of allies, and a "profile" can be viewed in which the ally has the option of explaining why they are an ally (to see an example, search "English Department" and then view the profile of Jan Vander Meer).

¹⁵² See, for example, MIT's "Action Tips for Allies of Trans People," available here:

<http://web.mit.edu/trans/tipsfortransallies.pdf>

¹⁵³ These include Affinity, for African American lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender women (<http://www.affinity95.org>); Amigas Latinas, for Latina lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender women (<http://www.amigaslatinas.org>); ALMA, for Latino gay, bisexual, and transgender men (<http://www.almachicago.org>); I2I: API Pride of Chicago, for LGBTQ Asians and Pacific Islanders (<http://www.chicagoi2i.org>); Trikone-Chicago, for LGBTQ South Asians (<http://www.trikone-chicago.org>); and akabaka productions, for LGBTQ Muslims (search on Facebook).

¹⁵⁴ The Office of LGBTQ Student Life at the University of Chicago posts coming out stories on its website. Stories by University of Chicago students, alumni, and staff are available here: <http://lgbtq.uchicago.edu/out/>

Why This Matters

According to the *2010 State of Higher Education for Lesbian Gay, Bisexual & Transgender People* survey results, the least comfortable place on campus for LGBTQ people is in the classroom.¹⁵⁵ One cause of this discomfort may be the omission of LGBTQ issues from academic course work, which, this report argues, “dehistoricizes [LGBTQ] experiences and paints a false picture of the world in which we live.”¹⁵⁶

The recommendations listed here support an increased integration of LGBTQ issues into the curriculum. These recommendations help in fulfilling NEIU’s strategic goal 1.5 (ensuring student success by intentionally integrating student support services into the curriculum) and strategic goal 2.7 (promoting academic excellence and innovation by utilizing diversity as a curricular/pedagogical dimension throughout the curriculum). Additionally, these recommendations are consistent with CAS guidelines for LGBTQ programs and services, which specify that schools should “promote scholarship, research, and assessment on LGBTQ issues.”¹⁵⁷

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. To facilitate students’ enrollment in LGBTQ-related courses, when these courses are currently not formally organized into an academic program, provide interested students with a list of other LGBTQ-specific courses already being offered at NEIU,¹⁵⁸ as well as additional courses that are likely to include some discussion of LGBTQ issues.¹⁵⁹
- b. Compile and post on the LGBTQ website a list of faculty on campus who are available as guest lecturers for courses that address LGBTQ issues.

¹⁵⁵ Only 64% of LGBTQ survey respondents said they felt comfortable in the classroom, compared to 76% of heterosexual respondents. The comfort level of LGBTQ respondents was lower for the classroom than it was for overall campus climate (70%) or for department/program climate (76%).

¹⁵⁶ Rankin, S., et al. *2010 State of Higher Education for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender People*. Charlotte, NC: Campus Pride, 2010. 16.

¹⁵⁷ Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. *CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Programs and Services*. Washington, D.C., 2006, page 16.

¹⁵⁸ These include English 303 (Gay & Lesbian Literature), Women’s Studies 310 (Lesbian and Queer Cultures), Sociology 352 (Sociology of HIV/AIDS), and Justice Studies 328 (Social Justice and GLBTQ Issues).

¹⁵⁹ These include Women’s Studies 101 (Women’s Perspectives and Values), Justice Studies 202 (Justice and Inequality), History 392 (History of Sexuality), Sociology 320 (Topics in Sex and Gender), Sociology 340 (Sociology of Sexualities), Psychology 311 (Psychosexual Development), Philosophy 218 (Philosophy of Sex), and Social Work 208 (Human Sexuality and Social Work).

- c. Increase the number of books, journals and educational films on LGBTQ issues in the campus library.¹⁶⁰
- d. Appoint an NEIU librarian to develop an online subject research guide for research in LGBTQ Studies, similar to the subject research guides that are on the NEIU library website for other disciplinary subjects.¹⁶¹

Level II:

- e. Purchase a subscription in the NEIU library to the EBSCO database “LGBT Life with Full Text.”¹⁶²
- f. Provide guidance that helps faculty to integrate LGBTQ issues into NEIU’s teacher preparation program in the College of Education, in accordance with recommendations from the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance.¹⁶³
- g. Provide guidance that helps faculty to integrate LGBTQ issues into NEIU’s social work program at NEIU, in accordance with recommendations from the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance.¹⁶⁴

Level III:

- h. Fund professional development training for faculty in teacher preparation and social work programs at NEIU to assist faculty in integrating LGBTQ issues into the curriculum for these programs.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ The need is particularly great for transgender sources. Currently, the campus library has fewer than 10 books about transgender. An extensive bibliography of scholarly sources on transgender is available here: <http://www.trans-academics.org/biblio>

¹⁶¹ The NEIU library’s current subject research guides can be found here: <http://libguides.neiu.edu/>. An example of a LGBTQ research guide is the one posted by Columbia College Chicago, available here: <http://libguides.colum.edu/glb>

¹⁶² This is the definitive database for scholarly research on LGBTQ issues. A full description of the database is available here: <http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/lgbt-life-with-full-text/>

¹⁶³ In 2010, NEIU received a grade of “C” based on the website presence of its attention to LGBTQ concerns in its teacher preparation programs. Six schools in Illinois received higher ratings for their programs. The “Visibility Matters 2010” report can be found here:

http://www.illinoissafeschools.org/page_attachments/0000/0071/visibility_matters_report_card_final.pdf. Online resources that College of Education faculty might find helpful include “Beyond Tolerance: A Resource Guide for Addressing LGBTQ Issues in Schools,” available for free by request at <http://www.nycore.org/2010/11/beyond-tolerance-resource-guide/>, as well as the many professional development resources, classroom activities, and teaching kits available from Teaching Tolerance at <http://www.tolerance.org/>.

¹⁶⁴ In 2010, NEIU received a grade of “C” based on the website presence of its attention to LGBTQ concerns in its social work preparation program. Eight schools in Illinois received higher ratings for their programs. The “Visibility Matters 2010” report can be found here:

http://www.illinoissafeschools.org/page_attachments/0000/0071/visibility_matters_report_card_final.pdf

¹⁶⁵ The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance provides these professional development opportunities. Information about scheduling these sessions and possible topics can be found here: <http://www.illinoissafeschools.org/programs/public-education/>

11. Take action to intentionally recruit, retain, and graduate LGBTQ students.

Why This Matters

These recommendations enact an institutional commitment to the success of LGBTQ students. The recommendations specifically align with Goal 1.3 of NEIU's Strategic Plan, which advocates raising the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of "students from historically underrepresented groups," which includes LGBTQ students. The recommendations listed here also manifest NEIU's core values of diversity and access to opportunity.

Recommended Levels of Fulfillment

Level I:

- a. Recruit, retain, and graduate LGBTQ students by publicizing available LGBTQ scholarships on the LGBTQ Center's website.¹⁶⁶
- b. Recruit LGBTQ students by publishing on the Campus Pride website the results of NEIU's LGBTQ-friendly campus climate index.¹⁶⁷
- c. Recruit and retain LGBTQ students by creating a solid web presence about LGBTQ programs, services, and resources on the NEIU website.
- d. Retain and welcome incoming LGBTQ students by providing information about the LGBTQ student center and related services during the orientation sessions for new students.¹⁶⁸
- e. Retain LGBTQ students by routinely acknowledging them in public statements about the diversity of NEIU's student body and by ensuring their needs are addressed on campus. The Director of the LGBTQ Center can assist senior administrators in learning how to acknowledge LGBTQ students in public forums regularly, respectfully, and comfortably.
- f. Honor LGBTQ students with a lavender graduation ceremony.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ This information can be found at these websites: <http://www.collegescholarships.org/scholarships/lgbt-students.htm> and at <http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/gay.phtml>. Additional information is available on the Human Rights Campaign website: http://www.hrc.org/issues/youth_and_campus_activism/8644.htm

¹⁶⁷ For details, see <http://www.campusclimateindex.org/>. This publicity should not take place until after the Level I recommendations in this proposal are enacted.

¹⁶⁸ Work group members who visited UIC's Gender & Sexuality Center were struck by how many students said they visited the Center during the first week of classes because it was described during the orientation sessions for new students.

¹⁶⁹ Lavender graduation ceremonies are held at many campuses nationwide, including local schools like UIC, Northwestern, and the University of Chicago. For more information about lavender graduation ceremonies, see http://www.lgbtcampus.org/old_faq/lavender_graduation.html.

Level II:

- g. Recruit LGBTQ students by contacting gay-straight alliances and similar student organizations at Chicago-area high schools.¹⁷⁰
- h. Recruit LGBTQ students by continuing the practice of issuing press releases to the *Windy City Times* newspaper about LGBTQ-related programs and events at NEIU.
- i. Recruit and retain LGBTQ students by continuing the practice of entering a float in the annual Chicago Gay Pride Parade. Host a party for LGBTQ students and alumni after the parade.
- j. Retain students by offering a mentoring program to assist LGBTQ students in transitioning to college life.¹⁷¹
- k. Celebrate LGBTQ graduates by starting a constituency alumni group.¹⁷²

Level III:

- l. Recruit LGBTQ students by purchasing ads in the *Windy City Times* newspaper.
- m. Recruit LGBTQ students by participating in a regional LGBTQ college admission fair.
- n. Retain LGBTQ students by providing funding for LGBTQ conferences and/or leadership retreats.¹⁷³
- o. Recruit, retain and graduate LGBTQ students by providing scholarships designated for LGBTQ students.¹⁷⁴

Notable LGBTQ alumni of NEIU, such as Joel Hall, can be invited speakers at these ceremonies. This graduation event would be comparable to other NEIU specialized graduation celebrations, such as the Activist Graduation sponsored by Women's Studies and the cultural graduation ceremonies being planned by the Pedroso Center.

¹⁷⁰ A listing of Gay-Straight Alliances in Illinois high schools is available here: <http://www.illinoissafeschools.org/gsa-network/>

¹⁷¹ Grand Valley State offers one program that could serve as a model.

¹⁷² This can support Strategic Goal Six, Fiscal Strength, especially by improving alumni relations (goal 6.4) and increasing private support (goal 6.6). An example of a very successful LGBTQ alumni group is the one at the University of Chicago. This group has officers, a steering committee, bylaws, frequent events (including mixers and an annual holiday party), and a Facebook page. The website for the group includes links for giving which allow donors to designate that funds are to be used for supporting the LGBTQ Center or supporting the research or conference attendance of LGBTQ students. For more information, see <http://lgbtqalumni.uchicago.edu/>

¹⁷³ For example, the Campus Pride Summer Leadership Camp <<http://www.campuspride.org/camppride>>

¹⁷⁴ Illinois campuses that provide such scholarships are Northern Illinois University, the University of Chicago, and UIC.

Source: http://www.hrc.org/issues/youth_and_campus_activism/8644.htm

**REVIEW OF CHIEF RECOMMENDATIONS,
ORGANIZED BY THE PARTIES WHO WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENACTING THEM**

President

- Approve searches for Director of Women’s Center, Assistant Director of Women’s Center, and Director of LGBTQ Center, as well as supporting staff, all to begin their positions in January 2012 (refer to Level I recommendations on pages 13-15 and 33-35).
- Solicit nominations and appoint search committees for Director of Women’s Center, Assistant Director of Women’s Center, and Director of LGBTQ Center, to complete their charge within the Fall 2011 semester (refer to recommendations about search committees and job ads on pages 14 and 33-34).
- Appoint the President’s Advisory Council on Diversity Issues (refer to pages 9-11 for recommended members and charge).
- Publish a response to this proposal for the university community in early Fall 2011, identifying what recommendations have been endorsed, what actions have already been taken, what actions are imminent, and a projected timeline for actions that will require more time (refer to timeline on page 7).
- Issue a response that confirms the university’s value of diversity and of LGBTQ students specifically whenever someone distributes homophobic literature on campus (refer to page 44, item j).

President’s Council

- Determine institutional reporting lines for the Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Center (refer to pages 11-12 for important considerations).
- Determine campus locations for the Women’s Center and the LGBTQ Center, in conjunction with Facilities Management (refer to pages 16-19 for Women’s Center recommendations and pages 36-38 for LGBTQ Center recommendations).
- Determine the feasibility of hiring a female counselor/psychologist, budgeted as a joint appointment of the Women’s Center and the Counseling Office (refer to page 15, item c).
- Determine the feasibility of hiring or appointing a campus representative to advocate for the needs of women students who are parents of young children (refer to page 16, item d and all that is entailed in major recommendation 4 on pages 21-25).
- Discuss how to fund LGBT-related professional development for the University Police (refer to page 43, item b), Counseling Office staff (refer to page 46, item b), and Health Services staff (refer to page 46, item c), so that these critical employees have training for working with LGBTQ students that informs the professional service they provide.
- Discuss implementing a childbirth accommodation policy (refer to page 23, item h).

- Discuss implementing a policy that would require all extensively renovated and newly constructed buildings to include at least one gender-neutral bathroom (refer to page 50, item d).
- Discuss all remaining recommendations in this proposal, determine the level at which each should be endorsed, and communicate endorsed actions to the responsible parties (refer to pages 60-63).
- Following the appointment of the President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues, read this Council's annual report and discuss ways to enact its recommendations (refer to pages 9-11).
- Following the hire of the new Director of LGBTQ Center, receive guidance about how to acknowledge LGBTQ students in public forums regularly, respectfully, and comfortably (refer to page 57, item e).

President's Advisory Council on Diversity Issues

- Fulfill all responsibilities outlined in the charge for this new council (refer to list on pages 10-11).
- Develop and implement a bias incident report form, intended as an ongoing method of measuring the campus climate and developing recommendations to improve its inclusiveness (refer to page 27, item i and page 44, item k).
- Complete Safe Zone training (refer to page 44, item g).

Pedroso Center Staff

- Attend a meeting early in the Fall 2011 semester with Women's Studies, the Dean of Students, Student Activities, and women-centered student organizations to plan programming and services for women students during the Fall 2011 semester because a Women's Center and its staff will not yet be present (refer to timeline on page 7).
- Once the Women's Center and LGBTQ Center staff are hired, work closely with them so the staff members of all the diversity centers are well-prepared to work with students who experience multiple forms of underrepresentation or identity-based oppression (refer to page 12).
- Coordinate programming with the Women's Center and the LGBTQ Center (refer to page 12).
- Complete Safe Zone training (refer to page 44, item g).
- Help plan a session on diversity issues for new faculty and staff hires, in conjunction with the Women's Center, the LGBTQ Center, the Accessibility Office, University Outreach and Equal Employment, the Center for Teaching and Learning (for new faculty orientations), and Human Resources (for new staff orientations) (refer to page 27, item h and page 44, item i).
- In conjunction with the Women's Center and LGBTQ Center, co-host workshops that help students know how to verbally respond to bigoted comments (refer to page 45, item o).

Women's Center Staff

- Fulfill all responsibilities outlined for in the job descriptions for these positions (refer to list on pages 14-16). Many of these responsibilities are not repeated in later pages of the proposal and therefore are not listed separately here, yet they require equal care and attention.
- Work closely with the Pedroso Center and the LGBTQ Center so the staff members of all the diversity centers are well-prepared to work with students who experience multiple forms of underrepresentation or identity-based oppression (refer to page 12).
- Participate in the hiring a female counselor/psychologist, budgeted as a joint appointment for the Women's Center and Counseling Office (refer to page 15, item c).
- Provide educational and social programming on women's issues and concerns (refer to pages 19-21; also, page 27, items d and g; page 28, items k and l; and page 45, item o).
- Create a comprehensive website for the Women's Center (refer to pages 31-32; also, page 22, item d; page 26, item b; and page 29, items b and d).
- Exhibit educational/awareness posters throughout campus about topics affecting women's safety (refer to page 26, item c).
- Complete Safe Zone training (refer to page 44, item g).
- Help plan a session on diversity issues for new faculty and staff hires, in conjunction with the Pedroso Center, the LGBTQ Center, the Accessibility Office, University Outreach and Equal Employment, the Center for Teaching and Learning (for new faculty orientations), and Human Resources (for new staff orientations) (refer to page 27, item h and page 44, item i).

LGBTQ Center Staff

- Fulfill all responsibilities outlined for in the job descriptions for these positions (refer to list on pages 34-36). Many of these responsibilities are not repeated in later pages of the proposal and therefore are not listed separately here, yet they require equal care and attention.
- Work closely with the Pedroso Center and the Women's Center so the staff members of all the diversity centers are well-prepared to work with students who experience multiple forms of underrepresentation or identity-based oppression (refer to page 12).
- Provide educational and social programming on LGBTQ issues and concerns (refer to pages 39-42; also, page 45, item o).
- Provide ongoing Safe Zone training, emails with updates for those who have completed the training, and advanced training levels (refer to page 44, item f and page 45, items m and n).
- Create a comprehensive website for the LGBTQ Center (refer to pages 53-54; also, page 43, items c and d; page 44, item h; page 46, item a; page 47, item d; page 49, item a; page 55, item b; and page 57, item a).

- Help plan a session on diversity issues for new faculty and staff hires, in conjunction with the Pedroso Center, the Women's Center, the Accessibility Office, University Outreach and Equal Employment, the Center for Teaching and Learning (for new faculty orientations), and Human Resources (for new staff orientations) (refer to page 27, item h and page 44, item i).
- Initiate a lavender graduation ceremony (refer to page 56, item f).

Student Life Staff

- Work closely with the Women's Center, the LGBTQ Center, and the Pedroso Center so that all Student Life staff members are well-prepared to work with students who experience multiple forms of underrepresentation or identity-based oppression (refer to page 12).
- Provide more frequent family-friendly social events on campus and indicate on publicity notices the age-level appropriateness of those events (refer to page 24, item j).
- Charter a student organization or club for students who are parents (refer to page 24, item l).
- Incorporate activities addressing women students' and LGBTQ students' needs into special events for new students, such as Class Act and Fall into Fun Week (refer to page 20, item d and page 39, item c).
- Complete Safe Zone training (refer to page 44, item g).
- Whenever possible, give advance notification to the LGBTQ Center and the LGBTQ student organization whenever a group that condemns homosexuality (such as H.O.M.E.) schedules a campus visit (refer to page 44, item j).

Dean of Students Office Staff

- Announce and host a meeting early in the Fall 2011 semester with Women's Studies, the Pedroso Center, Student Activities, and women-centered student organizations to plan programming and services for women students during the Fall 2011 semester because a Women's Center and its staff will not yet be present (refer to timeline on page 7).
- Until staff members for a Women's Center are hired, create and maintain a website for women students that guides them to campus resources and some off-campus resources (refer to page 31, item b).
- Collaborate with the University Police and the Behavioral Concerns Team to develop a campus stalking policy (refer to page 28, item j).
- Until a different campus representative is appointed, advocate for the needs of women students who are parents of young children (refer to page 16, item d and all that is entailed in recommendation 4 on pages 21-25).
- Complete Safe Zone training (refer to page 44, item g).
- In orientations for new students, discuss safety information (page 26, item a), the campus-sponsored websites for women students and LGBTQ students (page 32, item d), and NEIU's diversity centers (refer to page 57, item d).

University Outreach and Equal Employment Staff

- Change the wording of NEIU's non-discrimination policy to list gender identity/expression as a separate entity from sexual orientation and ensure that gender identity/expression is included in all statements of NEIU's non-discrimination policy (refer to pages 48-49).
- Continue to sponsor Safe Zone training once a semester until LGBTQ Center staff are hired who can take over that responsibility (refer to page 44, footnote 116).
- Once budgeted, coordinate with off-campus organizations the LGBT-related professional development for the University Police (refer to page 43, item b), Counseling Office staff (refer to page 46, item b), and Health Services staff (refer to page 46, item c).
- Help plan a session on diversity issues for new faculty and staff hires, in conjunction with the Pedroso Center, the Women's Center, the LGBTQ Center, the Accessibility Office, the Center for Teaching and Learning (for new faculty orientations), and Human Resources (for new staff orientations) (refer to page 27, item h and page 44, item i).

Facilities Management Staff

- Consult with the President's Council to determine campus locations for the Women's Center and the LGBTQ Center and renovate the selected spaces (refer to pages 16-19 for Women's Center recommendations and pages 36-38 for LGBTQ Center recommendations).
- Identify a location for a lactation room for nursing mothers and prepare that space (refer to page 23, item e).
- Add diaper changing tables to campus bathrooms (refer to page 23, item f).
- Change the signage of the single-stall women's restroom in the Building E mezzanine to designate this as a gender-neutral bathroom (refer to page 50, item c).
- Discuss with Campus Recreation the feasibility of adding a gender-neutral changing/locker room and restroom in the Physical Education Complex (refer to page 50, item f).

Health Services Staff

- Update the Health Services website so that it provides better referrals and services for women and LGBTQ students (refer to page 29, items b and d; page 30, item h; page 47, item d).
- Notify faculty who teach courses that address women's issues that staff from Health Services are available as guest lecturers on women's health (refer to page 30, item e).
- Provide group workshops in the Women's Center that focus on women students' physical health needs (refer to page 30, item g).
- Discuss the feasibility of initiating programs that use students to promote and educate their peers about women's health issues (refer to page 30, item i).
- Discuss the feasibility of providing online workshops on women's health concerns (refer to page 30, item j).

- Receive LGBTQ-related professional development on working with LGBTQ students (refer to page 46, item c).
- Have an open dialogue session about LGBTQ-related health concerns with students at the LGBTQ Center once a year (refer to page 47, item g).
- Consider hosting a health fair that includes representatives devoted to LGBTQ health (refer to page 47, item h).

Counseling Services Staff

- Participate in the hiring a female counselor/psychologist, budgeted as a joint appointment for the Women's Center and Counseling Office (refer to page 15, item c).
- Provide group workshops in the Women's Center that focus on women students' psychological and emotional health needs (refer to page 30, item f).
- Ensure that the Counseling Office staff always includes at least one counselor, fellow, or extern who specializes in LGBTQ issues (refer to page 46, item a).
- Receive LGBTQ-related professional development on working with LGBTQ students (refer to page 46, item b).
- Update the Counseling Office website so that it provides crisis line referrals for LGBTQ students (refer to page 43, item d; also, page 43, footnote 112).
- Provide group workshops in the LGBTQ Center that focus on LGBTQ students' psychological and emotional health needs (refer to page 47, item f).

University Police

- Confirm functionality of Code Blue emergency phones (refer to page 26, item a and footnote 57).
- Collaborate with the Women's Center to offer workshops on women's safety issues at least once a year on the main campus and satellite campuses (refer to page 27, item d).
- Have an open dialogue session about safety concerns with women students at the Women's Center once a year (refer to page 27, item f).
- Provide and/or promote self-defense training to women students on the main campus each semester and to women students at CCICS and El Centro at least once a year (refer to page 27, item g).
- Collaborate with the Dean of Students Office and Behavioral Concerns Team to develop a campus stalking policy (refer to page 28, item j).
- Receive LGBTQ-related professional development on working with LGBTQ students (refer to page 43, item b).
- Have an open dialogue session about LGBTQ-related safety concerns with students at the LGBTQ Center once a year (refer to page 45, item l).
- Update the University Police website to include information for victims of hate crimes (refer to page 43, item c).

Behavioral Concerns Team

- Contact the Women’s Center director whenever a student’s behavior affects the safety of a woman student, so that the Women’s Center director can support the impacted woman (refer to page 27, item e).
- Collaborate with the University Police and Dean of Students Office to develop a campus stalking policy (refer to page 28, item j).

Enrollment Services Staff

- Streamline the process by which transgender students can change their name in university records (refer to pages 51-53).
- Update the Records Office website to include information about the name change process (refer to page 51, item a and page 52, item e).
- Follow recommendations to intentionally recruit LGBTQ students (refer to page 58, items g, i and m).

Office of Sponsored Programs Staff

- Investigate and apply for a “Child Care Means Parents in School Program” grant from the U.S. Department of Education (refer to page 22, item b).
- Investigate and apply for a “Grants to Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking on Campus Program” grant from the U.S. Department of Justice (refer to page 28, item m).
- Assist the Women’s Center director in applying for grants (refer to page 14, including footnote 15 and page 30, footnote 79).
- Assist the LGBTQ Center director in applying for grants (refer to page 35, footnote 85).

Cultural Events Staff

- Schedule at least one Presidential Lecture Series speaker per year to address diversity issues, including issues relevant to women students and LGBTQ students (refer to page 10; page 21, item n; and page 41, item o).

Marketing Office Staff

- Remove from NEIU’s website all references to the Adult and Women Student Programs (refer to page 31, item a).
- Follow recommendations to market NEIU as an LGBTQ-friendly campus (refer to page 57, items b and e, and page 58, items h, i, and l).

Alumni Relations Staff

- On the Alumni Relations website, notify students of their option to request a re-issued diploma that displays the student's correct name (refer to page 52, item e).
- Begin an LGBTQ constituency alumni group (refer to page 58, item k).

Library Staff

- Consult with the Women's Center and the LGBTQ Center regarding their book, magazine, and video purchases (refer to page 18, footnote 25 and page 38, footnote 92).
- Increase the number of books, journals, and educational films on LGBTQ issues in the library (refer to page 56, item c).
- Develop an online subject research guide for LGBTQ Studies, similar to the subject research guides that are on the NEIU library website for other disciplinary subjects (refer to page 56, item d).
- Subscribe to the EBSACO database "LGBT Life with Full Text" (refer to page 56, item e).

Career Services

- Develop resources that advise LGBTQ students about their unique needs when entering the job market (refer to page 40, item g).

Human Resources

- Collaborate with the Pedroso Center, Women's Center, LGBTQ Center, Accessibility Office, and University Outreach and Equal Employment to offer a workshop on diversity issues as part of the orientation for new staff members (refer to page 27, item h and page 44, item i).

Center for Teaching and Learning Staff

- Collaborate with the Pedroso Center, Women's Center, LGBTQ Center, Accessibility Office, and University Outreach and Equal Employment to offer a workshop on diversity issues as part of the orientation for new faculty members (refer to page 27, item h and page 44, item i).

Faculty

- Share faculty-initiated research related to diversity with the university in public forums (refer to page 10).
- Serve on search committees for the Women's Center and LGBTQ Center hires (refer to page 14 and page 34).
- Meet with the directors of the Women's Center and LGBTQ Center to discuss ways that academic and co-curricular efforts can be coordinated to benefit women and LGBTQ students (refer to page 14).
- Participate in professional development and Safe Zone training to improve skills in educating and interacting with women and LGBTQ students (refer to pages 10, 14, and 34).

- Serve as advocates and allies for women students (page 32, item f) and LGBTQ students (refer to page 54, items c and f).
- Until staff members for a LGBTQ Center are hired, create and maintain a website for LGBTQ students that guides them to campus resources and some off-campus resources (refer to page 53, item a).
- Consider serving as guest lecturers for courses that address LGBTQ issues (refer to page 55, item b).
- Consider being trained to be Safe Zone trainers (refer to page 44, footnote 116).
- Use campus-sponsored websites for women students and LGBTQ students to refer students to appropriate resources (refer to pages 31 and 53).
- Integrate LGBTQ issues into NEIU's teacher preparation program in the College of Education and into NEIU's social work program (refer to page 56, items f, g, and h).