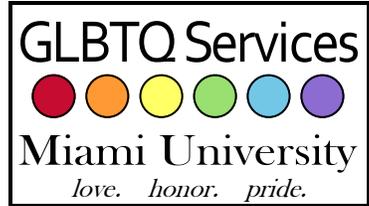


Out in All Directions: LGBT Students at Miami Spring 2011 Needs Assessment

INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of the needs assessment conducted by Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Services (GLBTQ Services) at Miami University in Spring 2011. The assessment was designed to learn more about GLBTQ students, their experiences, and their needs.



PARTICIPANTS

- Data collected between February 7 and March 3, 2011.
- 116 usable responses, 107 completed entire survey.
- 17 graduate students, 99 undergraduate students.
- 97 Oxford, 12 Hamilton, 7 Middletown.
- 85.3% (N=99) identified as white (only), and 14.7% (N=17) identified as people of color.
- 71 female, 43 male, 2 transgender.

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

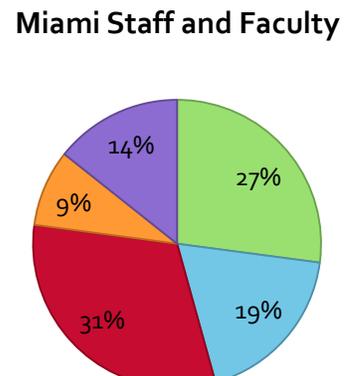
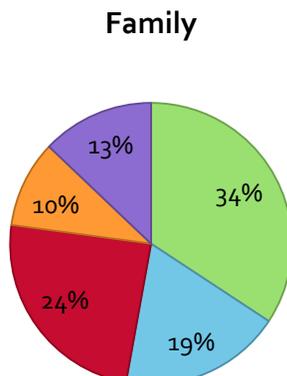
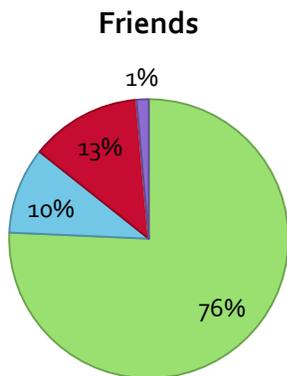
Respondents were able to choose as many sexual orientation categories as they wanted. The options were: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Asexual, Pansexual, Heterosexual, Straight, and Don't Know. Almost half (N=51) chose more than one category. 66 identified as something other than straight or heterosexual. Most common was "Gay" with 39.6% (N=46) identifying with that label.

Participants were also invited to write in any other labels they used to describe their sexual orientation. One person did not choose any sexual orientation categories, and wrote in that "I have never been asked." Another respondent chose six categories, and also wrote in "I do not label my sexuality." Eleven used this section to signal some type of sexual fluidity or questioning that was not present in the categories. Several participants identified as "bi-curious" and "heteroflexible." One participant wrote "About 75% Straight," and another wrote "straight-ish."

Answers were also complex for the open question about gender identity. 54 people used terms typically used to describe sex (such as "male" or "female, girl, woman"), while 13 used terms often used to describe gender (such as "masculine" or "feminine"). 17 used terms that reflect a gender identity that is out of the mainstream, such as "genderqueer" or "gender neutral."

With how many people in the following groups are you out about your sexual orientation/gender identity?

(N=66; asked only of those who did not identify as straight)

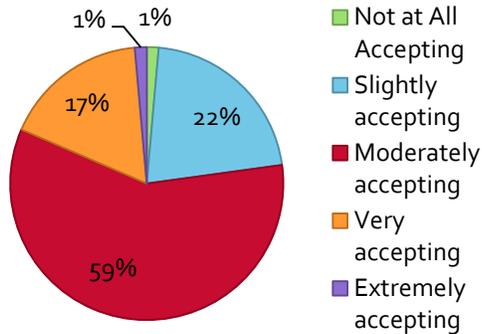


Most or all
 Many
 A few
 One
 None

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UNDERSTANDING CAMPUS CLIMATE

Overall, how accepting do you think Miami is for people who identify as GLBTQOIA?



We were interested in asking students who identified as GLBTQOIA about their perceptions of campus climate. We did this using the question "Overall, how accepting do you think Miami is for people who identify as GLBTQOIA?" 77% of respondents said that Miami is moderately to extremely accepting. Other insights about campus climate for GLBTQOIA people (N=66):

- A majority (87.9%) say they have never experienced physical violence.
- 31.8% experienced verbal harassment occasionally or often.
- More than half have some experience with GLBTQOIA identities being portrayed negatively in the residence hall (56.1%) and in the classroom (59.1%).
- 92.4% have at least occasionally felt supported in a way that includes their sexual orientation/gender identity.

Regression model for overall acceptance	β	p
Safety showing affection with a romantic partner on campus	.31	.005**
GLBTQOIA identities portrayed positively off campus	.27	.011*
Verbal harassment due to your sexual orientation/gender identity (reverse coded)	.26	.014*
GLBTQOIA identities portrayed negatively in the classroom (reverse coded)	.15	.164
Level of outness to friends	.14	.133
R²	.523	
*p<.05, **p<.01		

Students also provided descriptions of their experiences.

- "Especially in the residence halls, pictures and slurs are written on dry erase boards almost every day."
- "I was harassed by a fellow student upon him learning that I had a girlfriend, but it was one isolated incident."
- "I have found many supportive allies through mentors and staff members."
- "Lots of annoying offensive language in the classroom such as, "Sexual lifestyle" and "Sexual Preference" which is annoying."
- "Verbal harassment uptown is common. I can't even count the number of times I've heard people yell things at me from their cars."
- "It would be nice to see more of a presence on campus, but it is definitely improving!"

questions about different attributes of campus, and correlated these to the question about overall sense of acceptance. With the elements that were most strongly correlated, we built a regression model (see green box at left) to show the elements that have the strongest connection to a sense of acceptance. This model explains 52.3% of the variance in overall sense of acceptance ($R^2=0.52$, $F(5,60)=13.18$, $p<.001$).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The regression model suggests that we can contribute to a GLBTQOIA student's overall sense of acceptance by taking particular steps.

- Increase safety for students who wish to show affection with a romantic partner on campus.
- Highlight positive portrayals of GLBTQOIA identities.
- Reduce verbal harassment.
- Reduce negative classroom experiences.
- Create an environment that encourages friends to support friends being out about their sexual orientation/gender identity.