

7-7-2014

Incredi-bull-ly Inclusive?: Assessing the Climate on a College Campus

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Incredi-bull-ly Inclusive?:
Assessing the Climate on a College Campus

by

Aubrey L. Hall

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Women's and Gender Studies
Department of Women's and Gender Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Florida

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Date of Approval:
July 7, 2014

Keywords: LGBT, campus climate, higher education, transgender, sexual orientation, gender
identity

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ABSTRACT

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students have unique experiences on campus such as discrimination, exclusivity, and homo-/trans-phobia. Stated simply, this research project intends to address these issues by 1) identify students' perceptions of gender identity and sexual orientation diversity on campus, 2) identify the experiences of LGBT students during their time at the institution, and 3) acknowledge suggestions from the student body for ways the University being studied is, or may continue to be, inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Through the application of the campus climate framework and modification of existing climate surveys, a student-centered campus climate survey was distributed to various classes and student organizations. After a distribution period of seven weeks, the analysis of the data brought about many findings. This study determined that, while students acknowledge that the University attempts to be inclusive, LGBT students continue to experience harassment and discrimination. Individual and systematic interventions as well as suggestions for resource expansion were also provided by students as a means to cultivate a more welcoming environment.

With a concluding recommendation that research should continue to be conducted thoroughly and regularly, the University should consider this study the tip of an iceberg when attempting to understand students' perceptions of campus climate. More systematic and intersectional research needs be conducted on campus to determine the how varying student populations interpret everyday life on their college campus.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This research aims to assess students' perception of the campus climate as it relates to issues of gender identity and sexual orientation at the University of South Florida. Campus climate, referred to as the campus' metaphorical temperature gauge (warm and welcoming versus a cold and alienating environment (Renn & Alemán, 2002)), is described as the overall ethos of an academic environment. This is mediated by the extent to which students feel safe and interpret themselves as being valued as members of a University community (Renn & Patton, 2010). Overall, it is a reflection of institutional mission and identity (Renn & Patton, 2010). Climate surveys are used by academic institutions to describe the "attitudes, perceptions, or observations that campus constituents have about the environment" (Peterson & Spencer, 1990). Therefore, a climate survey is an instrument used to determine whether a climate is welcoming or "chilly" to the specified population being studied (Henry & Nixon, 1994). The University has completed such assessments to evaluate how employees experience the climate on campus, including the perceived climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) faculty and staff. However, the institution has neglected to evaluate how students perceive the climate on campus.

By focusing on the student population and highlighting issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, this research project intends to assist the University to 1) identify students' perceptions of gender identity and sexual orientation diversity on campus, 2) identify the

experiences of LGBT students during their time at the institution, and 3) acknowledge suggestions from the student body for ways the University is or may continue to be inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity.

1.2 Justification

The University has assessed the campus climate, but not from the perspective of the students. Justification for this research lies within its potential to provide information to campus constituents about an unstudied and (typically) marginalized population. The most recent campus climate surveys conducted by the University were completed in 2002 and 2010 and focused solely on the experiences of those who are employed by the University. This research, then, fills a gap in our understanding of campus climate at the University. Justification for this study is presented in the following two sections: a) information centered on the LGBT population and b) information about the University itself.

1.2.1 LGBT Population

Within academic institutions, LGBT identified students are recognized as coming out prior to entrance into the academy (i.e., middle and high school), strengthening their identity during their tenure in college, and requiring resources on campus to meet their growing needs (Waldo, 1998; Brown & Gortmaker, 2009; Windmeyer, 2012). When considering issues that are uniquely experienced by those who identify as transgender, the youth of today are less likely to feel obligated to hide their gender variant identity. Even if they lack support from immediate family members or friends they have the ability to gain validation, connection, and community online (Rankin & Beemyn, 2001). The development of this external support structure means that the youth of today are the first generation of teens who can actually be transgender teens (Rankin & Beemyn, 2001).

However, while many argue that the LGBT population is growing, the rate of growth or current prevalence of this population is undecipherable due to a lack of tracking such demographic information (Renn & Alemán, 2002). The Williams Institute (2011) estimates that 3.5 percent of the United States population are LGBT identified persons. Nonetheless, if adhering to the estimates stated above, a large state University with roughly 40,000 students could anticipate 1,400 (3.5%) LGBT students.

LGBT populations have unique experiences on campus such as discrimination, exclusivity, and homo-/trans-phobia. The LGBT population as a whole are more likely than heterosexual students to be the victims of verbal harassment, physical assault, intimidation, and discrimination, and generally interpret their campus environment as hostile (Renn & Alemán, 2002; Effrig, Bieschke, & Locke, 2011; Beemyn, 2012). However, while both LGB and transgender populations fear for physical safety it cannot be assumed that both populations require the same resources (Bieschke, Eberz, & Wilson, 2000; Effrig, Bieschke, & Locke, 2011). While often conflated into a monolithic community, despite the distinct variation in sexual and gender identities, LGB and transgender college students have specific experiences and needs (Dugan, Kusel, & Simounet, 2012; Renn, 2010; Marine, 2011).

When considering harassment and discrimination, transgender identified students are four times more likely to identify their gender expression as the reason for their harassment. Gender variant students also categorize the rate of mistreatment as nearly double that of cisgender respondents – even if they were bisexual, gay, or lesbian (Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld, and Frazer, 2010). The types of harassment experienced by transgender students ranges from subtle and/or deliberate excluded, being referred to as a speaker for the entire transgender population, being stared at or being the target of graffiti, being harassed in class, and being intimidated

and/or bullied (Marine, 2011). In addition, 32 percent of transgender identified students reported experiences of unwanted sexual contact when compared with 21 percent of cisgender students (Marine, 2011; Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2010). Institutional discrimination is also prevalent: segregation of gender-specific restrooms and residence halls, binary options on admissions forms, and dividing students into gender-specific athletic teams (Beemyn, 2003, 2005; Cart, 2000; Marine, 2011). In the end, many LGBT identified students consider transferring to a different University due to treatment (Effrig, Bieschke, & Locke, 2011; Beemyn, 2012; Ivory, 2012; Rankin et al., 2010).

1.2.2 The University

The University itself has declared dedication in “sustaining a community of free inquiry” and a “diverse campus environment, in which differences are respected and appreciated” regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity (University of South Florida, 2006). One goal of the University is to “Encourage thoughtful and deliberate integration of diversity into everyday practice.” The 2013 – 2018 Strategic Plan states that the University is a “global research university dedicated to student success and positioned for membership in the Association of American Universities (AAU)¹” (University of South Florida, 2012).

As part of the University, the role of Student Affairs in academic institutions is to serve the student holistically (American Council on Education, 1937, 1949; Nuss, 1996; Leider, 1999).

¹ The AAU is a nonprofit association that was founded in 1900 and currently includes sixty-two institutions (Association of American Universities, n.d.). This association “focuses on national and institutional issues that are important to research-intensive universities” and membership is by invitation (Association of American Universities, n.d.). In fact, three-fourths of those in the association must approve of the University’s “based on the high quality of programs of academic research and scholarship and undergraduate, graduate, and professional education in a number of fields, as well as general recognition that a university is outstanding by reason of the excellence of its research and education programs (Association of American Universities, n.d.)” Therefore, this published dedication to gaining membership to the AAU is significant because it demonstrates the University’s dedication to improvement. More importantly, a majority of these Universities have LGBT Resource Centers.

Morrill (1980) states that this should be accomplished through the study and understanding of the interactions between the student, the environment, and the consequences of the student-environment interaction in order to pinpoint potential interventions. This includes fostering development by providing opportunities for students to obtain skills, explore different attitudes, and take advantage of resources that they may need within the academic environment they are present in. Morrill (1980) goes on to state that the University is responsible for promoting environmental resource improvement to generate the optimal atmosphere for student development to occur (p. 40).

Due to the fact that the University has a mission to serve the student holistically (Nuss, 1996; Leider, 1999) and has published strong language supportive of diversity, this study argues that it is time that the University recognizes sexual orientation and gender identity as two of the needs that should be studied and addressed in student-centered ways. It could be argued that if institutions of higher education do not address the needs of their LGBT students that they are, in fact, not fulfilling their responsibility and dedication to developing the student in a holistic fashion.

1.3 Terminology

This section introduces the terms that will be used throughout this study. When discussing the LGBT population this study is referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender identified persons. Crawley, Foley, and Shehan, (2007) states that sexual orientation (also called sexuality) is the manner in which a person pursues and practices a sense of sexual self. The person's attraction to someone of the same gender (gay/lesbian), opposite gender (straight), or both genders (bisexual) represents the "LGB" and heterosexual populations.

Gender is understood as a social and cultural construction of our personal identities (Lorber, 1994; Stryker, 2008; Newhouse, 2013). This study will use the term “transgender” as it is commonly understood as an umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity/expression or behavior does not align with that typically associated with the biological sex they were assigned at birth (American Psychological Association, 2002; Marine, 2011; Newhouse, 2013). This represents the “T” in LGBT and the students who identify as transgender, genderqueer, or any gender variant identity. In contrast, “cisgender” will be used for individuals whose gender identity and expression aligns normatively with biological sex.

The binary aspect of gender is what differentiates social meanings that typify male and female bodies (Crawley et al., 2007). Gender expression is the way a person communicates their internal sense of self through external expressions of that gender (American Psychological Association, 2002; Negrete, 2007; Newhouse, 2013). Both Crawley et al. (coming from sociology) and Lev (coming from social work) have put forth similar diagrams that describe the normative understanding of gender. Figure 1 shows the seemingly perfect relationship sex, gender, and sexuality have.

According to the Gender Box Structure female bodies are expected to produce feminine gender identities and live as women who are attracted to men; their biological sex is a predisposition for their gender identity and sexuality.

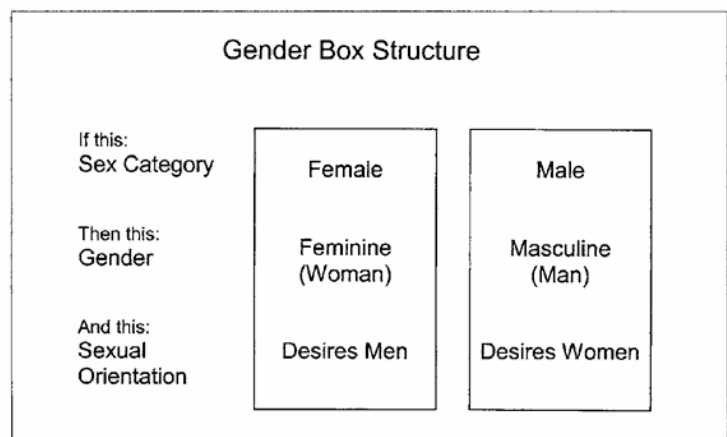


Figure 1. Gender Box Structure.

However, many have moved beyond the limiting aspects of the binary and recognize that sex, gender, and sexuality are better understood on individual continuums. The use of a continuum demonstrates that no person is completely masculine or completely feminine but instead appear on a varied spectrum. Crawley et al. (2007) demonstrates movement from the Gender Box Structure (a model that codes expectations according to biology) to the Gender Feedback Loop (Figure 2). This allows for consideration of lived experiences and does not

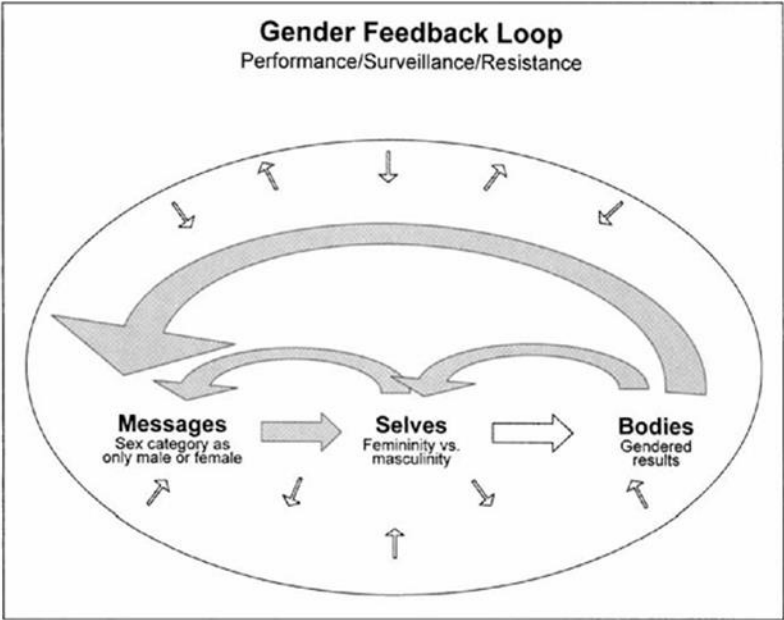


Figure 2. Gender Feedback Loop.

rely on dichotomies. It recognizes that gender is not purely what the individual does, but what others do to them by way of socialization and norms.

Similarly, Lev (2004) demonstrates that the binary system of, and stringent relationship between sex, gender identity, gender role, and sexual orientation is not valid and instead conceptualizes variation within each group along a continuum. Her framework for understanding these concepts has been used in student development theory within higher education and therefore, is very applicable and useful to consider for this study. Figure 3 illustrates the movement to continuums. This diagram of various continuums vividly demonstrates how an individual may lie to either end, adhering to binary categories, or within a range. And since each characteristic is separate and independent of each other, a person has the ability to have a female

body who identifies as a masculine woman who is bisexual. By disregarding the binary structure, limitations on personal identification and expression are diminished.

Unfortunately, general society has not made as much progress as the academy has in troubling the ideas of the binary systems. The binary system lends itself to social hierarchies which create deviant and minority groups, as well as social expectations and norms (“rules”) (Crawley et al., 2007). And more importantly, there are ramifications for a person breaking social norms or identifying with deviant identities. People may break the “rules” when their gender or sexuality does not match their (perceived or actualized) sex. Such social norms (“rules”) are fed to individuals through socialization and policy. Texts have previously categorized homosexuality as deviant and have pathologized gender variants (American

Psychiatric Association, 1968, 1980). Through these ideologies, heterosexuality and cisgender bodies become the social ideal and are deemed normative; lending power and majority status over those who identify as non-heterosexual or gender variant. So while many have begun understanding the continuum model, there is still a large portion of society that refers to the Gender Box Structure.

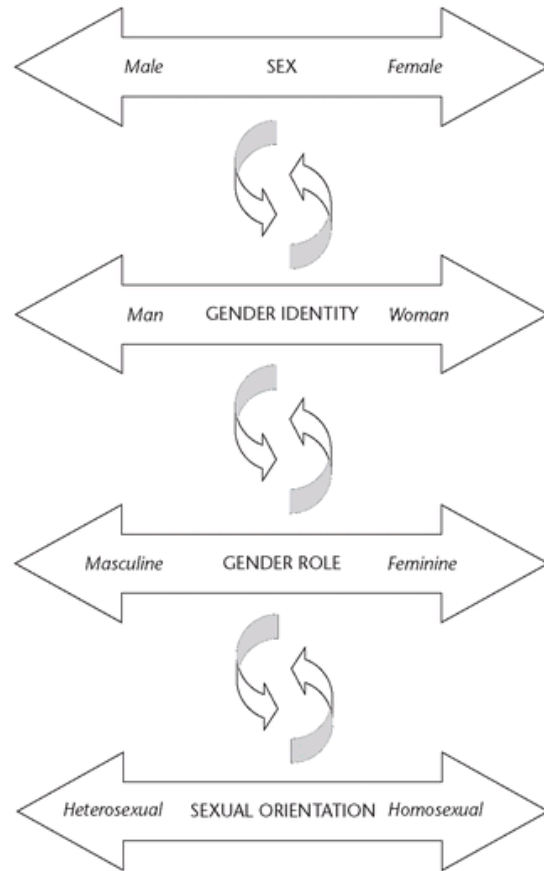


Figure 3. Lev's Continuum.

1.4 Research Questions

Through the application of the campus climate framework developed by Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson and Allen (1998, 1999) and adapted by Milem, Dey, and White (2004), and the distribution of a campus climate survey to students, I will address the following research questions:

1. Do students recognize the presence of sexual orientation and/or gender identity diversity on campus?
2. Have students perceived University events to be inclusive of sexual orientation and/or gender identity?
3. How do students perceive others' (students, staff, and/or faculty) attitudes and prejudices towards sexual orientation and/or gender identity?
4. Have students experienced harassment or discrimination because of their perceived or actualized sexual orientation and/or gender identity?
5. Do students believe the structure and organization of the University acknowledges the presence of students of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities?

This research is meant to be exploratory in nature. Stated simply, the purpose of this research is to uncover student perceptions of LGBT students while also providing the University administration with information about the LGBT student population and their experiences on campus in order to promote changes that will create and/or enhance a welcoming environment.

1.5 Positionality

As a lesbian-identified, cisgender woman, who is currently pursuing a graduate degree from the Women's and Gender Studies Department at the University being studied, my

positionality is complex. The University administration may harness doubt regarding the ability I have to efficiently conduct a campus-wide research project since I have no prior experience. However, I have been trained in a variety of research methods and have a critical eye for oppressive institutions and activities. This provides me with a valuable perspective for conducting research on marginalized populations. Another potential point of contention would be my LGBT identity. It could be argued that due to my identification with this population, I may afford some bias within the research. Fortunately, due to the nature of my research, the potential to skew the data or the results is nearly impossible. On the other hand, being part of this campus community granted access to the LGBT population. Because some students in the P.R.I.D.E. and the Trans+ Student Union (T.S.U.) are familiar with my name and my research, students may have been more eager, willing, and trusting when deciding on survey participation.

CHAPTER TWO:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Campus Climate Framework

In the late 1990's Eric L. Dey (1995, 1996, 1997) was well into his discovery of the relations within, and connections between, students and their academic environment. His understanding of an ecological perspective, which reconceptualizes the relationship between the students and the college environment as both reciprocal and dynamic (Chang, Milem, & Antonio, 2011, pg. 43), allowed others to create a framework that could be used to assess such interactions within academic institutions. While these assessments were originally used to evaluate issues regarding race, the framework can easily be used to assess campus climate issues related to any intergroup interaction. Working off of the concepts provided by ecological scholars, Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen (1998, 1999) were able to conceptualize a framework with four (4) distinct dimensions: 1) compositional diversity; 2) historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion; 3) psychological climate; and 4) behavioral climate.

Each dimension takes part in assessing a specific aspect of the institutional climate. Compositional diversity is defined as the “numerical and proportional representation of various student populations on a campus” (Chang, Milem, & Antonio, 2011, p.47). This dimension is described as being the most thought about when campus leaders consider creating new programs and initiatives that are targeted towards improving campus climate. Historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion accounts for the history that the University has with the target population. While this generally referred to segregation in terms of race, this can be applied to events that have

been held on campus. The third dimension is the psychological climate. This dimension encompasses the views held by students regarding intergroup relations and the perception of discrimination or conflict among diverse groups. Since an individual's perceptions are shaped by their position within an institution and their life experiences, it is common that students in the dominant group will perceive the campus and its climate as more positive than that of students in the minority group (Chang, Milem, & Antonio, 2011). While the psychological dimension can be categorized as perceived interactions, the behavioral dimension includes the nature of interactions between and among people from different groups. For this dimension it is the quality of the interaction that matters.

The application of this framework allowed for an understanding of diversity through assessment of attitudes, perceptions, and observations. However, the framework lacked the ability to consider differences as being necessarily in conflict with one another. Because of this, Hurtado et al. (1999) argued that because an individual's outlooks and perceptions are pliable they can be separated from the more unwavering institutional norms that characterize organization's culture.

This gap influenced Milem, Dey, and White (2004) to construct a fifth (5th) dimension which they called "organizational and structural diversity." This served to represent the aspects of campus organization and structure that are embedded with processes that benefit some groups (Milem, Dey, & White, 2004; Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005). This dimension is demonstrated through the curriculum, budget allocations, hiring practices, tenure decisions, and even reward structure of an institution (Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005). Larger, systemic changes must be applied to alter this dimension. A chart regarding the Campus Climate Framework can be found in Appendix A.

2.2 Application of Campus Climate Framework

The campus climate framework is applied to this study in two ways. First, the framework is used as a guiding light to assess all aspects (i.e., physical, aggregate) of the University's environment by incorporating the five (5) dimensions of the campus climate framework into the construction of the survey questions. A chart that demonstrates the alignment of framework dimensions to survey questions can be found in Appendix B. Questions pertaining to each dimension are presented to ensure that a holistic review of the campus is conducted. Second, this study uses the framework in the analysis of the survey results to understand how various elements of the campus environment have effectively (or ineffectively) addressed LGBT concerns. This inclusive definition of organizational culture provides a theoretically sound foundation upon which to consider the range of university-student interactions and contexts that may be illustrated by the survey results.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In order to situate the current study, information about sexual orientation and gender identity in general as well as in higher education must be discussed. Including relevant information about this institution in particular will also be included.

The literature review for the current study consists of three major sections. The first section, will briefly describe issues of sexual orientation and gender identity as they relate to the LGBT population at large. The second section will consist of a discussion of higher education literature regarding campus climate surveys, particularly as they relate to LGBT issues. In the third section, an extensive review of the Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity website and crime statistics literature from the University itself are discussed.

3.2 Historical Context of LGBT Student Issues

While LGBT individuals nationwide have faced institutional oppressions and inequality, LGBT students face their own unique obstacles. Education is intended to provide an environment for students to develop citizenship, expand intelligence, develop social and moral responsibility, and prepare for future occupations (Adler, 1982; deMarais & LeCompte, 1995). Unfortunately, LGBT students have encountered numerous obstacles to obtaining equal opportunities and experiences. From court rulings and protests, to the production of student organizations and safe spaces, LGBT students have fought for adequate treatment in education.

Court rulings in favor of a diverse and inclusive curriculum have encouraged the visibility of LGBT issues in American history. Enacted only in the state of California, the FAIR Education Act was put into place to “prevent schools from adopting learning materials with a discriminatory bias or negative stereotypes” (The FAIR Education Act, n.d.). This is a movement towards ensuring that all contributors of history are accounted for, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, ability, or sexual orientation. In January of 2012, sexual orientation was added to the guidelines (California Department of Education, n.d.). This would ensure that students had adequate access to information about the trials and tribulations of LGBT individuals in history such as those who were persecuted during the Holocaust for being LGBT or the execution of Harvey Milk – an LGBT political advocate.

Beyond the curriculum, LGBT student’s participation in school dances have even been contested. In *Fricke v. Lynch* the courts heard a case regarding a student’s choice to bring a same-sex date to senior prom. As the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) (2005) cites, in the spring of 1980, Principal Richard Lynch denied Aaron Fricke’s request to bring a male date to the school’s prom for fear of the students’ safety and possible adverse effects to the student body. However, after hearing both sides, the Judge responded in favor of the students. He stated that he was “convinced that meaningful security measures are possible, and the first amendment requires that such steps be taken to protect rather than to stifle free expression” (ACLU, 2005, p. 6).

To combat these and other inequalities, students and administration have established a number of ways to address such mistreatment and exclusion. In the 1980s, the first Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) groups began to emerge and were given the task of fighting homophobia and transphobia in schools and strive to make schools feel safe and welcome to all students,

regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity (Mayberry, 2013; Banks, 2010; GSA Network, n.d.). Colleges and Universities took part in the inclusive process and created trainings called Safe Zone for students, staff, and faculty. This program becomes a bridge between those members of the heterosexual community (who are referred to as Allies) who are supportive of inclusion and equality with the LGBT community. While unclear, the initiation of this program is given to Ball State University in 1992. The University for this study began providing such trainings to its campus constituents in 2002.

Student intervention also exists in the form of protest. One of the best examples comes from the year 1996 when 150 students from the University of Virginia organized the first Day of Silence (Day of Silence, 2011). By 2008, more than 8,000 schools had participated. Students who wish to participate in this silent protest are asked to hand “Speaking Cards” to teachers that state,

Please understand my reasons for not speaking today. I am participating in the Day of Silence, a national youth movement bringing attention to the silence faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their allies in schools. My deliberate silence echoes that silence, which is caused by name-calling, bullying and harassment. I believe that ending the silence is the first step toward fighting these injustices. Think about the voices you are not hearing today. What are you going to do to end the silence? (Day of Silence, 2011)

This has been called the single largest student-led action aimed at creating safer schools for all students (Day of Silence, 2014).

3.3 Historical Context of Campus Climate Surveys

Campus climate surveys assess the attitudes, perceptions, and expectations within interpersonal interactions (Cress, 2002; Hart & Fellabaum, 2008). The purpose of conducting climate survey research is to influence a foundation for institutional change (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). They are utilized by academic institutions to gauge the environment’s relations to issues

of diversity (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998; Hart & Fellabaum, 2008). Initially, they were constructed to evaluate the climate for racial diversity (Hurtado et al., 1998). However, it was not long before such surveys with similar goals were used for issues regarding other issues (i.e. gender; Hall & Sandler, 1982). Hart and Fellabaum (2008) recognize that sexual orientation and gender identity has been neglected when considering climate surveys; but so have other characteristics such as religion, social class, and veteran status (p. 224).

Rankin (2005) was the first to conduct a national study of campus climate for LGBT students. Of the fourteen campuses (four private and ten public) surveyed, a total of 1,660 self-identified LGBT students responded (Rankin, 2005). This study showed that a third of LGBT undergraduates had experienced harassment within the past year. The study also uncovered derogatory remarks as the most prominent form of harassment (89 percent). However, Rankin Blumenfeld, Weber, and Frazer (2010) were able to expand beyond this and obtain surveys from over 5,000 people at colleges and Universities that identified as LGBT. This study continued to show trends of harassment and discrimination. The study found that LGBT respondents were significantly less likely to feel very comfortable/comfortable with the overall campus climate, their department/work unit climate, and classroom climate than their heterosexual counterparts (Rankin et al., 2010) This study also uncovered the fact that transgender individuals attributed harassment to their gender identity 87 percent of the time (p. 12).

The University has the Executive Summary and Final Reports for the 2002 employee Campus Climate Survey and only the Executive Summary for the 2010 Campus Climate Survey available on the Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity Office website. Both surveys – created by Dr. Cavendish in conjunction with the Council on Campus Environment and Diversity

– have a specific section that describes the experience of the LGB employee population within the university. Unfortunately, the survey did not take into account gender identity.

The main purpose and goal of this survey, as stated within the Final Report, was “to provide quantitative and qualitative information about perceptions, levels of satisfaction and specific experiences among faculty and staff on the USF Tampa campus in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusivity in campus life” (p. 4). The “main objective of this research initiative was to use the results of the survey as a part of a strategic planning process to enhance diversity and the overall campus climate at the University of South Florida Tampa campus” (p. 4). Distributing the survey between September – October 2002, the Final Report was published in January of 2004. The chronology of the 2010 report is not available at this time.

The 2010 Executive Summary includes a comparison of the results from the 2002 and 2010 surveys. The 2010 survey states that 9.8% of respondents identified as non-heterosexual. There are many significant improvements noted within the report. The 2010 survey shows a 15% increase in respondents stating that they agree or strongly agree that USF provides opportunities to increase understanding of LGBT people (p. ii). This report also notes that responses show “that USF is making strides in improving the climate for the GLBT employee population” as evidence that LGBT people were less likely to report feeling left out of social events or activities and are more likely to report the USF helped affirm their identity than they were in 2002 (p. v). However, this survey also revealed that LGBT employees were “the most at risk of being the target of harassment (24.4%) and discrimination (19.5%)” while other respondents stated that they felt slightly less comfortable working with LGBT identified individuals (p. v).

As indicated by the University composed reports, after assessing their campus environment the institution was able to address prominent issues discussed by employees and

therefore, receive better responses during the next consecutive survey year. Though not all issues were alleviated, the obvious improvements are noteworthy. Therefore, it is hopeful that the present study may identify the needs and experiences of the unsurveyed student population to begin the process of composing a generalizable and replicable survey instrument that can be applied to the students as well as faculty and staff at the University.

3.4 Review of University Documents

The University's websites as a medium for information have the potential for providing an abundance of support for LGBT identified individuals. At present, the University has published plenty of information on their websites regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. However, the lack of a cohesive website makes the University's dedication seem scattered, a point relevant in terms of students' perceptions of the inclusivity of their institution.

Because this study focuses on a particular University, it is imperative that the study positions the University through its own websites and correlating documents. This section will focus on two websites: the Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity Office (DIEO) and the University Crime Statistics. The information below will put forth an effort to describe the University's current web-published information on LGBT issues.

3.4.1 DIEO Website

The University DIEO has an elaborate website devoted to discussing its diversity, policies, and mission of inclusion. The DIEO website states that this office is dedicated to providing "effective leadership to ensure that diversity and equal opportunity are a thriving part of the fabric of the [University]" (Diversity, n.d.). The website is equipped with navigation options that lead the viewer to information that is relevant to sexual orientation and gender

identity. Relevant pages include the EEO Categories, Presidential Advisory, and Policy & Procedure tabs. These further expand to more specific information such as Gender and Sexual Orientation (EEO Categories) and the Committee on Issues of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (Presidential Advisory).

3.4.1.1 EEO categories

While ‘Sexual Orientation’ and ‘Gender’ are present as navigation opportunities, the selection options are very narrow. The ‘Sexual Orientation’ option links to such pages as the USF PRIDE Alliance, USF Safe Zone, the USF Gay and Lesbian Alumni, and a Presidential Address from January of 2001 (that does not address sexual orientation at all). The tab for ‘Gender’ leads viewers to information regarding sex, pregnancy, wage discrimination, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, and the Feminism & Women’s Studies page. While such information is valuable, for those who do not identify within the gender binary or may be in the midst of transition, more valuable information related to the anti-discrimination policy or regulations that may or may not be put into place to protect them may be even more pertinent. For instance, housing policy related to transgender issues may be an important consideration.

3.4.1.2 Presidential advisory committee

The Committee on Issues of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (CISOGI) is an Advisory Committee that (a) advises the President on matters pertaining to issues of sexual and/or affectional orientation as they pertain to University faculty, staff, and students as well as (b) evaluate and monitor the University environment for issues related to these matters (Crawley, 2013). This aspect of the site is able to successfully bring together issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. However, the information about said Committee is limited and out of date. For instance, the website currently lists Sara Crawley as the Chair and main contact when in fact,

Joseph Puccio (Medical Director of Student Health Services) and Aziz Talbani (Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs) were established as co-Chairs during the 2013 – 2014 academic year. This website also provides viewers with links to the Committee’s Facebook and Twitter. The Committee’s most recent contribution to the DIEO is a holistic compilation of unisex bathrooms on the University's main campus.

3.4.1.3 Policy & procedure

The function of this tab is to provide faculty, staff, and students with information regarding University policies. The first link on the main page is the website for the General Counsel; this website allows users to search for key words. Searching “gender” or “sexual” will bring up the Discrimination and Harassment policy. This document states that the University “protects its faculty, staff, and students from discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation, as well as gender identity and expression.” The same document can be found simply by Googling “[University] nondiscrimination policy.” This inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity was added to the Discrimination and Harassment policy in 2005 (Crawley, 2013).

3.4.2 University Crime Statistics Reports

A review of the University’s crime statistics is yet another way to uncover the history of more serious offenses reported by LGBT students. The University’s Police Department website has the Security and Fire Safety Reports for the Tampa campus that span over the years 1998 until 2012. These reports are easily accessible in .pdf form and relay vital information about various types of crimes, rates of arrests, as well as external and internal resources for anyone who may be looking for such information. During this fourteen (14) year period only one “Sexual Orientation” based hate crime was reported – the incident happened during 2004

(University of South Florida, 2004). “Gender” is also listed as a hate crime category – lacking specificity of whether this has to be with the typical binary understanding of gender or whether issues with gender identity would be grouped in as well. This however received no reports during the entire fourteen (14) year time span. These statistics seem to shed positive light on apparent lack of reported hate crimes towards this population.

3.5 Conclusion

As demonstrated in this chapter, LGBT students face issues of inclusion and equality, inside and outside of the classroom. Students have proven their dedication to eradicating issues of bullying and erasure of LGBT lives and experiences by organizing student groups and annual protests. Educational institutions have also begun taking part in bettering the lives of this population. To continue this progress many institutions have, and continue to, conduct campus climate surveys to assess their changing climate. The University being studied here has plenty of information regarding its inclusion of LGBT students and their issues. There is clear coverage of institutional policy and plenty of referrals for on- and off-campus resources. However, because the University lacks a cohesive site of material regarding this population, information may therefore not be readily accessible.

Design, analysis/discussion, conclusions (implications and suggestions)

The remaining portion of this paper is dedicated to the implementation, analysis, and discussion of the campus climate study of LGBT students and my assessment of their perceptions of the university. The following chapter will detail the manner in which the survey was constructed and distributed as well as describing the analysis process. The discussion will then transition to an in-depth analysis of the data collected through the survey. The concluding

chapter will discuss the implications for the findings as well as provide thorough suggests for effective interventions that should take place.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

Survey research has been conducted since the implementation of the census in 1790 (United States Department of Commerce, 2013). Feminist survey research began in the late 1800s with the purpose of discovering social problems as well as becoming the foundation for encouraging social and policy change – such practices continue today (Kim, 1997; Steinbugler, Press, & Dias, 2006; Ropers-Huilman & Winters, 2011; Harnois, 2013).

The implementation of a survey as a quantitative research technique “can be helpful for understanding how particular attitudes, behaviors, and experiences are distributed or associated in a population (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 205).” The campus climate survey will explore the experiences of LGBT students on this particular college campus. The ability of this instrument to identify and connect overarching patterns of inclusivity/exclusivity is appropriate and necessary to examine the experiences of students of differing sexual orientations and gender identities in this campus environment.

Surveys have the ability to reach numerous participants with little time commitment. This method allows for the broadest reach with little pressure on the participant for time dedicated to research. Due to the history of the University conducting other climate surveys in this fashion, mimicking their method may allow administration to conclude the findings of this research as valid. Finally, due to the nature of the content, the distribution of a survey allows potential

participants to complete the survey when it is convenient to them and allows them to regulate the privacy within which they answer such questions.

4.2 Design

The survey used in this study is based on the campus climate framework (Milem, Dey, & White, 2004) to ensure that all dimensions are addressed. The survey was adapted from the campus climate survey distributed to the University employees in previous years (2002, 2010). However, because the survey distributed to the employees had only a minimal focus on sexual orientation *and* gender identity, this study reviewed questions from other campus climate surveys (especially from the state of Florida) to determine the best strategy for obtaining in depth information on these issues. The main survey reviewed and adapted was the Que(e)ry survey (Lockhart, n.d.).

This newly constructed instrument was divided into five (5) sections: Demographics, Social Factors, Discrimination, Environment, and Suggestions. The Demographics section was used to collect respondents' information and as a means of analysis when identifying group differences. This is necessary when considering aspects of intersectionality – such as the circumstances of LGBT persons of color and their persistence in concealing their orientation/identity to avoid harassment or confrontation (Rankin, 2005). The remaining sections were composed of questions that addressed various aspects of the campus climate framework (see Appendix B).

Following the Demographics section was the Social Factors section. This section aimed to gain insight into the students' perspectives of the University as a whole. It asked students for their opinion on how welcoming the environment was to diverse students and ideas. It also focused on the students' participation in and experience with student organizations. The

Discrimination section focused solely on experiences of harassment and discrimination. This section asked students about their experiences but also their perceptions of different campus resources and environments. The Environment section further elaborated on the campus resources as well as the events that are held on campus. Finally, the survey closed with the Suggestions section which looked for students' recommendations for improvements to the University.

The instrument has eighty-eight (88) questions in total. A majority are closed, Likert scale questions, but open ended question are included to allow for additional information to be collected and also to supplement questions that may not have adequate answers available in the given options (see Appendix C for the survey questions). A chance to win an opt-in incentive was placed at the end of the survey. Participants were asked to provide an email address but were advised that a) this is voluntary and b) the given email is separate from and will have no connection to the survey itself.

4.3 Procedure

Prior to distribution, the survey was pilot tested in an upper level classroom. This pilot test was done in person and students were provided printed versions of the survey. Students were asked to identify any weaknesses or confusion within the survey. Through this process it was discovered that students were not knowledgeable of the use of such words as "queer," "genderqueer," or "asexual" to describe gender and sexual orientation. They stated that seeing such words without context or definition may confuse respondents. Modifications to questions in the beginning of the survey that would demonstrate what was meant by the use of the words "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" alleviated this issue. Students also expressed concern about the term "pluralist society." After discussion, student recognized, and agreed, that the use

of this language should remain because it correlated to the University Diversity Statement. Lastly, the students in the pilot study were able to confirm that duration of time needed for students to complete the survey.

The instrument was distributed to selected classes and organizations. The classes were selected by browsing the University's classes on the Registrar's Schedule Search website. Ideal classes fulfilled students' requirements of Foundations of Knowledge & Learning (FKL) and were of various levels and sizes. Classes that fulfilled FKL requirements were used because it provided a framework for recruiting classes. Also, these class are attended by all student – regardless of major or program – because FKL classes are required to graduate so it gave the advantage of being taken by diverse students. The student organizations included organizations that are known to account for LGBT issues (i.e. P.R.I.D.E. Alliance) as well as those who do not (i.e. To Write Love on Her Arms). Appendix D charts the classes and organizations that were solicited as well as those who participated.

By following this distribution the researcher was able to ensure LGBT identified individuals as well as non-LGBT identified individuals would have adequate access to the survey. The intent to over-sample students in LGBT specific organizations was initiated to combat concerns of small response rate. This is a legitimate reason to access LGBT organizations. These measures were practiced to ensure that an adequate sample is obtained as well as accounting for generalizability.

In all cases listed above, a representative (i.e. instructor or organization president) was contacted via email. The email described the purpose of the survey and asked them to distribute it to their respective students/members. The email that the representatives received are listed in Appendix E. Attached to the email was the Participation Information Sheet – listed as Appendix

F. If the instructors/organization leaders consented to sending out the survey to their students/members, it was up to the students to open and complete the survey. Students who choose to access the link acknowledged that they are giving passive consent. Due to this medium, the researcher had no relationship with the participants and has no knowledge of which students completed the survey. Participant anonymity was secured through the additional medium of distribution by a third party (the instructor/organization leader) as well as through the electronic submission of the survey.

Students recruited through classes conducted during the Spring had a total of four weeks to complete the survey. During this time, two reminder emails were sent out to the class/organization representative asking them to remind their students/members to complete the survey. It should be noted that three weeks into the distribution period the researcher took the necessary steps to obtain Institutional Review Board approval to extend the distribution time into the Summer semester. After gaining final approval (Appendix G) classes were again selected by browsing the University's classes on the Registrar's Schedule Search website.

Students recruited through classes conducted during the Summer semester had two weeks to complete the survey due to time commitments related to the thesis. Student Organizations recruited throughout Spring and Summer had a total of seven weeks to complete the survey. Student organizations had an additional week when considering the week between the end of Spring classes and the beginning of the Summer semester.

Upon closing the survey the researcher awarded the incentives. This was done by using Random.org – a random number generator. After entering the appropriate span of numbers, three random numbers were generated. These numbers were compared to the students who opt-ed in for the incentive. Students were contacted via email to notify them. Gift cards were placed in

envelopes with the email address written on the front. These envelopes were then transported to the Women's and Gender Studies Department and given to the office assistant. Closing of the survey initiated the analysis process.

Brooks and Hesse-Biber (2007) state that mentioning feminist research without feminist activism would be nonsensical and even impossible. Therefore, to conclude the study, an executive summary will be composed and distributed to campus constituents. Contacting campus resources where students identified issues and offering assistance in assessment and sensitivity training as well as coordinating collaboration between the resource and LGBT student organizations would begin addressing negative climates. Offering to present the findings at an open campus presentation for students, staff, and faculty is also a potential. These actions will be the final step in acting as a catalyst for change on campus (Brown & Gortmaker, 2009).

4.4 Participants

The students who responded to the survey came from across the University, with a total of 122 respondents. Collectively, 3,325 students were solicited (via classes² and student organizations³) but only 928 students received the notification from student leaders or instructors to complete the survey. Therefore, this study has a 27.91 percent distribution rate and a 13.15 percent response rate. Distribution rate per category should also be noted. Student organization distribution rate was 18.3 percent and classes' (collectively) was 33.43 percent. Solicitation in the Summer semester harnessed a higher distribution rate (62.29%) when compared to the Spring (26.29%). Appendix D elaborates on the student organizations and classes that were solicited.

² The number of students in each class was verified by the Registrar's Staff Search website.
<http://www.registrar.usf.edu/ssearch/staff/staff.php>

³ The number of students in each student organization was verified by Center for Student Involvement.

Those that are colored grey correlate with the classes and organizations that agreed to distribute the survey.

A majority (50.8%) of students who participated came from the College of Arts and Sciences and 45.1% from other colleges and programs. Lower level students (First and Second year) comprised 26.2 percent, Upper level students (Third, Fourth, and Fifth and up years) 58.2 percent, and Graduate students accounted for 11.5 percent of the respondents. It should also be noted that the sample include 59.8 percent of respondents who identified as white, leading to good representation of non-white identified students. Of these non-white students, the most frequent reported race / ethnicity was black (15.4%), followed by Hispanic/Latina (14.5%), and multiracial (6.8%). There is an overrepresentation of women, who compose 64.8 percent of the survey data.

When considering the presences of varying sexual orientations it should be noted 47.5 percent of students responding to the survey identified themselves as LGB, a percent that is well beyond the expected population of LGB students at the University. Fourteen students identified as gender variant (transgender, genderqueer, other); four of these students also selected that they identify as a woman and five selected that they identify as a man. Of the students who selected gender variant identities, five are people of color and twelve identify as LGB; two as heterosexual.

These data are comparable to the University system. According to the 2013 – 2104 University Fact Book, the University's student population consist of 10 percent black, 18 percent Hispanic, 3 percent multiracial, and 60 percent white (University of South Florida, 2013, p. 14 – 15). When considering gender, the Fact Book shows that the University system is comprised of 58 percent female and 42 percent male (p. 15). The survey also closely mirrors the breakdown of

students by College with the Fact Book showing 43.5 percent of students come from the College of Arts and Sciences (p. 31). Due to an obvious lack of institutional tracking, there is no University comparison for the number of students who identify as LGBT.

4.5 Data Analysis

To begin, the researcher broke down the survey sections to reconfigure them into the framework dimensions. Refer to Appendix B for the framework to survey correlation. This allowed the framework to guide the analysis process. The questions from each dimension were analyzed individually as well as being considered holistically within the dimension. The answers to specific questions will also be considered against the demographic variables to uncover the perspectives and experiences of specific groups.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Cleaning the raw data was necessary prior to analysis. The first questions to be reviewed were the demographics provided by students. For the question regarding the students' identified gender, answers of woman (n=79) and man (n=33) were left alone, allowing them to represent cisgender options, while transgender (n=4), genderqueer (n=10), intersex (n=0), and Other (n=1) selections were combined. This collapsing of categories was necessary to bring together a small portion of students. For the purpose of this study, the students in this combined category will be referred to as "gender variant." The question asking students to identify their sexual orientation also produced a new variable. While those selecting the straight (n=59) category were left alone, those who selected lesbian (n=14), gay (n=8), bisexual (n=13), queer (n=13), questioning (n=3), asexual (n=0), or other (n=7) were combined. This group will be referred to as the "LGBQQAO"

category for the remaining duration of this study⁴. The question regarding to race went under a similar manipulation: white was retained as a sole category, while black, Hispanic/Latina, Asian, Middle Eastern, American Indian, Multiracial, and other were combined into a variable labeled “non-white.” For class grouping, students who indicated they were First and Second year students will be considered “Lower level students” while those who selected Third, Fourth, Fifth and up are referred to as “Upper level students.”

The responses given in other sections were modified too. The Discriminations section had two questions where the possible answers were yes, no, or unsure. For both questions, answers of yes and unsure were combined into one variable (given the value of 1) and no remained as another variable (given the value of 2)⁵. All responses of “Not Applicable” were changed to “Missing” and therefore were not calculated into analysis.

I conducted two types of analysis. Frequencies were used to determine if there was a popularity in response. These are discussed numerically or by percentages, thus revealing trends in student responses. The second form of analysis is cross tabulations. This form of analysis allowed the study to compare the responses between two groups. Bringing to the light the differences among populations, and therefore perceptions and opinions, allowed the study to further understand which populations felt the most welcome on campus and which populations

⁴ It must be noted that the categories constructed here are not mutually exclusive. Student have multiple identities and therefore may be both cisgender and LGBTQQAQO. Taking this into account is necessary when considering comparisons. Therefore, the only legitimate comparisons – and the only ones to be discussed in this study – are between the dichotomies created in this section. So while the deconstruction of binaries is desired, such dichotomies had to be constructed and utilized for the duration of this study. Due to such small numbers, additional statistical analysis would be inaccurate and inappropriate.

⁵ Giving both answers of “Yes” and “Unsure” the same value was strategically done to ensure all students who know, or think, they have been the target of harassment have the opportunity to discuss their experiences. Because students may not know if their experience meets the University’s definition of harassment, this question allowed them to discuss it regardless of institutional definition. It also lends itself potential to encourage the University to reiterate or clarify the definition of harassment.

suggested the most need for improvement. Due to small sample sizes, analyses of statistical relevance were not conducted on these data.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

5.1 Contextualize Findings

The write up of the findings will again follow the layout of the campus climate framework. Charts and graphs will accompany the dimensions, though only pertinent information will be placed in the body of the thesis. Within each of the sections, when applicable, findings from this survey will also be compared to that of the University Employee Campus Climate Survey.

The findings from this research are discussed in five section; one section for each dimension of the campus climate framework. Each section will begin by reiterating the definition and purpose of the dimension. Next, the research questions will be reiterated followed by an analysis of the data to answer the research question at hand. Data from two or more questions will be used to thoroughly analyze and discuss each dimension.

The analysis will go beyond considering the overall answer to Likert scale questions and will discuss the answers given by various groups and categories of students. Such groups analysis will include analysis by race (white/non-white), gender (gender variant/cisgender), sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, other (LGBQQAO)/heterosexual), and even by class standing (lower level/upper level/grad). While such an analysis may not fully account for intersectional experiences, it is one way to ensure a greater acknowledgment of different groups' perceptions and experiences within one campus.

5.1.1 Compositional Diversity

The first dimension to be discussed is compositional diversity. The purpose of this dimension is to decipher if students recognize the diversity within their campus environment. The research question for this dimension asks, *do students recognize the presence of sexual orientation and/or gender identity diversity on campus?* The answer to this question is necessary to determine the starting point for introducing new ideas to the student body. The questions reviewed in this section will uncover the degree to which students see and recognize diversity on the University campus. The questions in this dimension will allow students to rank their perception of campus diversity on a five point scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

The first set⁶ of questions discussed here ask students if it is easy to meet and befriend students of different sexual orientations and gender identities (Table 1). When asked about sexual orientation, students Strongly Agreed / Agreed 64.5 percent overall. Those who self-identified as heterosexual students had the highest agreement rate at 70.2 percent while those in the LGBQQAQO category had the second lowest agreement rate (58.9%). In fact, students who identified themselves as being part of the dominant categories (cisgender and heterosexual)

Table 1. Percent Reporting of Acknowledging Categories.

Category		...of different sexual orientations.	...of different gender identities.
Race	White	63.2	41.2
	Non-White	66.7	42.2
Gender Variant		57.1	42.9
Cisgender		65.4	41.1
LGBQQAQO		58.9	42.9
Straight		70.2	40.3

agreed at a higher rate than those who identified themselves as being part of the minority categories (gender variant and LGBQQAQO students). On the other hand, when asked if it is easy

⁶ To clarify the language here, questions will be reviewed in “sets” because every question is asked twice; once with the focus on sexual orientation and once with the focus on gender identity.

to get to know people of different genders, we see a general decrease in the number of students who agree with the statement, with virtually all groups of students reporting similar rates of agreement to the question.

The last question in this section ask students if the University provides opportunities that promote better understanding of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. A review of student responses can be

Table 2. Percent Reporting Perception of Educational Opportunities.

Category		Percent
Race	White	55.88
	Non-White	53.33
Gender Variant		42.86
Cisgender		54.21
LGBQQAQO		57.14
Straight		52.63

found on Table 2. With an overall agreement rate of 54.9 percent, it is obvious that student may find the available educational opportunities

insufficient or are unaware that they exist. This also signifies to the University that they still have a number of students to reach. The category of students that have the highest agreement is LGBQQAQO while Straight identified students were the second lowest group who agreed with this statement. The decline in agreement rates from cisgender respondents (54.21%) to that of gender variant respondents (42.86%) should also be noted.

When the University first conducted their campus climate of their employees in 2002 they discovered that only 42.3 percent of respondents Strongly Agreed / Agreed with the statement “USF provides opportunities that promote better understandings of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people.” However, after conducting the survey again after eight years (in 2010), we see a 15 percent increase (rising to 57.3%) in those who agree the institution provides a better understanding of this population. It can be assumed that this increase may have been due to expansion of employee training, broader visibility in the environment, and other institutional interventions. Therefore, this research that currently states only 54.9 percent of

students Strongly Agree / Agree that the University provides such opportunities, can rise with purposeful and tactful trainings and events for students. This demonstrates ample opportunity for the creation and expansion of educational events, especially in the realm of gender.

5.1.2 Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion

Being unable to ask students about the University's history in its entirety, for this section of analysis, the focus will be on the social and academic events put on by the University that students have experienced. Therefore, these questions are able to decipher the events the student experienced as being inclusive or exclusive to the LGBT community in the history of the students' attendance at the institution. The research question to be answered here is, *have students perceived University events to be inclusive of sexual orientation and/or gender identity?*

This set of questions consisted of an initial question asking if any events have made the student feel welcomed or unwelcomed, answered by selecting a "Yes" or "No" button followed by a free response question that states, "If yes, what events?" This would allow students to not only state the exact events but would allow them to elaborate if they felt inclined.

Asking students to identify events that have made them feel welcomed was the first couple of questions. Of the 103 who responded to this question, 87 (84.5%) stated that there has been an event that they would describe as welcoming. Seventy (70) students then continued to the second part of the set and described the events that they found the most welcoming. The most popular answer was the presence of LGBT specific student organizations (P.R.I.D.E. and T.S.U.) and their corresponding events. The second most popular response was Week of Welcome. Though in its infancy, LGBT History

month was mentioned four times. Mention of LGBT History month events is significant because it is one of the only LGBT specific events that is sponsored by the University, as opposed to a student organization.

In contrast, when asked what events made them feel unwelcomed, 102 students responded to this question with only 32 (31.4%) stating “Yes” there has been an event on campus that has made them feel unwelcomed. Twenty-four (24) students described the events that they found the most unwelcoming. Ten (10) students responded with the Butterfield lecture⁷ in particular and four (4) discussed religion in general. Four students identified Greek life as unwelcoming. Some even named specific sororities (e.g. Delta Delta Delta). One student stated, “I kind of wanted to join a fraternity, but I’m not a cis-male so I can’t.” Three other students identified P.R.I.D.E. events; one naming the Drag Show in particular.

5.1.3 Psychological Dimension

Even though the psychological dimension is not constituted by concrete interactions among students and other individuals, the perception that students hold about others’ level of acceptance influences them to confine their expressions and may result in them living and working in an environment that they consider hostile. Completing the Suggestion section of the survey one student states , “I just would like to be comfortable around people and be myself...some people don’t let you be who you are and that’s why we can’t succeed because we feel [like we are] in a box.” This dimension will uncover

⁷ On October 7th or 2013, Rosaria Butterfield visited the University to give a lecture titled, “Homosexuality and Christianity.” This lecture was highly controversial and received a large amount of attention on campus. It was attended by roughly 500 students, some to support Butterfield and others to silent protest (“Religious speaker responds to controversy”, 2013; Rosenthal, 2013; Sathe, 2013; “Sexuality, Christianity lecture creates dialogue, protest”, 2013; “Students to rally outside lecture”, 2013).

students' feelings of being welcomed or being pushed into a box. The research question for this dimension asks, *how do students perceive others' (students, staff, and/or faculty) attitudes and prejudices towards sexual orientation and/or gender identity?*

For this analysis, four sets of questions will be considered. The first two sets of questions will pertain to students' perception of how welcoming certain spaces and select campus resources are to sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The second two sets ask students to rate how much they agree with statements pertaining to how welcome and unwelcome they feel on campus.

Students were asked to select locations where they felt uncomfortable or unsafe expressing their sexual orientation and gender identity (Table 3). These questions presented students with set spaces on campus and asked them to mark

Table 3. Percent Reporting Perception of Discomfort with Campus Space.

Location	Sexual Orientation (number of responses out of 122)	Gender Identity (number of responses out of 122)
Classroom	23 (18.9%)*	11 (9%)*
Work (on campus)	13 (10.7%)	8 (6.6%)
Resident Hall	14 (11.5%)	8 (6.6%)
Around Friends	4 (3.3%)	3 (2.5%)
Around students you do not know	30 (24.6%)*	14 (11.5%)*
Around Professors	26 (21.3%)*	10 (8.2%)*
Around staff/administrators	19 (15.6%)	8 (6.6%)

all places they consider hostile. Both questions show that students feel the most hesitation around students they do not know.

Students also identify professors, regarding sexual orientation, and the classroom, regarding gender identity, as the second most unwelcome space. The asterisk (*)

indicates the top choices for students in the LGBQQAQO and gender variant categories, with differences identified among these two groups. When discussing sexual orientation, gender variant students indicated that they feel the most uncomfortable in the classroom. Having discussions around students they do not know was second. LGBQQAQO students identified students they do not know as the environment most unwelcoming to them and professors as the second. When asked about discussing gender identity, the classroom and students they don't know were tied for the most uncomfortable environments for gender variant students. Being around professors was selected the second most often. LGBQQAQO students again identified being around students they do not know as being the most welcome with the classroom and professors tied for the second most selected.

The second set of questions asked students to rank campus resources using a five option Likert scale. These questions asked student how comfortable and respected they felt reaching out to these campus resources for issues or information related to sexual orientation and gender identity. As shown by Table 4, students entrust themselves to the same top three choices for issues and related to both sexual orientation and gender identity. First, students feel most comfortable with student clubs and organizations that are dedicated to LGBT issues. Then we see the Counseling Center followed by Student Health Services.

The highest ranked are not the only ones that should be discussed though. Students failed to identify campus ministries as a campus resource they would look to for issues they may experience regarding sexual orientation. On the other hand, students identified University Police

as the least favored resource for issues pertaining to gender identity. In fact, for these least favored resources, more students selected “Not At All” (42.3% and 41.5%) than they did “Completely” and “Mostly” combined.

A third set of Likert scale style questions asks students to consider the frequency of their experiences, using the response options of “Always” to “Never.” The first two questions pertain to the environment’s ability to affirm students’ identities while the second ask students about their experience with fear while on campus.

Table 4. Percent Reporting Perception of Comfort with Campus Resource.

Resource	Sexual Orientation Completely/Mostly (%)	Gender Identity Completely/Mostly (%)
Student Health Services	68.2	64.2
University Police	40.7	36.9
Counseling Center	73.6	71.2
Campus Ministry	35.2	44.8
Academic Advisor	46.4	48.5
Faculty Member	45.2	47.0
Housing and Residential Education	40.0	43.6
Resident Advisor	50.0	46.2
Office of Multicultural Affairs	61.1	55.4
Student Affairs	56.4	54.1
LGBT Clubs and Organizations	82.3	75.4
Department/Program Chair	45.8	49.2

Students were asked how often during the past year they felt the University environment helped affirm their sexual orientation. The overall response was 47.6 percent stating they Always

/ Often felt the environment was able to accomplish that while 19.5 percent stated that the environment “Never” was able to assist them in positive affirmation of their sexuality. Three out of twelve (25%) gender variant students who responded to this question selected Always / Often as an answer. On the other hand, twenty out of forty-seven (42.5%) of LGBQQAQO students selected an answer of Always / Often. The second question mirrors the first but refers to gender identity. This question obtained a 50.7 percent approval rate among students who completed the question. However, while those who marked Always / Often rose, so did the number of students who selected “Never” (27.4%). There was also an increase for both LGBQQAQO and gender variant students. When considering gender identity, five out of fourteen (35.7%) gender variant students selected Always / Often while nineteen out of thirty-eight (50%) LGBQQAQO students agreed that the University affirmed their gender identity.

The second set of questions asks the student to rate how often they feared for their personal safety

because of their sexual orientation and gender identity (Table 5). The data shows that overall, 85.4 and

Table 5. Percent Reporting for Fear of Personal Safety

Category	...gender identity (%)	...sexual orientation (%)
Gender Variant	15	9
Cisgender	5	2
LGBQQAQO	8	3.9
Straight	4.3	2

83.1 percent of students’ state that they Never / Rarely fear for their safety. However, as shown by Table 5, there is a different level of safety per student population. The numbers in the table show the percentage per student group. To demonstrate, two out of thirteen (15%) gender variant students stated that they fear for their personal safety Always / Often because of their gender identity, much more than their cisgender peers. Gender variant students also report higher levels

of fear for their safety because of their sexual orientation than their cisgender peers. The same pattern, with LGBTQAO students reporting higher levels of fear of personal safety due to both gender identity and sexual orientation than their straight peers was also found. So while it could be argued that students interpret their environment as being welcoming enough for the vast majority to not fear any physical harm most of the time, it is obvious that some harness more fears than others, and that both issues of sexual orientation and gender identity are relevant to this discussion.

5.1.4 Behavioral Dimensions

As stated previously, the Behavioral Dimension encompasses students' actions and interactions within the environment where they are present. When referring to the University setting, these interactions happen among friends, in classrooms, and within student organization meetings. The importance in understanding students' actions and interactions is to determine if students are living within an environment that is welcome and accepting to the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity.

The research question for this dimension asks, *have students experienced harassment or discrimination because of their perceived or actualized sexual orientation and/or gender identity?* This dimension will allow students to discuss their experiences on campus – the positive and the negative. The questions analyzed in this section will include the status of LGBT allies, the frequency of derogatory language among University occupants, and will conclude with a discussion of students who have experienced harassment.

Students were asked to rank the statement “I am an ally (supporter) to lesbian, gay, and bisexual identified individuals.” A majority of students (89.2%) Strongly

Agreed / Agreed to the statement. When asked the same question but referring to transgender identified individuals, the overall support remained high with 84.8 percent of students saying they Strongly Agree / Agree.

Breaking down this number by student categories allows a broader understanding of which students indicated a higher level of support for LGBT students (Table 6). From this break down we are able to see that the only groups to remain consistent in support across orientation and gender lines are those who identify as gender variant or LGBQQAQO themselves while all other categories decrease slightly when referring to the statement that includes transgender support. White students were much more

Table 6. Ally Support per Category

likely to identify themselves as an ally on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity than their non-white peers. Indeed, when considering the student population who showed the least amount of support for LGBQQAQO students, it was students who identified themselves as non-white. Only 75.56 percent of non-white students stated that they Strongly Agreed / Agreed that they were allies to LGBQQAQO students. While non-white students also show a lower amount of support for gender variant students than their white peers, heterosexual students were much less likely to identify themselves as allies to

Category		Sexual Orientation	Gender Identity
Gender Variant		13/14 (92.86%)	13/14 (92.86%)
Cisgender		93/105 (88.57%)	79/106 (74.53%)
LGBQQAQO		55/56 (98.21%)	55/56 (98.21%)
Heterosexual		44/55 (80%)	40/56 (71.43%)
Race	White	65/66 (98.49%)	62/67 (92.54%)
	Non-white	34/45 (75.56%)	33/45 (73.33%)
Lower Level		27/31 (87.10%)	27/31 (87.10%)
Upper Level		59/67 (88.06%)	58/68 (85.29%)
Graduate		13/13 (100%)	13/13 (100%)

transgender students at 71.43 percent than their LGBQQAQO counterparts. This trend is also reflected in the students’ academic standing. While support for LGBQQAQO students rise as the students level progress, the data show a slight dip in support for gender variant students from Upper level students.

The second set of questions to be reviewed in this section pertain to the incident rate of derogatory language students have heard from various University groups. For these questions students were asked how many times they have heard students, faculty, and staff say insensitive remarks about LGBQQAQO and transgender identified students.

Table 7. Incidence Rate of Disparaging Remarks by Category.

Category	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	0 times	5+ times	0 times	5+ times
Student	18.7%	32.7%	35.8%	26.6%
Faculty/Teaching Assistant	79.4%	2.8%	79%	4.8%
Staff	76.6	1.9%	81%	4.8%

The Table 7 shows details of the findings. While students did indicate a range of incidences – one to four times – for the purposes of this section the table focuses on the portion of students who have heard or witnessed no events of offensive language and those who have heard or witnessed five or more such accounts. As shown here, students have hardly experienced negative comments from faculty, teaching assistants, or staff members. While such experiences with employees are not unheard of, the greatest amount lies in remarks regarding gender identity. On the other hand, nearly a third of the students who responded to this question stated that they have heard students say five or more insensitive comments about LGBQQAQO identified persons within the past year, and a fourth of the respondents had heard a student say disparaging comments regarding transgender individuals.

The last set of questions to be discussed in this section deal with students' direct experience with harassment while on campus. This question in particular has the potential to make University officials aware of the prominence or lack of negative experiences on campus.

Of the students who completed the survey, 14 stated "yes" or "unsure" when asked if they had been the target of harassment. This accounts for 12.8% of my sample. These students were then directed to answer additional questions. When asked how many times they have experienced harassment, a majority of students (73.3%) reported that they had had one or two incidences with another student as the aggressor (86.7%). Two students reported that they "Always" report an incident of harassment and the other 12 stated they do it "Sometimes." Of those who indicated incidents of discrimination, eight were white and the remaining six were non-white; three were gender variant and nine identified themselves as LGBQQAO.

Of the locations provided students reported "Other University Space" as the most frequent site of harassment. While this does not tell us an exact space, through this research we can focus on places outside of the work place and housing (on and off campus). Attention should also be placed in the classroom – shown to be the second most frequent place that students have selected as being harassment prone.

5.1.5 Organizational/Structural Dimension

This dimension addresses issues pertaining to how inclusive the structure of the institution is. This may include policies, budgets, the curriculum, and the institution's dedication to having inclusive resources and spaces. The research question that correlates with this dimension is, *do students believe the structure and organization of the University acknowledges the presence of students of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities?* The questions analyzed here come in three forms: the first set are statements that ask students to rate them on a

Likert scale, the second ask students to identify the most needed resource(s), and the third asks them in an open answer format for further suggestions. The answers found within this final analysis may guide the University constituents in how to continue to address the needs of LGBT individuals.

Two questions discussed here are very important for determining the University’s ability to adhere to its mission. The Diversity Statement (2006) states that the University is “[a] diverse campus environment, in which differences are respected and appreciated, promotes more effective teaching, produces greater

learning outcomes, and better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and pluralistic society.” To avoid a double-barreled question, this statement was broken into two parts.

The first question states “USF is a diverse campus environment where differences are respected and appreciated.” Students

were asked to rate this question as Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (Table 8). Overall, students Strongly Agree / Agree with this statement 88.5 percent of the time. When broken down by category, we see the strongest agreement with the statement by heterosexuals (92.28%) and the least amount with those identified as gender variant (78.57%). It may come as no surprise

Table 8. Percent Responding in Agreement Regarding Diversity.

Category		(%)
Gender Variant		57.14
Cisgender		71.70
LGBQAAO		61.82
Heterosexual		80.70
Race	White	71.64
	Non-white	71.11
Lower level Students		80.65
Upper level Students		69.12
Graduate Student		61.54

that students in minority populations (LGBQAAO, gender variant, non-white) agreed at a lower rate than those in the opposite/correlational, dominant positions.

Table 9. Percent Responding in Agreement Regarding Preparation for Society.

Category		(%)
Gender Variant		78.57
Cisgender		88.79
LGBQAAO		83.93
Heterosexual		92.28
Race	White	89.71
	Non-white	86.67
Lower level Students		87.10
Upper level Students		86.77
Graduate Student		100

The second part of the question to fulfill the Diversity Statement ask students to rate the sentence, “USF prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and pluralistic society.” Table 9 demonstrates a breakdown per student category. The overall approval of this statement drops to 71.4 percent – a seventeen percent drop in agreement. However, as defined above, heterosexual students had the highest agreement rate (80.7%) and gender variant students had the lowest (57.14%). While the same trend appears where those in the minority population agree at a lower rate than their opposite/correlational, dominant population, there is also a trend in student level. The table clearly shows that as students’ progress through their education at the University, they are less likely to agree that the institution prepares them properly for a diverse society.

The second question discussed here pertains to the students’ opinions about what resources the student body could benefit from. Students were able to mark any or all of the

resource options provided for them. The top three choices include the addition of an LGBT Resource Center (63.1%), the expansion of LGBT specific counseling (62.3%), and the expansion of SafeZone and Ally training (61.5%). Only four students, or 3.3 percent, stated that no additional resources were needed.

The manner in which different groups seemed to prioritize different resources becomes apparent through this analysis. The addition of an LGBT Resource Center was the top choice for

Table 10. Top Choices for Additional Resources by Category.

Category		Top Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
Race	White	Counseling	LGBT Center	Ally Training
	Non-White	Ally Training	LGBT Center	Counseling
Gender Variant		LGBT Center	Counseling	Housing
Cisgender		LGBT Center	Ally Training	Counseling
LGBQQAQO		LGBT Center	Housing	Counseling/Ally Training
Hetero		Counseling	Ally Training	LGBT Center
Lower level		LGBT Center	Ally Training	Counseling
Upper level		Counseling	LGBT Center	Housing/Ally Training
Grad		Housing	Ally Training	Counseling

both LGBQQAQO and gender variant students. It is also interesting to note that every group or category of student (race, class standing, gender, and sexual orientation) listed Counseling within their top three choices.

The last question on the survey asks students for additional suggestions for how USF could improve the campus climate for LGBT students. Thirty-nine (39) students responded. While some reiterated the need for the expansion of resources stated previously such as an LGBT Resource Center, other students took the time to elaborate on issues they consider

significant. For instance, many students took their time to elaborate on the need for counseling services.

Student explicitly stated that expansion of transgender, or gender variant, counseling services would be beneficial. Some state that hiring a therapists that specializes in issues of gender would be helpful as well as the extension of counseling services (long-term counseling) for issues related to gender. One student described how the addition of such a resource on campus would be helpful to them; “Specifically for transgender students, I would recommend employing a gender therapist on campus. I've been looking for one for months and having trouble due to not owning a car. My troubles would lessen considerably if there were a gender therapist that I could go to on campus.” Another student expressed their frustration about the lack of service by stating they desire a “[c]ounseling center that actually does something for trans* people instead of just immediately refers us out like we're too weird for them to deal with.”

In this free response section students also described a clear yearning for institutional support of the LGBT community. Students encourage the University to make “public affirmations of their support whenever public events take place.” One student even suggests more visibility: “visible stickers (on office doors, on department main doors, on buildings, in public/high-traffic areas like the Marshall Center, Counseling Center).” The students that responded recognized the institutions support of student organizations but want the University to “ACTUALLY SHOW THAT [the University] SUPPORTS THE LGBTQA+, NOT JUST THE PRIDE CLUB.” This idea of expanding recognition beyond the one organization continue as one student asks that the University to “[a]ctively go out of their way to be vocal about support and

their no tolerance policy. Advocate for gender sensitivity in classrooms by faculty and staff. . . . [and] consider transgender issues just as seriously as LGB issues.”

The one response that was overwhelming in number (fifteen students) was the desire for the University to expand its educational and sensitivity training for students, staff, and faculty alike. For employees, students requested “Advanced training for all faculty and staff on Counseling Services and Student Health Services. Language matters when disclosing.” Respondents also stated that they “think it is important to stress acceptance to incoming students” and to “[c]reate a mandatory course on campus, or make safe zone mandatory” for all students. However, students also critiqued the composition of the education being given. Some point out the lack of gender inclusive education: “Don't just limit education to Gay and Lesbian issues. Bisexuality is often erased and transgender individuals are rarely supported openly. Also, consider having more education on Asexuality, Pansexuality and other marginalized orientations, gender non-conforming and genderqueer issues, and especially issues surrounding Intersex people.” The desire for the expansion of educational efforts is stated clearly by another student: “More awareness, and education so there will be no future hate crimes.”

Now that every dimension has been thoroughly reviewed, it is important to conduct a recap of the findings. This will be followed by a clear articulation of the implications for such findings. This information is presented in the next section.

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary and Implications

The purpose of this study was to assess the campus climate for LGBT identified students from the perspective of the student body population. The information obtained from this study fills the gap in knowledge regarding this understudied yet obviously present population. By distributing a campus climate survey with the intention of discovering students' perception of and experiences with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity this study demonstrates students' experiences on campus.

The survey was composed using questions from the University campus climate surveys of the past, the Que(e)ry survey, and the application of the campus climate framework. This survey was distributed to students through two venues: student organizations and classes.

The information presented in this study is very important for institutional administrators and should be considered as a guide for where they could focus their resources in the future. As demonstrated by the Compositional dimension, students do recognize the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities on campus, yet find it hard to meet gender variant individuals.

This study, by way of the Historical Legacy of Inclusion/Exclusion dimension, also demonstrates that students acknowledge that the University attempts to hold inclusive and welcoming events. While nearly half of those who responded to the open ended question of unwelcoming event by showing their distaste with the Butterfield lecture, it has to be known that while this event may not have settled well with the LGBT population and their allies, that being

inclusive of all means the University must hold events that may oppose or contradict each other. Nonetheless, the overwhelming amount of students who responded with recognition of, and answers for, positive events emulates the positive perspective they have on events held by the University. This study also recognized the prominence of P.R.I.D.E. on campus. And while this recognition may be a symptom of a sampling issues due to recruitment through organizations, it may also relate to the single organization focus for the campus as mentioned earlier.

As discussed in the Psychological dimension, students feel unwelcome in certain spaces and the University may take note of this in its attempt to remedy such situations. However, the overall low amount of discomfort with these spaces states that students do feel welcomed in most, if not all, University spaces. When considered differently, while 24.6 percent of students feel uncomfortable discussing their sexual orientation around students they do not know, the other 73.4 percent of students who responded to that question – by lack of selection – stated that they do feel comfortable in such situations. This study was also able to make University constituents aware of students' comfort with campus resources; a useful tool to consider when conducting trainings in the future.

The Behavioral dimension is also able to bring to light student experiences with harassment and discrimination as it pertains to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. While a small sample, fourteen (14) students – 12.8 percent – stated that they had such encounters, such accusations need to be strongly considered since such reports have not been reflected in the campus crime reports. This demonstrates the University's need to take such reports seriously and the need to exert appropriate sanctions when necessary. The majority of students who experience harassment and discrimination state that they are reporting it to someone yet these reports may be lost before a resolution is found.

Lastly, the Structural/Organizational dimension makes it clear that students recognize that the institution's structures attempt to be inclusive and provide adequate resources to LGBT students. However, the students believe that more can be done. Now that University administration has access to a chart that clearly signifies where students wish to focus University resources (LGBT Resource Center, Counseling, and Ally Training), the University may be interested in addressing some of these requests first.

The findings from this study bring about many implications for the University at hand. This study has the potential to influence the students, the classrooms, and even campus resources.

While it is true that the student suggestions on how to improve the campus climate are very beneficial and will provide ample information to campus constituents, the limitations and implications for their suggestions needs to be discussed. Specifically, the implications for counseling services and SafeZone training being the second and third most requested resources. While these resources are necessary for LGBT students and allies alike, these resources address LGBT issues on an individual level. While counseling may assist LGBT students in adapting to their environment and ally training may educate small groups of students, these resources do not act on a systematic scale to influence or address the institutional problems related to LGBT students. If mandated, SafeZone ally training has the potential to influence the overall climate but such mandate does not exist. Additional, since these resources are utilized by students in private or in small multipurpose rooms in the student center, these particular resources also do not adhere to the students request for more visual support of the LGBT population nor do they create a dedicated LGBT space within the University. Because of this, the development of an LGBT Resource Center (students top choice) is fundamental. Such a resource would not only

provide students with internal and external resources, support, programming, and campus activities, it would be a space within student life that can be identified as a truly LGBT inclusive space.

This study has provided ample information for the University to target the student populations most in need of LGBT education. It is obvious that non-white students are less likely than their white peers to consider themselves allies of LGBT individuals, a point that deserves further research and perhaps dedicated focus for the campus community. However, this population already demonstrates initiative by selecting the expansion of SafeZone training as their most requested resource. And student organizations identified here as problematic (specifically the Greek organizations), should be encouraged to attend a SafeZone training and to collaborate with the LGBT organizations on campus. Having some of the lowest self-reporting as LGBT allies means there is plenty of potential for improvement. Similar comments can be said about heterosexual students; while they seem to be comfortable and supportive in instances of sexual orientation, more education regarding gender identity is needed.

One finding that needs to be addressed is the classroom environment. LGBQQAO and gender variant students identified this as an atmosphere that they are not comfortable in and an environment where they have experienced harassment or discrimination. To ensure that all students feel welcome in the classroom the University should encourage instructors to provide diversity clauses on their syllabi and to be very explicit that such instances of discrimination are not welcome and will not be tolerated. Students come to the University seeking higher education; feeling unwelcome in the classroom is an inherent juxtaposition to this concept. However, this also entails that the instructors themselves are aware of and abide by the diversity policy, and that they have received adequate information and training to be themselves allies of LGBQQAO

and gender variant students- an issue not addressed in this study or in the prior University campus climate study. Another suggestion for the classroom would be to integrate information about the LGBT population so students gain a historical understanding and familiarity with them. Since FKL classes are a requirement, having these classes incorporate relevant information into their lesson plans (whether it be history, sociology, or literature) would allow students exposure to such topics.

This study brought to light successes and shortcomings of campus resources. Due to the overwhelmingly negative light students place on campus ministries and University Police, it should be a priority to a) notify these campus resources of such perspectives and b) assist them with departmental assessment and additional training. Determining why students perceive them as a hostile resource can better assist University Police and campus ministries to address issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. It should also be considered a necessity for these resources to make a valid attempt to reach out to the LGBT population on campus and take steps towards building collaborations and bridges among themselves. Ensuring that these resources are perceived as welcoming is greatly important for students who may need to utilize such resources. In sum, if a student is afraid they will be re-victimized by University Police, they may disregard notifying them of being physically assaulted in the first place. This is not a relationship the University should allow to persist.

In fact, issues with reporting is another concern that arises from this study. All twelve students reporting harassment stated that they had reported their instances of harassment yet there are no available records that such harassment occurred. Because only police reports are included in the University statistics, there is no valid way to ensure that every reported instance was addressed in an appropriate manner. As an obvious limitation of the survey, there is also no

record of *who* the students reported these instances to. This is information that needs to be uncovered to ensure that all parties – students, staff, and faculty – are aware of the appropriate manner to address instances of LGBT harassment and discrimination and all levels of administration and authority are held accountable.

Another implication for this study is to update the DIEO website with the Final Report of the 2010 survey. This is imperative to consider comparisons to the student population. The data from this study indicate similar outcomes: that students (54.9%) and staff/faculty (57.3%) both agree the University provides opportunities to gain a better understanding of the LGBT population. Unfortunately, these numbers (while similar) also indicate that almost half of people from all over the campus believe the University is not providing adequate opportunities to better understand this population. The University had eight years between employee surveys to take action to ensure that more people had access to such knowledge. It is time that the University did the same for the student population.

It also needs to be recognized that issues of gender need to be fully uncovered because gender variant students demonstrate the desire for more educational opportunities, the most psychological unrest, and harness the most fear of physical harm. This is understandable since they have experienced the most instances of harassment as indicated by this study. The implication for this finding is the need for more education of gender identity and issues regarding transgender students on campus. By bringing to light these issues the University should attempt to focus their energy to ensuring that this small yet important population has the same enjoyable experience as everyone else.

6.2 Limitations

While much was accomplished through the duration of this study, it did not come without obstacles. The main issues encountered included time constraint, sample size, lack of generalizability, use of dichotomies, sample framework, issues with survey formatting, and an issue with distribution interface.

Only having seven weeks to conduct a study on the holistic nature of campus climate is a difficult task. It should be noted that this seven week period spanned across final exam week for the Spring semester and the first week of the Summer semester. Both are very hectic times for students and instructors alike and had the potential to influence a lack of participation from both parties.

One of the most significant limitations of this study is the limited number of respondents. The limited amount of participation may be due to the small scale of the distribution as well as a lack in student interest; students may not be interested in participating in a survey that they feel has no relevance to their life. Conducting the study as a single person without the backing of the University or the resources to encourage more participation meant that this study had limited access to reach students. The small number of participants will also perpetuate the lack of generalizability.

The small number is only one reason why this study may not be generalizable to the entire student population. The fact that nearly half of the respondents in my sample identified their sexual orientation as something other than heterosexual means that there is an overrepresentation of LGB students. However, while this fact limits the overall generalizability of the study, it does demonstrate the important of, and interest in, this topic to the LGBT population.

Another ramification for having a small pool of respondents is the need to recombine student populations into a group that should be looked at individually. For example, those in the LGBQQAO had to be combined into a single category even though a separate analysis for bisexual students when compared to lesbian or gay students would be beneficial for analysis purposes. But due to such small numbers, additional statistical analysis would be inaccurate and inappropriate. So while the deconstruction of binaries is desired, such dichotomies had to be constructed and utilized for the duration of this study.

When recruiting students through classes, this study attempted to focus on classes that met the FKL requirements. However, because most natural science classes are large, survey classes, little to no representation of them appear in the sampling framework. This study had a limited number of students that could be contacted and I made an executive decision to distribute the survey to a higher number of smaller classes within the social sciences rather than a few large classes within the natural sciences. So while students of every major may be represented in an FKL class, this survey was not able to capture the data for students who attended natural science classes.

While the composition of the survey attempted to include all aspects of students' experience on campus there was a limitation in the survey format. Because the researcher was unable to fit the survey with "Other" answers that were accompanied by open ended box to allow for student input, information could have been lost. In the future, acquisition of such a box should be applied to the survey to ensure that students' words can be obtained on all questions. When addressing non-normative and fluid topics such as sexual orientation and gender identity, only allowing students the ability to answer questions with pre-set options is inadequate.

Though an unforeseen obstacle, distributing the survey by email made it difficult for instructors to transpose it onto Canvas. Near the end of the first distribution cycle one instructor notified me of the challenge sending them an email posed. Because an instructor's primary form of contact to their students is through the Canvas messaging system, they would have to go through extra steps to distribute an email sent through the Gmail system among their students. Unfortunately, being neither a student in their class nor in an organization they are a part of, Gmail was the only option available. Reflecting upon this now, this obstacle may have discouraged some instructors from agreeing to participate.

6.3 Considerations for Further Research

While lacking some degree of generalizability, this research demonstrates that the University has a compelling interest in assessing its student populations. Climate research in the future should seek institutional support and attempt to give incentives to student organizations to encourage members to participate. Many may disregard participation because they do not perceive such topics as being relevant to them. It should be the institution's vision to educate students on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity and instill a sense of responsibility to the student in the dominant, majority populations (i.e. white, cisgender, heterosexual). By continuing to develop an understanding of the LGBT student population, integrating LGBT knowledge into the curriculum, and producing LGBT specific resources, the University can begin breaking down the acceptance of heteronormativity within the student culture and institution at large.

The University should consider this study the tip of an iceberg when attempting to understand students' perceptions of campus climate. More systematic and intersectional research should be conducted on campus to determine the how varying student populations interpret

everyday life on their college campus. This research should be conducted thoroughly and regularly.

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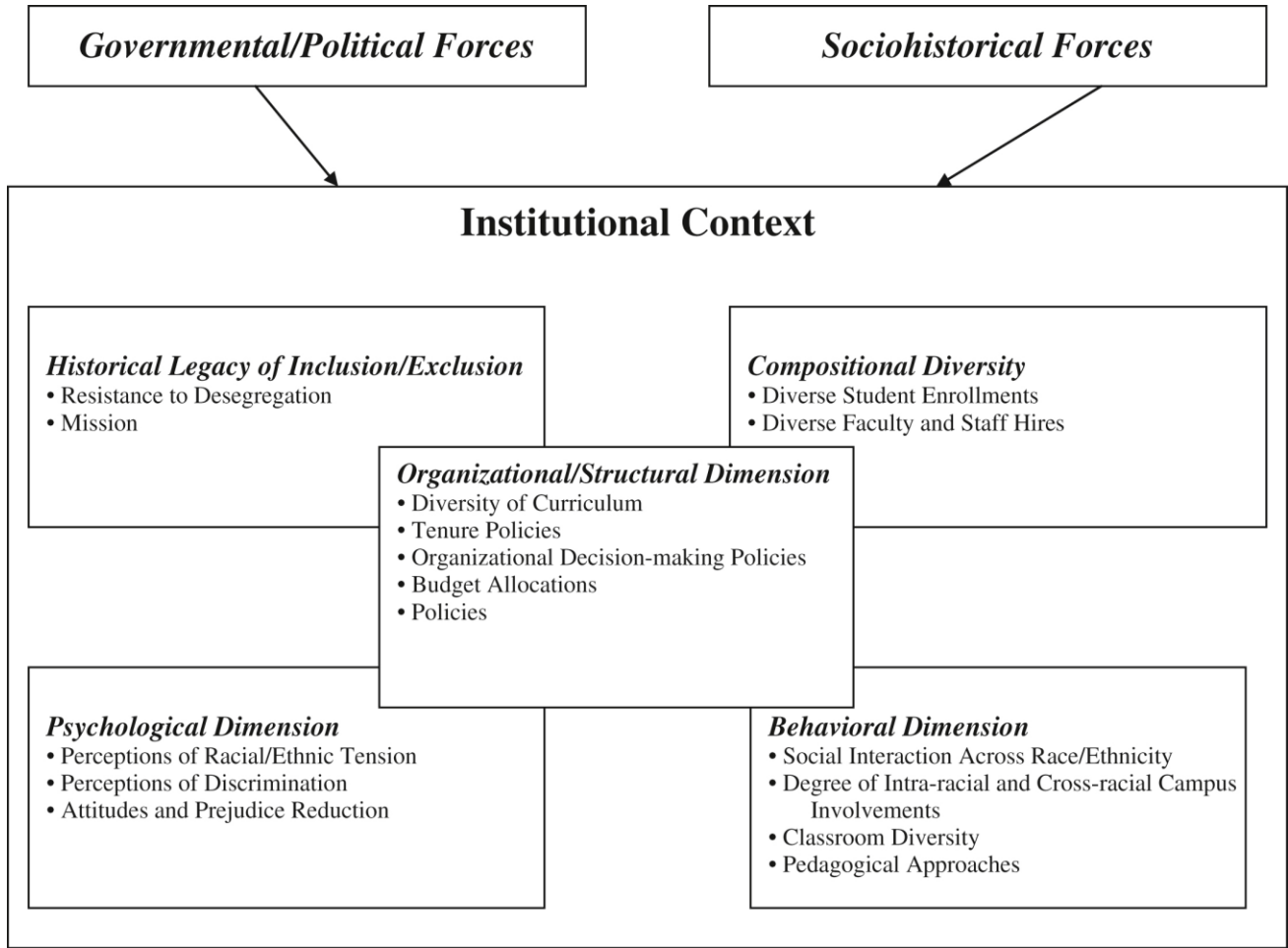
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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Campus Climate Framework



Appendix B. Question-Framework Correlation Chart

Question-Dimension Correlation Chart	
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you Identify as (mark any that apply): (gender) • Do you identify as: (sexual orientation) • Do you identify as: (race) • What is your academic standing at the University of South Florida? • What College is your major in?
Historical Legacy of Inclusion/ Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have there been events on campus that have made you feel welcomed on campus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If yes, what events? • Have there been events on campus that have made you feel unwelcomed on campus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If yes, what events?
Compositional Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, it is easy at USF to get to know people of different sexual orientations (which may include lesbian, gay, heterosexual, and bisexual). • In general, it is easy at USF to get to know people of different genders (which may include gender queer, transgender, and intersex). • USF provides opportunities that promote better understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.
Psychological Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USF provides as environment for the free and open expression of ideas and opinions. • I would recommend USF to friends looking for a school environment that is welcoming of people of diverse sexual orientations and/or gender identities. • How often during the past year at USF have you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ...felt comfortable discussing your sexual orientation on campus? ○ ...felt you needed to minimize an aspect of your sexual orientation to be able to fit in? ○ ...felt isolated of left out when work was required in groups because of your sexual orientation? ○ ...felt left out of a social event or activity because of your sexual orientation? ○ ...felt the USF environment helped affirm your sexual orientation? • How often during the past year at USF have you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ...felt comfortable discussing your gender identity on campus?

**Psychological Dimension
(cont.)**

- ...felt you needed to minimize an aspect of your gender identity to be able to fit in?
- ...felt isolated or left out when work was required in groups because of your gender identity?
- ...felt left out of a social event or activity because of your gender identity?
- ...felt the USF environment helped affirm your gender identity?
- Did concerns about your sexual orientation play into your decision to join student clubs and organizations?
- Did concerns about your sexual orientation play into your decision to not join student clubs and organizations?
- Did concerns about your gender identity play into your decision to join student clubs and organizations?
- Did concerns about your gender identity play into your decision to not join student clubs and organizations?
- How accepting and welcoming were student clubs and organizations to your sexual orientation?
- How accepting and welcoming were student clubs and organizations to your gender identity?
- How often during the past year at USF have you:
 - ...felt that you were expected to speak on behalf of all lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals?
 - ...feared for your personal safety because of your sexual orientation?
- How often during the past year at USF have you:
 - ...felt that you were expected to speak on behalf of all transgender individuals?
 - ...feared for your personal safety because of your gender identity?
- Select locations where you feel uncomfortable or unsafe expressing your sexual orientation (mark any that apply)
- Select locations where you feel uncomfortable or unsafe expressing your gender identity (mark any that apply)
- Have you ever considered transferring or leaving USF because of your experiences of feeling unsafe or unwelcome?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How safe, comfortable, and respected do you feel reaching out to these campus resources for issues or information related to sexual orientation? • How safe, comfortable, and respected do you feel reaching out to these campus resources for issues or information related to gender identity?
<p>Behavioral Dimension</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am an ally (supporter) to lesbian, gay, and bisexual identified individuals. • I am an ally (supporter) to transgender identified individuals. • Have you personally ever been the target of harassment at USF? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How many times? ○ Was the aggressor a student? ○ Have you reported it? ○ Where did it happen? • How often during the past year at USF have you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ...avoided disclosing your sexual orientation due to fear of negative consequences? ○ ...had a student challenge or attempt to embarrass you because of your sexual orientation? ○ ...had to conceal your sexual orientation to avoid intimidation? ○ ...experienced some other form of discrimination because of your sexual orientation? • How often during the past year at USF have you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ...avoided disclosing your gender identity due to fear of negative consequences? ○ ...had a student challenge or attempt to embarrass you because of your gender identity? ○ ...had to conceal your gender identity to avoid intimidation? ○ ...experienced some other form of discrimination because of your gender identity? • Please indicate the number of times within the last year you have heard an insensitive or disparaging remark about lesbian, gay, and bisexual identified persons by... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ...a student. ○ ...a faculty member or teaching assistant. ○ ...a staff member.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please indicate the number of times within the last year you have heard an insensitive or disparaging remark about transgender identified persons by... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ...a student. ○ ...a faculty member or teaching assistant. ○ ...a staff member.
<p>Organizational/Structural Dimension</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USF is a diverse campus environment where differences are respected and appreciated. • USF prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and pluralistic society. • The USF student body could benefit from (mark all that apply) • Do you have any suggestions for how USF could improve the campus climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students?

Appendix C. Survey

Do you identify as (mark any that apply):

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Queer
- Questioning
- Asexual
- Straight
- LGBTQ Ally
- Other

Do you identify as (mark any that apply):

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Genderqueer
- Intersex
- Other

Do you identify as (mark any that apply):

- White
- Black
- Hispanic/Latina
- Asian
- Middle Eastern
- American Indian
- Multiracial
- Other

What is your academic standing at the University of South Florida?

- First year
- Second year
- Third year
- Fourth year
- Fifth year and up
- Graduate (Masters or PhD)

Which College do you study in?

- College of Arts and Sciences
- Behavioral and Community Sciences
- College of Business
- College of Education
- College of Engineering
- College of Global Sustainability
- College of Marine Science
- College of Medicine
- College of Nursing
- College of Pharmacy
- College of Public Health
- College of the Arts
- Prefer not to respond

Social Factors Section

USF is a diverse campus environment where differences are respected and appreciated.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

USF prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and pluralistic society.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

USF provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas and opinions.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

In general, it is easy at USF to get to know people of different sexual orientations (which may include lesbian, gay, and bisexual).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

In general, it is easy at USF to get to know people of different gender identities (which may include genderqueer, transgender, and intersex).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

USF provides opportunities that promote better understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I would recommend USF to friends looking for a school environment that is welcoming of people of diverse sexual orientations and/or gender identities.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I am an ally (supporter) to lesbian, gay, and bisexual identified individuals.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I am an ally (supporter) to transgender identified individuals.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

How often during the past year at USF have you:
.....felt the USF environment helped affirm your sexual orientation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

Not Applicable

.....felt the USF environment helped affirm your gender identity?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt comfortable discussing your sexual orientation while on campus?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt comfortable discussing your gender identity while on campus?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt you needed to minimize an aspect of your sexual orientation to be able to fit in?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt you needed to minimize an aspect of your gender identity to be able to fit in?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt isolated or left out when work was required in groups because of your sexual orientation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes

- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt isolated or left out when work was required in groups because of your gender identity?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt left out of a social event or activity because of your sexual orientation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....felt left out of a social event or activity because of your gender identity?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

Have you ever been involved with student clubs or organizations?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever been involved with any LGBTQ clubs or organizations?

- Yes
- No

Did concerns about your sexual orientation and/or gender identity play into your decision to join student clubs and organizations?

- Yes
- No

How accepting and welcoming were student clubs and organizations to your sexual orientation and/or gender identity? (1 = hostile, 5 = totally accepting)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Discrimination Section

Have you personally ever been the target of harassment at USF?

- Yes
- No

(If yes continue to following questions)

How many times?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+

Was the aggressor a student?

- Yes
- No

Have you reported it?

- Yes always
- Yes, some of the time
- No never

Where did it happen? (mark any)

- Dorm/residence hall
- Classroom
- Other university space
- Off campus housing
- Other

How often during the past year at USF have you:

.....avoided disclosing your sexual orientation due to fear of negative consequences?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often

- Always
- Not Applicable

....avoided disclosing your gender identity due to fear of negative consequences?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

....felt that you were expected to speak on behalf of all gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

....felt that you were expected to speak on behalf of all transgender individuals?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

....had a student challenge or attempt to embarrass you because of your sexual orientation

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

....had a student challenge or attempt to embarrass you because of your gender identity?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

....had to conceal your sexual orientation to avoid intimidation?

- Never
- Rarely

- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

...had to conceal your gender identity to avoid intimidation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

....feared for your personal safety because of your sexual orientation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....feared for your personal safety because of your gender identity?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

....experienced some other form of discrimination because of your sexual orientation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

.....experienced some other form of discrimination because of your gender identity?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always
- Not Applicable

If applicable, select locations where you feel uncomfortable or unsafe expressing your sexual orientation and/or gender identity:

- Classroom
- Work
- Residence hall
- Around students you don't know
- Around your professors
- Around staff/administrators
- Around friends

If applicable, select locations where you feel uncomfortable or unsafe expressing your gender identity:

- Classroom
- Work
- Residence hall
- Around students you don't know
- Around your professors
- Around staff/administrators
- Around friends

Have you ever consider transferring or leaving USF because of your experiences?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate the number of times within the last year you have heard a student make an insensitive or disparaging remark about LGBT identified persons?

- 0 3
- 1 4
- 2 5+

Please indicate the number of times within the last year you have heard a faculty member or teaching assistant make an insensitive or disparaging remark about LGBT identified persons?

- 0 2
- 3 4
- 1 5+

Please indicate the number of times within the last year you have heard a staff member make an insensitive or disparaging remark about LGBT identified persons?

- 0 3
- 1 4
- 2 5+

Environment Section

How safe, comfortable, and respected do you feel reaching out to these campus resources for

things related to sexual orientation?

Rank: Not at all / A Little / Somewhat / Mostly / Completely / N/A

- Student Health Services
- University Police
- Counseling Center
- Campus Ministries
- Faculty advisor
- Office of Resident Life
- Your RA
- Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Student Affairs
- LGBT clubs and orgs
- Department Chair/Director

In this next section please consider social, academic, ministry, etc. events that were put on by a social organization or the University when answering the following questions:

- Have there been events on campus that have made you feel welcomed on campus?

Yes

No

(Open ended question)

- Have there been events on campus that have made you feel unwelcomed on campus?

Yes

No

(Open ended question)

Suggestions Section

The USF student body could benefit from (select all that apply):

- LGBT counseling resources
- Gender-neutral housing
- Expansion on safe zone and ally programs
- An LGBTQ center on Campus
- No additional resources are needed
- Prefer not to respond

Do you have any suggestions for how USF could improve the campus climate for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people?

(Open ended question)

Resources:

Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention (USF) at (813) 974 - 5757

GLBT National Hotline at 1-888-843-4564

GLBT Helpline at 1-800-786-2929

Trevor Lifeline at 866-488-7386

Appendix D. Sampling Framework Spreadsheet

Student Organizations				
Name of Organization	Approx. Number of Student Members	Initial Email send date	Reminder Email	Notes
PRIDE Alliance	198	4/11/2014	4/23/2014; 5/20/2014	Agreed to distribute
LGBT Medical Society	21	4/18/2014	4/23/2014	no response
Pre - Med AMSA	55	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
TSU : Transgender Student Union	24	4/11/2014	4/23/2014; 5/20/2014	Agreed to distribute
TWLOHA - USF Chapter	50	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
Women's Rugby	39	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
BSU	180	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
LASA	187	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
Biology Club	275	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
Boricua Student Association	46	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
Bulls Out For Business	19	4/15/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response
National Society of Collegiate Scholars	119	4/11/2014	4/17/2014; 4/23/2014	no response

Spring Classes				
FKL	Name of Course	Prefix	Approx. Number of Students	Notes
Social and Behavioral Sciences Gen Ed - ALAMEA Perspectives Gen Ed - Social Sciences	Intro to WST	WST 3015	86	Agreed to distribute
Gordon Rule 6A Communications Social and Behavioral Sciences Gen Ed - ALAMEA Perspectives	Intro to the Black Experience	AFA 2000	74	Agreed to distribute
Social and Behavioral Sciences Gen Ed - Social Sciences	Intro to Psych Science	PSY 2012	276	No response
			204	
Social and Behavioral Sciences Gen Ed - Social Sciences	Intro to Sociology	SYG 2000	54	Agreed to distribute
Social and Behavioral Sciences Gen Ed - Social Sciences	Human Sexual Behavior	WST 2600	150	no response
Capstone Gordon Rule 6A Communications Exit Rqrmnts Literature/Writng	Film and Culture	ENG 4674	193	Denied distribution request.

Exit Requirements Major Works Writing Intensive				
Human/Diversity & Global Gen Ed - ALAMEA Perspectives Gen Ed - Historical Persp Historical Context and Process	Latin American Civilization	LAH 2020	97	no response
N/A	Gay/Lesbian US History	HIS 3930	25	Agreed to distribute
Humanities Gen Ed - Historical Persp Gen Ed - Social Sciences	Culture Study of Pop Music	HUM 2522	47	Agreed to distribute
N/A	Comm/Gender/Identity	COM 3014	27	Agreed to distribute
Human/Diversity & Global Gen Ed - Historical Persp Gen Ed - Social Sciences Historical Context and Process	Intro to World Religions	REL 2300	69	no response
Humanities Gen Ed - Historical Persp Gen Ed - Social Sciences Historical Context and Process	Intro to Ethics	PHI 1600	118	no response
Capstone Exit Requirements Major Works	Science & Society	HUM 4938	106	Denied distribution request.
Social and Behavioral Sciences	Politics of Women's Health	WST 4320	35	no response

Social and Behavioral Sciences Gen Ed - ALAMEA Perspectives Gen Ed - Social Sciences	Intro to WST	WST 3015	110	Agreed to distribute
Gordon Rule 6A Communications Exit Rqrmnts Literature/Writng Writing Intensive	Lit by Women of Color in Diasp	WST 4252	22	Agreed to distribute

Summer Classes				
FKL	Name of Course	Prefix	Approx. Number of Students	Notes
Gordon Rule 6A Communications Social and Behavioral Sciences Gen Ed - ALAMEA Perspectives	Intro to the Black Experience	AFA 2000	149	No response
Humanities Gen Ed - Historical Persp Historical Context and Process	The Female Experience in America	WST 2250	110	Agreed to distribute
Social and Behavioral Sciences	Politics of Women's Health	WST 4320	9	No response
NS Life Science Exit Requirements Major Works	Women, Environment, and Gender	WST 3324	110	Agreed to distribute
N/A	Gender and Society	SYD 4800 (crosslisted with WST)	18	Agreed to distribute
N/A	Queer Film and TV	WST 4930	23	Agreed to distribute

Appendix E. Class Distribution Email

Hello ___Instructor Name___,

My name is Aubrey Hall and I am a second year Masters student in the Women's and Gender Studies department. I am conducting research (Pro00015963) as part of my graduation requirements and would appreciate your assistance.

I am looking for participants to take part in a brief (10 – 15 minutes) online survey. The purpose of this survey is to assess the campus climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students. All students are eligible to take this survey. I am interested in students of all sexualities, genders, and disciplines to respond.

The benefits of participating include the opportunity to contribute knowledge of student experiences on campus, insight into how students are affected by their campus, as well as allowing students' voices to be recognized on issues related to LGBT experiences on campus. In addition, students have the opportunity to opt-in to a drawing for one of five \$20.00 Visa gift cards. After I have finished data collection, I will conduct the drawing and will provide you with more detailed information about the research findings.

I also want potential participants to acknowledge potential risks or discomforts that maybe initiated by participation. While this research is considered to be minimal risk, it is possible that discussing personal experiences may induce feelings that range from mild discomfort to significant distress. If students experience any discomfort during the survey please contact the University's Counseling Center at [813-974-2831](tel:813-974-2831).

All information shared will remain confidential. Students' participation is voluntary and if they wish to discontinue their participation they may simply leave the website at any time. Additional information can be found on the Participant Info Sheet attached to this email.

Please forward this information and the link to this survey to the students in your class(es). To complete the survey, please click on the following link: http://usf.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_aWNo22PAM4utE8J

Your participation is appreciated!

Thank you and have a wonderful day.

Aubrey Hall

University of South Florida
ahall4@mail.usf.edu

Appendix F. Class Distribution Email

Hello ___President Name___,

My name is Aubrey Hall and I am a second year Masters student in the Women's and Gender Studies department. I am conducting research (Pro00015963) as part of my graduation requirements and would appreciate your assistance.

I am looking for participants to take part in a brief (10 – 15 minutes) online survey. The purpose of this survey is to assess the campus climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students. All students are eligible to take this survey. I am interested in students of all sexualities, genders, and disciplines to respond.

The benefits of participating include the opportunity to contribute knowledge of student experiences on campus, insight into how your campus has affected you, as well as allowing your voice to be recognized on issues related to LGBT experiences on campus. In addition, participants have the opportunity to opt-in to a drawing for one of three \$20.00 Visa gift cards. After I have finished data collection, I will conduct the drawing and will provide you with more detailed information about the research findings.

I also want potential participants to acknowledge potential risks or discomforts that maybe initiated by participation. While this research is considered to be minimal risk, it is possible that discussing personal experiences may induce feelings that range from mild discomfort to significant distress. If you experience any discomfort during the survey please contact the University's Counseling Center at [813-974-2831](tel:813-974-2831).

All information shared will remain confidential. Your participation is voluntary and if you wish to discontinue your participation you may simply leave the website at any time. Additional information can be found on Participant Info Sheet attached to this email.

Please forward this information and the link to this survey to the members in your organization. To complete the survey, please click on the following link: http://usf.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_aWNo22PAM4utE8J

Your participation is appreciated!

Thank you and have a wonderful day.

Aubrey Hall

University of South Florida
ahall4@mail.usf.edu

Appendix G. Participation Information Sheet

Incredi-bull-ly Inclusive? Determining the Climate for LGBT Students on a College Campus

Purpose of Study:

This is a study being conducted by Aubrey Hall, graduate student at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. The purpose of this study is to determine the degree of inclusivity of, and campus climate for, LGBT students on campus.

What will be done:

You will complete a survey, which will take 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey includes questions about your experiences in, and perceptions of, the University campus. This will include questions related to inclusion and discrimination, as well as attitudes about sexual orientation and gender identity. We also will ask for some demographic information (i.e., race, year in school, academic department, etc.) so further analysis can be conducted.

Benefits of this Study:

You will not receive any direct benefit from participating in this study. However, if you choose to take the survey you will be contributing to knowledge about your experiences on campus, insight into you're your campus has affected you, as well as allowing your voice to be recognized on issues related to LGBT experiences on campus.

Compensation

Participates will have the option to voluntarily enter their email address at the end of the survey to opt-in to a drawing for one of three \$20.00 Visa gift cards. After researchers have finished data collection, the drawing will be conducted. At the close of the survey, the email addresses of those who completed the survey and opted in for the drawing will be put into a randomized generator and winners will be selected. Email addresses and survey response will not be connected. They will be notified via email address and will be instructed to obtain gift at the front desk in the Women's and Gender Studies department. Gift card will be placed in an envelope with only email address as identifier. Front desk staff, who has no prior knowledge of research, will be instructed to distribute gift cards after verifying only email address of student

Risks or discomforts:

This research is considered to be minimal risk. Discussing experiences may induce feelings that range from mild discomfort to intense distress for participants. If this is experienced during the survey please contact the University's Counseling Center at 813-974-2831. Other local resources – especially for LGBT individuals who may need specialized assistance – can contact the following resources:

Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention (USF) at (813) 974 - 5757

GLBT National Hotline at 1-888-843-4564

GLBT Helpline at 1-800-786-2929

Trevor Lifeline at 866-488-7386

Confidentiality:

Your response will be kept completely confidential. We will NOT know your IP address when you respond to the Internet survey. We will ask you to include an e-mail address when you complete the Internet survey so opt- in to the drawing for the gift certificate. However, your e-mail address will not be stored with data from your survey. Instead, you will be assigned a participant number, and only the participant number will appear with your survey responses and weblog entries. Only the researchers will see your individual survey responses. The e-mail addresses will be stored electronically in a password protected folder; a hard copy will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. After we have finished data collection and have sent you a copy of the results of the study, we will destroy the list of participants' e-mail addresses.

Decision to quit at any time:

Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation from this study at any time. If you wish to discontinue your participation simply leave the website. If you do not click on the "submit" button at the close of the survey your answers and participation will not be kept on record. You may also choose to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

How the findings will be used:

The findings of this study will be used strictly for scholarly purposes. The results from the study will be presented in educational settings and at professional conferences. The results may be published in a professional journal in the field of education or women's and gender studies.

Contact information:

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Aubrey Hall at ahall4@mail.usf.edu or the University of South Florida Research Review Committee chairperson, Dr. Michelle Hughes-Miller as hughesmiller@usf.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638.

By beginning the survey, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this research, you are at least 18 years of age or older, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty.

Appendix H. Institutional Review Board Approval Letter



RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799
(813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-7091

4/7/2014

Aubrey Hall, BA
Women's & Gender Studies
4202 East Fowler Ave, CMC 202
Tampa, FL 33620

RE: Expedited Approval for Initial Review

IRB#: Pro00015963

Title: Incredi-bull-ly Inclusive?: Assessing the Climate for LGBT Students on a College Campus

Study Approval Period: 3/31/2014 to 3/31/2015

Dear Ms. Hall:

On 3/31/2014, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and **APPROVED** the above application and all documents outlined below.

Approved Item(s):

Protocol Document(s):

[FINAL Protocol V2](#)

Consent/Assent Document(s):

[Participation Info Sheet V2](#)

Your study qualifies for a waiver of the requirements for the documentation of informed consent as outlined in the federal regulations at 45CFR46.117(c) which states that an IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed consent form for some or all subjects.

It was the determination of the IRB that your study qualified for expedited review which includes activities that (1) present no more than minimal risk to human subjects, and (2) involve only procedures listed in one or more of the categories outlined below. The IRB may review research through the expedited review procedure authorized by 45CFR46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. The research proposed in this study is categorized under the following expedited review category:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval by an amendment.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John A. Schinka, Ph.D.".

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board