

Office of the Provost

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LGBTQ+ GUIDE



Resources to Foster an Affirming Community for
LGBTQ+ Faculty, Students, and Staff

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Dedication to Marcellus Blount



We dedicate this LGBTQ+ resource guide to the memory of our beloved colleague and friend Marcellus Blount. Marcellus was a tireless advocate for LGBT curricula, for LGBTQ+ hires across the college, and for the importance of the activism for which the acronym LGBTQ+ stood. He was on the front lines for struggles for racial justice at Columbia, he was a part of the surge of activism that responded to the AIDS crisis, and he learned how to work within the University to change its composition, its goals, and its framing of knowledge. In his work, in his teaching, and in the sheer energy of his presence on campus, Marcellus created the conditions for the work that this guide charts and celebrates. We hope this guide can stand as a testament to Marcellus's legacy.

Jack Halberstam

Professor of English and Comparative Literature

Director of the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality

“I want to recognize—and I hope the guide that you’re compiling can recognize—the work that Marcellus Blount put in and the risk that he took to be the public face of LGBT studies on this campus alone for a very long time.”

—Senior faculty member, Morningside

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank the faculty, staff, and students who participated in interviews and focus groups, as well as Ted Gregory, Director of Diversity Initiatives and Talent Retention, who conducted the faculty and staff interviews. Additional thanks to the faculty and staff who contributed summaries of Columbia's LGBTQ+ history, scholarship, and advocacy. We appreciate the guidance provided by the LGBTQ+ Guide Working Group and the Provost's Advisory Council for the Enhancement of Faculty Diversity. Thanks to all who gave feedback and who submitted resources, including the Diversity Officers Work Group and the Queer and Trans Advisory Board (QTAB), facilitated by Vanessa Gonzalez-Siegel, Associate Director of Multicultural Affairs and LGBTQ Outreach from Undergraduate Student Life.

This guide is the result of the tireless efforts of Walter Bockting, whose leadership inspired and propelled this work, and who drafted much of its content. Finally, we thank Adina Berrios Brooks, Assistant Provost for Faculty Advancement, and Jennifer Leach, Assistant Director for Faculty Advancement, for project management and research support.

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INTRODUCTION



This guide has seven sections; additional content and an updated listing of resources can be found in the online Appendix.

Following this Introduction, [Section 1](#) provides definitions of the evolving language LGBTQ+¹ people use to describe their lived experiences, along with tips to put this language into practice. [Section 2](#) presents highlights of our historical roots at Columbia, the activism of the pioneers on whose shoulders we stand, and an overview of what we know about the LGBTQ+ community at Columbia today. Across the University, Teachers College, and Barnard, LGBTQ+ scholarship is thriving; [Section 3](#) features a number of activity hubs as an illustration, not meant to be an exhaustive description but rather some examples to inspire you. [Section 4](#) presents highlights of the progress that has been made in LGBTQ+ rights over the last 70 years, reviews Columbia policies relevant to LGBTQ+ equity and inclusion, and points toward the need for further policy development. [Section 5](#), Climate and Well-Being, synthesizes interviews we conducted with faculty, students, and staff to inform this guide. These conversations revealed that, although Columbia is a great place to work for LGBTQ+ individuals, experiences of climate and community vary, and sustained efforts are needed to optimize well-being. Mentorship and support from leadership and peers are key for progress toward that goal. [Section 6](#) stresses the importance of recruitment, retention, and advancement of LGBTQ+ faculty and scholars in order to strengthen Columbia's LGBTQ+ community. We share some of the successes to date and provide strategies for the enhancement of diversity and inclusion in all corners of our institution. Finally, in [Section 7](#), we stress the importance of going beyond inclusion and address the challenges LGBTQ+ face in the larger context of intersecting oppressions and the need for effecting broader social and racial justice for all.

We owe much gratitude to Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement Dennis A. Mitchell for his support for this project. Please join us in carrying the work forward!

[Walter Bockting, PhD](#)

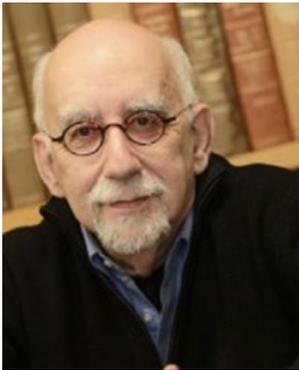
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1. For consistency, we use the acronym LGBTQ+ throughout this guide as an all-inclusive term.

LETTER FROM THE PROVOST



Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to introduce the *Columbia University LGBTQ+ Guide: Resources to Foster an Affirming Community for LGBTQ+ Faculty, Students, and Staff*, an extension of the Office of the Provost's ongoing work to strengthen inclusive excellence across the University. This resource was developed under the leadership of Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement Dennis Mitchell and the Provost's Advisory Council for the Enhancement of Faculty Diversity, a group created with the conviction that an inclusive environment is critical to achieve our highest ideals of research, teaching, and engagement in the larger world.

This is the fifth volume in a growing library of guides Vice Provost Mitchell's team has developed to improve the Columbia climate: the *Guide to Best Practices for Departmental Climate* (2019), which was quickly followed by an addendum, *Best Practices For Inclusive Remote Work in the Academy* (2020); the *Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Retention* (2018); the *Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Mentoring* (2016); and the *Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Search and Hiring* (2014).

This guide addresses issues of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, and follows on the Office of the Provost's initiative launched in 2016 to recruit faculty in the area of LGBTQ+ scholarship as part of the University's faculty diversity commitment. It is informed by academic literature as well as interviews with more than 40 Columbia faculty, students, and staff members. By offering resources and tools for action, we hope to help members of the University community better understand each other within the complex field of identities that inform our scholarly lives.

Doing so will help ensure that all members of our community, as well as those who will inherit the culture we create, can thrive at Columbia.

With best wishes,

[Ira Katznelson](#)

Interim Provost

Ruggles Professor of Political Science and History

LETTER FROM THE VICE PROVOST FOR FACULTY ADVANCEMENT



Dear Colleagues,

Columbia University attracts a diverse cadre of students, staff, and faculty, and we work to cultivate and sustain a campus climate where each member of our community can thrive. In our work in diversity, equity, and inclusion, we seek to combat systemic oppression, in all forms, when it manifests within our University community. For those who navigate intersectional identities, the academy can be particularly challenging. Therefore, an environment affirming of diversity in gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation is essential.

Since the student activism of the 1960s that led to the founding of the first campus organization of its kind, to the LGBTQ+ Scholarship Initiative, which welcomed an initial cohort of four scholars doing work in the area of LGBTQ+ research, Columbia has been a pioneer. Our LGBTQ+ faculty have made seminal contributions in medicine, public policy, law, journalism, history, and the arts, to name a few. We have much to celebrate, but there is more work to be done.

The task of compiling this guide was undertaken with much care over 12 months, with individual interviews with 16 faculty and 2 staff and focus groups totaling 11 graduate students and 7 undergraduate students. We heard accounts of frustration: in defending the legitimacy of one's scholarship, in microaggressions in classroom discussions, in confusing bureaucratic processes that misgender or misname, in policies with inflexible definitions of family, and in obtaining healthcare. We also heard stories of resilience, of determination, and of optimism, and learned of initiatives such as an onboarding guide for LGBTQ+ people of color in the Law School and Employee Resource Groups at the Medical Center.

In creating this guide, we seek to illuminate these stories, to create a living repository of campus resources, and to codify recommendations from our interviewees about how we can do better. We urge everyone at Columbia, regardless of role, career stage, or identity, to ask the question: *How can I be a better LGBTQ+ ally?* Departments and schools also have an important charge: to distribute this essential guide to all faculty, to incorporate it into onboarding and ongoing training, and to use the checklist on page 7 to inform future action. Through a coordinated, sustained effort, we can foster a more inclusive campus climate for LGBTQ+ members of our community, and by extension, for all who work and study at Columbia.

Finally, as this is a living document, we welcome your feedback. Please email us at facultyadvancement@columbia.edu with any suggestions, and visit our companion website for updates at www.provost.columbia.edu/content/lgbtq-resources.

Best,

[Dennis A. Mitchell, DDS, MPH](#)

Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement

Professor of Dental Medicine at CUIMC

CHECKLIST: OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

The following lists specific actions for University leaders, who have the opportunity to create meaningful change in the experience of LGBTQ+ members of our community. It concludes with a list of actions for all individuals; students, staff, and faculty alike can make meaningful contributions.

Actions for Leaders

STRUCTURAL/ADMINISTRATIVE

- Include LGBTQ+ issues in larger diversity initiatives**
- Improve data collection** regarding LGBTQ+ experiences through voluntary identification; review data and adjust practices and policies accordingly
- Improve assessment of gender identity, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation** on various forms (HR, student health, etc.), and provide options to decline to share this information
- Train faculty** on sexual and gender diversity
- Improve faculty interactions with students, staff, and their faculty peers** to improve campus climate and community and to provide role models for the pipeline into the field
- Publicly recognize** LGBTQ+ faculty, staff, and student contributions
- Include relevant LGBTQ+ resources** in orientation and onboarding activities and materials
- Create a centralized repository** for medical, legal, social, and financial information relevant to LGBTQ+ individuals' needs
- Provide safe venues for voicing ideas, opinions, and complaints**, including those related to LGBTQ+ diversity, equity, and inclusion
- In your diversity statements and commitments, **affirm your commitment to equity on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression**. In clinical practice environments, display the patient bill of rights that includes an antidiscrimination statement
- Ensure access to and visibility** of gender-inclusive restroom and locker facilities
- Display art, announcements, and visual and reading materials** that reflect LGBTQ+ people's identities and experiences

EVENTS/PROGRAMMING

- Organize faculty-driven and focused events to increase visibility** of diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, **including programming around LGBTQ+ people of color**; these events should also be targeted to non-LGBTQ+ faculty
- Encourage participation by faculty and students in Lavender graduation**, especially in Departments with fewer visible LGBTQ+ students and trainees

MENTORING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Create formal and informal mentorship opportunities** for junior faculty, students, and other trainees
- With the input of all members of the community, **plan informal meetings**, such as brown bag lunches, to provide opportunities for LGBTQ+ faculty, staff, students, and other trainees to connect
- **Provide** junior LGBTQ+ faculty **the opportunity to meet with department leaders**
- **Provide opportunities for professional networking** and collaboration with LGBTQ+ faculty from other Departments, Schools, and Institutions

WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION

- Familiarize yourself with and **advocate for flexible and accommodating policies** and practices that support LGBTQ+ faculty and staff and their families
- **Affirm the inclusion of same-gender and domestic partners** in support for dual-career faculty during and beyond the recruitment process
- **Encourage faculty to take advantage of tenure clock extension and modified duties** when the need arises, including and beyond extension and modified duties related to caregiving responsibilities

Actions for All

- **Model effective and supportive communication**, consistent with the principles of cultural competence and humility with regard to diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression
- **Model the inclusion of pronouns** in email signatures (see Appendix for example)
- **Display Safe Spaces icons or signage** in common areas or in private offices (see Appendix for example)
- **Be a visible digital ally** by posting Safe Spaces/Pride logos in your Zoom background and email signature (see Appendix for approved logos and examples of Zoom backgrounds)
- **Educate yourself** about LGBTQ+ topics without relying on LGBTQ+ individuals to do all the teaching
- **Apologize** if you inadvertently misgender someone; if you notice that a person is misgendering someone else, discreetly bring it to their attention
- **Incorporate LGBTQ+ researchers, authors, and vignettes** into your curriculum
- **Do not make assumptions** about anyone's sexual orientation and/or gender identity; rely on self-identification and respect confidentiality and the right to self-disclosure

SECTION 1: TERMINOLOGY

1.1: DEFINITION OF TERMS

When it comes to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, it is important to have an understanding of basic terms. As language evolves over time, these terms do as well. This list was adapted from the Office of Multicultural Affairs for their Safe Zone Training. For a complete listing of updated terminology, as well as tips on how to effectively approach conversations about sexual and gender diversity, see the Appendix. Source: [The Ally's Guide to Terminology](#), published by GLAAD.

Note: For consistency, we use the acronym LGBTQ+ throughout this guide as an all-inclusive term.

Asexual: An umbrella term used to encompass identities for people who do not experience sexual and/or romantic attraction. **Aromantic** is another term to apply to the latter.

Bisexual/Pansexual: An identity for people who are sexually and/or emotionally attracted to men and/or women and/or individuals who fall outside of the gender binary. Usage of one term or the other may vary from person to person; some may use the terms interchangeably.

Cisgender: A person whose gender identity does not differ significantly from their sex assigned at birth.

Gay: An identity for people who identify as men or non-binary and who are sexually and/or emotionally attracted to men. This term may also be used as an umbrella term analogous to queer.

Gender-affirming medical interventions: Hormone therapy or surgery to affirm one's gender identity. This may include feminizing or masculinizing hormone therapy, chest/breast surgery, genital reconstructive surgery, and facial feminization surgery. Transgender and nonbinary individuals may or may not undergo one or more gender-affirming medical interventions.

Gender expression: A set of social and emotional traits, often influenced by societal expectations, that classify an individual as feminine, masculine, androgynous, etc.

Gender identity: Self-identification as boy/man, girl/woman, or other gender, such as gender nonbinary or genderqueer.

Gender nonbinary: An umbrella term used to describe gender identities that do not fit within the binary of boy/man, girl/woman. Some nonbinary individuals identify also as transgender; others do not.

Gender nonconforming: A term used by some to describe people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from what is typical or expected based on their sex assigned at birth and the gender binary.

Heterosexism: A term that applies to attitudes, bias, discrimination, and systemic forms of oppression that are in favor of heterosexual sexuality and relationships. It includes the presumption that everyone is or should be straight.

Homophobia: Refers to a fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or all LGBTQ people. This can be understood as a destructive force that prevents many LGBTQ people from securing safer, open, and equal lives.

Intersex: An umbrella term describing people born with internal and/or external sex characteristics that differ from what is typically male or female, also referred to as "difference of sex development."

Lesbian: An identity for people who identify as women or nonbinary and who are sexually and/or emotionally attracted to women.

Puberty suppression: Early medical intervention to halt feminization and masculinization during pubertal development using GnRH analogues.

Queer: Originally a derogatory slur, it has been reclaimed by some to be an inclusive term for those within the LGBTQ+ community. Some individuals claim this identity to recognize the fluidity of sexual attraction and gender identity.

Questioning: An identity for people who are uncertain of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Sex assigned at birth: Assignment as male, female, or a different sex at birth, typically based on the appearance of one's external genitalia.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs significantly from their sex assigned at birth.

Transition: Social and/or physical changes a transgender individual may make to affirm their gender identity.

Transphobia: Refers to a fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender, gender nonbinary, and nonconforming people. A destructive force that prevents members of these communities from securing safer, open, and equal lives.

1.2: PUTTING TERMINOLOGY INTO PRACTICE: PRONOUNS AND NAMES

“We can talk about pronouns, a lot, but that isn’t enough—not nearly enough—because allyship really isn’t one dimensional and it is an ongoing thing . . . implicit biases and a lot of other stuff bleed(s) into a classroom so I feel like . . . there needs to be more. But how to be really inclusive to all the people and not just like say things politically correctly?”

(Undergraduate student, Morningside)

A growing number of students, staff, and faculty identify as transgender or gender nonbinary. Many use gendered pronouns, such as she/her/hers or he/him/his, consistent with their binary (trans)gender identity. Some use gender-neutral or plural pronouns, such as they/them/theirs, consistent with their nonbinary gender identity. We often use pronouns without considering their meaning, but they are essential for promoting safety, respect, and care for others (Brown et al. 2020). Understanding the impact of pronouns helps us to interact with others without making assumptions and inadvertently inflicting harm on them.

- **Pronouns are not simply “preferred,” but necessary.** The phrase “preferred pronouns” suggests that it is optional to use someone’s pronouns. Therefore, simply refer to or ask what pronouns a person “uses” (instead of “prefers”). Pronouns can change based on context, name changes, or a person’s identity development or gender journey.
- **Pronouns should not be assumed.** It is acceptable to ask someone for their pronouns, especially during introductions. It can be inclusive to encourage others to share their pronouns in a group context, but it is important to not make sharing pronouns mandatory.
- **It is appropriate to use gender-inclusive terms** such as “everyone/all” (instead of ladies/gentlemen), “partner” (instead of boyfriend/husband and girlfriend/wife), “they” (instead of he/she), “folks” (instead of you guys/ladies), and “person” (instead of man/woman) in order to avoid assuming others’ gender identity and pronouns.
- **Adding your pronouns to email signatures or name tags** can show respect, allyship, and increase awareness about the importance of pronouns to affirm gender.

- If you notice that a person is misgendering someone else, **discreetly bring it to their attention.**

- **Avoid outing transgender students accidentally by mentioning their other/official name.** Sometimes faculty and staff know that there is a discrepancy between a person’s previous name (because it remains in official Columbia records) and the name they use in class.

(Adapted from *Celebrate Pronoun Diversity!* by the Sexual and Gender Minority (SGM) SIG of the Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies)

How do I ask someone for their pronouns?

While it may seem uncomfortable to ask someone for their pronouns, it is crucial to not assume their pronouns. If you do not know someone’s pronouns, it is recommended to use their name instead. You can simply ask, “What pronouns do you use?” to learn about their pronouns. You can also share your pronouns in your own introduction to model openness around gender diversity and to normalize sharing of pronouns.

How do I recover from mistakes?

Misgendering occurs when someone accidentally (or, rarely, intentionally) uses incorrect pronouns when referring to or addressing someone else. Misgendering is invalidating and may be experienced as dismissive and alienating. If you accidentally misgender someone, it is important to quickly apologize, correct yourself, and move on. Deliberately misgendering someone is considered a form of harassment, as defined in the *EOAA Discrimination Policies* (eoaa.columbia.edu).

Pronouns in Use and Chosen Names at Columbia

Columbia has resources for students who seek to change their name or register their pronouns. Students can now opt to list their pronouns in use in CourseWorks. The Office of University Life has created a guide called *Pronouns in Our Community*, which reviews pronouns and contains a glossary of terms.

The Office of the Registrar allows students to identify a [Preferred First and/or Middle Name](#) in addition to their Legal Name. Students may request this service through the University Registrar’s Office. For more information, visit <https://www.registrar.columbia.edu>.

To learn more about the use of pronouns, see the Resources section in the Appendix.

SECTION 2: LGBTQ+ AT COLUMBIA: THEN AND NOW

2.1: A BRIEF HISTORY OF LGBTQ+ ACTIVISM AT COLUMBIA

Note: These highlights are part of the known history, which has been recorded through books, University archives, oral histories, and interviews. As with any history, we must acknowledge the inherent privilege of the tellers, those whose stories are recorded and repeated.

In 1966, Columbia sophomore Stephen Donaldson (a pseudonym for Robert Martin) founded the Columbia Student Homophile League (today's Columbia Queer Alliance), the world's first queer organization on a university campus. Despite the administration's initial reservations, the University granted the club's charter in April 1967, and the story made the front page of the [New York Times](#) on May 3, 1967.

Though the group's initial membership was small, the members had the support of the University's chaplain, an Episcopal priest and antiwar activist named Reverend John Cannon. By 1970, weekly LGBT Friday night dances were held in Earl Hall. In 1971, students established a gay lounge in Furnald Hall, which is now known as the Stephen Donaldson Queer Lounge. Thanks to the advocacy of the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, led by Andrew Dolkart, Professor of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at Columbia, Earl Hall has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

In his oral history interview for the 2019 Columbia [Pride of Lions](#) project, History Professor David Eisenbach noted that the activism at Columbia began well before the Student Homophile League: "We have the famous examples in the 1940s of Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, the foundation of the Beat moment, which opened a whole

discussion in post-war America about sexuality. These students were nurtured by great professors like Lionel Trilling and Mark Van Doren . . . [Columbia had this] history of nurturing the rebel." For more information, please visit the [Columbia Libraries Columbia LGBT records, 1961-1990, bulk 1967-1989](#).



Pride of Lions front page, 1972.

Anke A. Ehrhardt



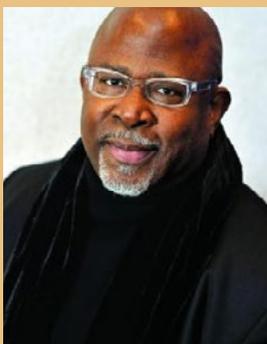
Anke A. Ehrhardt, Professor of Medical Psychology (in Psychiatry) Emerita and co-founder of the HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies and the Program for the Study of LGBT Health, joined Columbia's Department of Psychiatry in 1977. Her pioneering work on gender

and sexual development of children, adolescents, and adults started in 1964. She conducted some of the first clinical cohort studies of transgender individuals and set a standard for understanding the process of sexual differentiation. In 1987, she made history by receiving a major grant from NIMH for one of the first, large interdisciplinary research centers in the country to address the HIV pandemic. From the beginning, the Center's work included a focus on sex-positive and gender-sensitive interventions for LGBTQ+ youth and adults with multiple vulnerabilities (e.g., mental health, homelessness). From 2007 to 2018, Ehrhardt served as Psychiatry's Vice-Chair for Academic Affairs, strongly advocating for the recruitment and advancement of women and other underrepresented groups in academic medicine. Since 2012, Ehrhardt has led research and training efforts of the Program for the Study of LGBT Health (see Section 4), with projects on LGBTQ+ families and parenting, the effects of gender-affirming hormones on brain health, improving access to competent LGBTQ+ healthcare, and promoting equal opportunities for transgender people in the workplace.

In 1995, the group Proud Colors was created at Columbia to address the specific needs of queer students of color. <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/eye/2016/10/25/fitting-finding-place-columbias-lgbtq-scene/>

“Columbia has a lot of history of challenging things. [Columbia has been a pioneer in student organizing, for] both of these identities—in this case, me being Black and being gay. I think a lot of people at Columbia embrace such differences. You mention harassment, reporting, etcetera. I actually have nothing to report there. And that’s a great thing. I definitely appreciate being here. I realize how lucky many of us are to be part of Columbia. It can, you know, it can definitely get better. I think it’s great that the Provost’s office is thinking so progressively and proactively to provide guidance.” (Junior faculty member, Morningside)

Kendall Thomas



Kendall Thomas, Nash Professor of Law and co-founder of the Center for the Study of Law and Culture at Columbia Law School, joined its faculty in 1983 as the first out gay professor and the second African American faculty member. [In an interview](#) for the Columbia

Law School website, Thomas recalls that “the central and shaping reality of American legal culture for those of us in my generation who were gay or lesbian—whatever our race, ethnicity, or nationality—was the knowledge that we were entering the profession at a time when it was still a felony punishable with imprisonment in many places in the country to engage in consensual sexual intimacy with someone of the same sex.” Throughout his career as an activist during the AIDS epidemic, as a scholar and teacher in critical race theory, law and sexuality, and, most recently, as a performance artist, Professor Thomas has challenged traditional power structures and paved the way for the robust LGBTQ+ scholarship that exists at Columbia today.

This early activism and academic work of individuals like Professors Ehrhardt, Thomas, and Blount planted the seeds for the LGBTQ+ Scholarship Initiative (see Section 6.2) and many of Columbia LGBTQ+-related contributions to the academy (see Section 3).

For more information on LGBTQ+ history, see the Appendix.

2.2: COLUMBIA LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE

“I could not have imagined at the beginning of my career that in my 50s, people would ask me my pronoun preference or ask me how I describe myself in gender terms. Because back in the day, you had to really fight to get people to notice differences. We were all just lumped into a kind of LGBT without any recognition of what that might mean. The work of transgender politics in recent years has been to really educate people about what young people call nonbinary identification or identifications that do not simply fit into male, female, masculine, feminine boxes. I think that Columbia has made a good effort to try to have a lot of sensitivity to trans issues and that’s been really great.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

Faculty and Staff

Currently, we do not know how many Columbia faculty and staff identify as LGBTQ+. Data on their sexual orientation is not routinely collected, and information about gender is not collected in a way to reliably assess the number of transgender and nonbinary faculty and staff. What we do know is that an estimated 11.4–12.2 million US adults identify as LGBTQ+, including approximately 1.4 million transgender adults (Badgett et al. 2020). According to Gallup, the percentage of Americans identifying as LGBTQ+ has increased from 3.5 percent in 2012 to 4.5 percent in 2017, largely attributed to increasing numbers among the younger generation. Of the 1,521 respondents to the 2015–2016 Faculty Quality of Life Survey, 7 percent identified as LGBQ+; 85 percent identified as straight; and 8 percent did not disclose their sexual orientation identity. In addition, 0.4 percent of respondents identified as trans or gender nonbinary.

Visibility of LGBTQ+-identified faculty and staff varies considerably across Schools, Departments, and units at Columbia. In part, this may be related to the focus of scholarship; certain disciplines and interdisciplinary areas of focus may be more conducive than others to addressing issues of sexual and gender diversity in their teaching and research. It is critical to understand that, although their visibility may vary, LGBTQ+-identified faculty, staff, and students are present across the University in every discipline, school, department, and unit.

“I think this LGBTQ+ resource guide is a very symbolic gesture; it will help a community feel seen and represented. I would hope that the putting together of a guide also would be a nice catalyst for a way that members of this community can engage with one another.”

(Administrative staff, Morningside)

New York City provides a wealth of LGBTQ+ resources to members of the Columbia community. It is one of the reasons LGBTQ+-identified faculty, staff, and students want to work and study at Columbia.

“I can tell you that being in a big university in New York City is just such a pleasure, because there is a constant back and forth between the art museums, galleries . . . Almost nothing in virtual teaching and virtual online talks can make up for the loss of that organic intellectual community that was the consequence of this chemistry between a big diverse university and an exciting city.”
(Senior faculty member, Morningside)

Due to its sheer size and diversity of resources, the city can also be hard to navigate. Particularly LGBTQ+ people new to New York may benefit from help to find an entry point:

“New York City is a beast to navigate, and it’s so hard to build long-lasting relationships in the city because it’s so transient. It’s so big, it’s so fast, and so if you could be helpful and identify at least connections for people early at different points in their time at Columbia, that would make a difference, because it is hard. It’s not easy to build relationships in New York because it’s so fast-paced.” (Faculty member, Morningside)

At times, however, the rich resources of New York City (NYC) are taken for granted, leading some to conclude that, just by its NYC location, Columbia has the issues related to LGBTQ+ lives covered. Aside from local peer institutions that have their own resources, NYC resources do not necessarily address the specific needs of LGBTQ+ people in higher education, particularly for faculty. Columbia’s Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) has offered programming designed to respond to the needs of LGBTQ+ teaching faculty.

“We have had an affinity group for LGBTQ+ faculty, very highly attended. The room was packed and they were like, ‘there’s never anything like this.’ And I said, well, I’m so sorry to hear you say that. But I’m also glad to hear you say that because that’s what I thought, too.” (Columbia administrative staff, Morningside)

Beyond these efforts by the CTL, there is a broad need for LGBTQ+ faculty to connect with one another and engage in community, specifically at Columbia.

CUIMC Human Resources organizes Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), including one for LGBTQ+ employees who meet every month for networking, educational, and social opportunities. To learn more about the LGBTQ+ and other ERGs, please visit the CUIMC HR website: <https://www.cumc.columbia.edu/hr/working-at-cumc/staff-diversity-inclusion>.

Students and Trainees

“We didn’t have a club . . . so we just created one.” (Graduate student, Morningside)

Columbia students have created a number of LGBTQ+ student organizations. These include the [Columbia Queer Alliance](#) and the Medical Center’s [Queer and Ally Partnership](#). Nevertheless, in a number of settings across the University, opportunities for students—and trainees—to connect can be improved, particularly when it comes to connecting LGBTQ+ graduate students with undergraduates and to joining forces across schools on the Morningside campus. For students in schools with little visible LGBTQ+ representation, this is especially important. For an updated listing of LGBTQ+ student groups, please visit www.provost.columbia.edu/content/lgbtq-resources.

“But in my experience . . . [building a sense of community is] quite disparate; it seems like . . . something that’s left up to the students to patch together as friends, not really as a synthesized community. And that’s something that I’m not particularly thrilled with . . . [we need] spaces for people to gather—spaces for visibility. I think things like that could really help push LGBT life a little bit further on campus.” (Graduate student, Medical Center)

To inform this guide, we conducted focus groups with undergraduate and graduate students at both the Morningside and Medical Center campuses. Students stressed the following concerns:

1. Visibility and Community. Students agreed that campus resources need to be more easily accessible:

“A lot of this feels like it’s sort of built out of our own incentives, sort of outside of built spaces . . . and I think there are built spaces like QAP [Queer Allied Partnership] at VP&S, like Lambda [Health Alliance at CUIMC].”
(Graduate student, Medical Center)

“[It would be helpful] if there was even an initiative that identif[ies] faculty who were queer and trans affirming because I know in [some departments] you’re not going to find queer faculty, so maybe there are people who consider themselves to be allies.” (Graduate student, Morningside)

“All of the different resources that I did need because of my identities . . . I had to find separately. There wasn’t a centralized LGBT resource location I could look at. I had to find the medical information for insurance in one place, the information on social life in another place. I’d find all of these things in quite disparate locations.”
(Graduate student, Medical Center)



“We had Lynn Conway come and give a discussion, and with faculty at an [Office of the Provost–sponsored] luncheon. I think that was very helpful, and it was the first time that these issues had ever been talked about.”

(Senior faculty member, Morningside)

In 2016, Lynn Conway BS’62, MS’63 gave the Columbia Engineering annual Magill Lecture. Conway, Professor Emerita of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, is a pioneer of microelectronics chip design. Conway is also an early advocate for transgender people, having faced challenges in her career when she transitioned from male to female in 1968.

2. Mentorship. Having LGBTQ+ (or allied) mentors among the faculty had a powerful impact on students’ experience:

“At one of the introductions to med school there was an event that was hosted by [the Associate Dean for curriculum] . . . It was at his house, and we had an opportunity to just, like, feel like we were humans and we’re not like exclusively defined by or based off of the identifiers that we check off on a check box.” (Graduate student, Medical Center)

“Especially like within medical school, and within our medical training, the times that I felt most supported in this specific identity have been ones in which . . . there’s been a mentor.” (Graduate student, Medical Center)

“One thing that our student organization is trying to do is build an outlet for faculty who self-identify as LGBTQ to sign up to be mentors for students to try to build in that mentorship, but without [students] specifically [having to] seek it out.” (Graduate student, Medical Center)

“Queer representation [of] somebody successful in my field is currently impossible because they don’t exist above me.” (Graduate student, Morningside)

3. Financial Burden. LGBTQ+ students, who may not have emotional and material support from family for tuition, housing, or medical care, may face an additional financial burden:

“One of the biggest struggles that I see in the community . . . at an existential level, like, it’s financial; a lot of the members of the community . . . are not well-supported by their family . . . not only financially, but also emotionally . . . not only for health insurance, but also like shelter and food . . . I’m only supported by loans.” (Graduate student, Medical Center)

“I know as a trans person who’s trying to get healthcare that transitioning is really [expletive] expensive. And I think that’s not something that I could get my financial aid package increased for at all.” (Graduate student, Medical Center)

"[There is an additional challenge of] . . . being able to get an apartment in the city because you don't have a guarantor . . . that can weigh on mental health. And then, there aren't additional mental health resources. So I think really looking back at some of these determinants, even before we get to the point of health interactions, is really important, especially as far as financial support could be increased." (Graduate student, Medical Center)

"When we talk about creating community, that also includes sort of financial and material support. That's really the only way to start building a safe and strong community; [it] starts with the structural supports that are required." (Graduate student, Medical Center)

"I want that financial insecurity to be understood and to be known and for, like, the shakiness of the backgrounds of where some of us are coming from to be in the forefront of these conversations and not an affinity group conversation that happens after the real meeting, and I think that hearing people who are in leadership have those conversations in front of us and in public . . . they may be happening. But if we're not aware of it, we can't benefit from that work or . . . from knowing that that work is happening." (Graduate student, Morningside)

4. Intersectional Identities and Mental Health. Many LGBTQ+ students experience an additional emotional burden due to navigating intersectional identities in addition to their academic and professional responsibilities. Students on the Morningside campus indicated the need for more counselors able to speak to the queer experience, and given wait-times, a directory for referrals elsewhere:

"Removing that copay [for student mental health services] would be very helpful because . . . as most people know, queer people, especially people of color, . . . we don't have the same resources to get to outside medical help." (Graduate student, Morningside)

"I really appreciate that the visibility is there, that I can show myself and I show up with all of myself, but I do think that sometimes it does come with . . . this responsibility that can be a bit rough with everything else that I have to handle in life [as a first-generation student]."

(Graduate student, Morningside)

Key Resources for Students

For a complete listing, please see the Appendix.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) provides resources for students through LGBTQ @ Columbia (<https://www.cc-seas.columbia.edu/OMA/CULGBTQ>), with LGBTQ+ student group advising, events, education, advocacy, and other services and resources to help all students explore and better understand diverse queer and trans identities, experiences, and communities at Columbia and beyond. They organize the Queer and Trans Advisory Board and the Queer and Trans Resource Team. These collectives work together to identify and address LGBTQ+ community needs and advocacy points.



The Office of University Life and the **Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement** co-host a series of Graduate Initiative Roundtable panels with faculty members who share their experiences in higher education. Panels include LGBTQ+, First Gen, Women of Color, and Black and Latinx faculty. The primary audience is graduate students. For more information, please visit: <https://www.universitylife.columbia.edu/graduate-initiative>.

Columbia Pride: Columbia Alumni LGBTQ+ Shared Interest Group

Once students graduate, they have additional opportunities to connect and build social and career networks as alumni. The Columbia Alumni Association (CAA) is the University-wide alumni community of more than 365,000. Spanning all of Columbia's schools, the CAA provides opportunities for alumni and students to connect with fellow Columbians through events, Regional Clubs, and Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) around the country and the world.

SIGs serve to build community based on shared identities, experiences, and backgrounds. **Columbia Pride** is the official SIG for LGBTQ+ and allied alumni. Columbia Pride's mission is to build and strengthen community, foster a safe environment, and deepen the sense of connection between the LGBTQ+ alumni and student communities, as well as between those communities and the Alma Mater. For more information, visit <http://pride.alumni.columbia.edu/>.

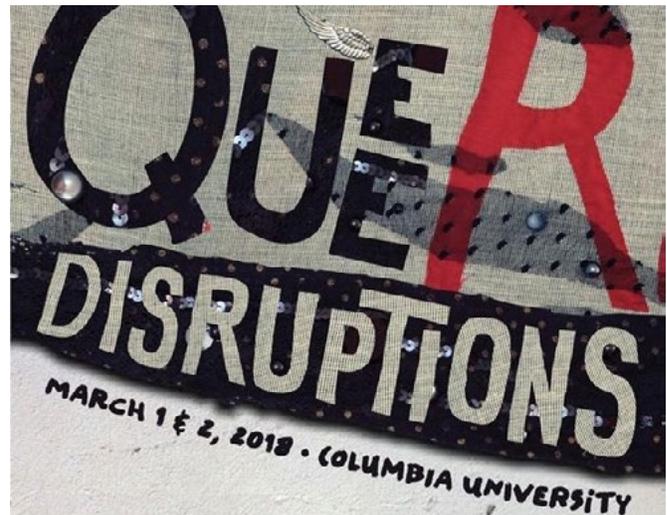
LGBTQ+ Scholarship Initiative

Columbia's faculty, staff, students, and other trainees include scholars whose work focuses on diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; the experiences of LGBTQ+ people; and the challenges they face.

The Office of the Provost has supported a number of LGBTQ+ initiatives with participation from across campuses, schools, and departments. Since 2016, the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement has sponsored Queer Disruptions, an annual conference that gathers an international slate of esteemed scholars, activists, and artists to explore the ways that queer studies, politics, and practices theorize, transform, and generate new social possibilities and reimagine scholarship, organized by the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Council.

Additionally, the Office of the Provost has pioneered the LGBTQ+ Scholarship Initiative to promote the recruitment of LGBTQ+ scholars to Columbia, which to date has resulted in four new faculty in Nursing and Psychiatry, History, English and Comparative Literature, and Religion (see [Section 6.2](#), Recruitment).

For vignettes about Columbia's LGBTQ+ scholarship, see [Section 3](#) (Beyond Inclusion: Hubs of LGBTQ+ Scholarship at Columbia).



Hosted by the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Council and the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement, the Queer Disruptions conferences bring together an international slate of esteemed scholars, activists, and artists from around the world.

SECTION 3: BEYOND INCLUSION: HUBS OF LGBTQ+ SCHOLARSHIP AT COLUMBIA

LGBTQ+ faculty, staff, and students not only are significant constituents with needs related to equity, diversity, and inclusion, but also include scholars who provide unique contributions to the academy, its scholarship, its community, and society at large. Here we feature a number of hubs of LGBTQ+ scholarship at Columbia to illustrate these contributions.

“I haven’t been successful in spite of being an LGBT researcher. I actually feel like I’ve been successful because I’m an LGBT researcher. I’m studying an understudied topic.”

(Junior faculty member, Medical Center)

The leadership of the various units at Columbia University, Teachers College, and Barnard College active in LGBTQ+ scholarship is represented on the [Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Council](#). The Council provides opportunities for communication, coordination, and collaboration across these units and the University at large. The Council hosts a breakfast meeting every semester and supports programming, including the Queer Disruptions conferences sponsored by the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement. Yasmine Ergas, Patricia Dailey, and Walter Bockting serve as the Council’s Co-Chairs. For more information, please contact the Council at WGSSC@columbia.edu.

3.1: INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON WOMEN, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY (IRWGS)

IRWGS is the primary locus of interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship on women, gender, and sexuality at Columbia University. The Institute draws its faculty from many disciplines, not only from all three divisions in Arts and Sciences, but also from the school of International and Public Affairs, the Mailman School of Public Health, and the Law School, providing rigorous training in interdisciplinary scholarship to both undergraduate and graduate students. It has collaborated closely since its inception with the Department of English and Comparative Literature, a department that has for decades helped foster feminist studies and today includes internationally rec-

ognized feminist scholars across several subdisciplines. Courses in IRWGS provide in-depth knowledge of the history and theory of gender and sexuality studies in both local and global contexts, helping to prepare students for professional work and to further academic engagement in a vast array of fields. IRWGS is also the primary location for the study of sexuality and of queer theory. In class work, in programming, and in research groups, IRWGS demonstrates a lasting commitment to investigating bodily practices, gender norms, and sexual preference in a global context.

In the US, scholars working under the banner of “queer theory” or “queer studies” comprise a wide-ranging group of thinkers with projects that range across numerous fields including disability studies, the politics of austerity, militarism and masculinity, urban planning, transgender surgeries in a global frame, queer diasporas, immigration, sex work, digital capitalism, racial violence, and so on. Most significantly perhaps, US-based scholars have been vigorous in opposing the notion of a “global gay” or of a singular model of gender, sexuality, and desire and have even critiqued the cultural imperialism inherent in both the circulation of queer theories globally and the circulation of queer bodies within circuits of sexual tourism.

Queer faculty at Columbia University are currently building a working group to consider how best to resituate queer studies to respond to shifts in sexual politics that have occurred over the past decade. The Institute has already received a three-year commitment of funding from Columbia’s Center for the Study of Social Difference, and it plans to apply for more funding as the group develops its core project. For the moment, its main focus will be in considering the place of sexuality and gender both in the spread of global capitalism and right-wing populism and in the activist and aesthetic responses to these new forms of authoritarianism. For example, while we sometimes find white gays and lesbians at the forefront of anti-Muslim groups articulating a fear of religious homophobia (this happened in the Netherlands), we often also find that improvised queer anarchist groups lead the charge against state violence (this happened in Turkey). This working group at Columbia, in conversation with other key centers and organizations in Brazil, Chile, and France, will attempt to map a set of potential futures for queer studies, queer politics, queer art, and queer activism.

New hires at Columbia have resulted in the expansion of queer studies offerings and research. In addition to the LGBTQ+ cluster hires (see Section 6.2), Columbia University has hired Vanessa Agard-Jones in Anthropology, Gil Hochberg in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, and Tey Meadow in Sociology. Together, these scholars have changed the culture of the University with regard not only to intellectual life but also in terms of social life and the lively exchanges between campus life and the busy worlds of New York City. Queer life and politics and art in New York City is richer for the presence of active queer scholars on college campuses here, and, in a post-COVID world, IRWGS looks forward to collaborative projects on and off campus. For further information, please visit <https://irwgs.columbia.edu/>.

3.2: CENTER FOR GENDER AND SEXUALITY LAW



[The Center for Gender and Sexuality Law's](#) mission is to formulate new approaches to complex issues facing gender and sexual justice movements. Founded by Professor Katherine Franke with co-director Suzanne Goldberg, the Center for Gender and

Sexuality Law has established Columbia Law School as the preeminent law school for the study of and specialization in the law of gender and sexuality. The Center is the base for many research projects and initiatives focused on issues of gender, sexuality, reproductive rights, bodily autonomy, and gender identity and expression in law, policy, and professional practice. A core focus of the Center's work is to provide students with opportunities to supplement their curricular learning through lectures, panel discussions, conferences, and guest speaker series on a multitude of contemporary issues regarding gender and sexuality law, including civil rights; bodily autonomy and reproductive justice; the rights of transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming persons; the rights and experiences of intersex persons; and gender norms in public space.

The Center sponsors a speaker series, "Frontlines of Gender Justice"; a visiting scholar program; and courses including Gender Justice, Reproductive Rights, Sexuality and the Law, Family Law, Domestic Violence, and Law and Masculinity. The Center also includes the Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic, as well as the Law, Rights, and Religion Project, a think tank that promotes social justice, freedom of religion, and religious plurality.

3.3: HIV CENTER FOR CLINICAL AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

"I met my husband in a gay sports league in the late 1980s, and we were all men except for two women. By 1990, more than half of them were dead. [I realized] life is too short to get caught up and worry about [homophobia]. It was certainly a very difficult time . . . but it also propelled me and people of my generation who survived. [I feel] less vulnerable because we felt like we had seen the worst of things."

(Medical Center senior faculty who arrived at Columbia at the height of the AIDS epidemic)



From its inception in 1987, the [HIV Center](#) supported an expanding portfolio of research grants that led to a greater understanding of the mental and sexual health of LGBTQ+ people.

The HIV Center was an important, welcoming environment in which LGBTQ+ researchers and trainees bravely took on a terrible pandemic that for years killed many, particularly gay/bisexual men and transgender women. HIV Center allies and collaborators with well-established research careers at CUIMC stepped forward to help "flip" prevailing models of homosexuality at Columbia from models espousing psychopathology to a model envisioning homosexuality and bisexuality as normal variants of human sexuality. With time this was expanded to include transgender and other queer communities.

With this new model in mind, HIV Center faculty, in turn, became involved in teaching and consulting at CUIMC and other academic settings, professional and scientific conferences, and community-based organizations. Faculty also became involved in HIV mental health policy formulation and advocacy at local, national, and international levels such as the AIDS Commission of the American Psychiatric Association and the NYS Psychological Task Force on AIDS.

HIV Center faculty were instrumental in starting the Columbia Center for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Mental Health at CUIMC and consulted with the Gay Health Advocacy Project and Mentorship Program on the Morningside campus. Perhaps most importantly, the HIV Center sent a clear message in the early years of the AIDS epidemic that, rather

than turn away AIDS patients for fear of discouraging other patients from seeking care at CUIMC, it would take on this epidemic, providing hope to stigmatized populations and support to a large number of us who were contending with the threat of discrimination within our fields and the intolerable prospect of an ongoing loss of patients, colleagues, and loved ones.

The HIV Center became a thriving environment in which scholars, community activists, and individuals infected with and affected by HIV worked synergistically to promote social progress in areas where inequities compounded its effect. Established researchers with prestigious careers worked hand in hand with creative, committed, young investigators to find novel solutions to urgent problems. Their openness about their diverse sexual orientations and HIV status facilitated a deep understanding of factors fueling the progression of the pandemic. Throughout the decades, the Center's investigators not only adapted but also rode the wave of social changes, drawing from its energy to push science into new areas of inquiry that went far beyond the limited problem of a viral disease. The postdoctoral Fellowship program of the HIV Center significantly contributed both to the training of new investigators and the challenging of the older ones to think in new ways.

NYC is home to over one-third of people living with HIV/AIDS in the US, the highest number of new infections of any US city, and large ethnic/racial minority populations coping with extreme economic and health disparities. In recent years, the emergence of new biomedical approaches to HIV prevention presents us with a defining moment in the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We have seen breakthroughs in the use of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) for prevention. These and other biomedical advances provide us with a new arsenal of strategies in the fight against HIV/AIDS. However, these approaches cannot reach their full potential without rigorous behavioral and social science research to ensure proper uptake and adherence, while also addressing the accompanying social and personal determinants of health, including intersectional stigmas (homo-, bi-, and transphobia; HIV; racism), mental health, substance use, and culturally appropriate access to prevention and care. HIV Center members are at the forefront of leadership in a range of "Ending the HIV Epidemic" (EHE) initiatives, including NYS Governor's Task Force and Blueprint for EHE, the Federal Plan for EHE across the US, and global EHE programs. Optimism is high in our ability to end the HIV epidemic, ensuring that no population is left behind and simultaneously advancing the mental and physical health, and the social and sexual well-being, of the LGBTQ+ community. For further information, please visit <https://www.hivcenternyc.org/>.

3.4: PROGRAM FOR THE STUDY OF LGBT HEALTH



In 2012, Jeffrey Lieberman, Chair of Psychiatry, and Bobbie Berkowitz, then Dean of Nursing, initiated the Program for the Study of LGBT Health, an across-schools, interdisciplinary collaboration. They appointed Anke Ehrhardt as the Program's first Director and recruited Walter Bockting to Columbia to serve as the Program's Co-Director. The Program's vision is a world that respects diversity in gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, in which LGBTQ+ people and their families can thrive and have access to competent, evidence-based healthcare. To realize this vision, a comprehensive understanding is needed of the development of gender identity and sexual orientation; the characteristics and health status of the LGBT population; the risk/protective factors and processes of resilience; and key components of effective interventions, treatments, and health and public policies. The Program set out to pursue the research agenda outlined in the 2011 Institute of Medicine Report "The Health of LGBT People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding." The Program brings together a critical mass of investigators, teachers, service providers, and policy makers from various disciplines to work in synergy to advance LGBTQ+ health. The Program's clinical footprint includes the Columbia Gender Identity Program and LGBTQ+ Health at the Nurse Practitioner Group.



Initial priority areas included youth and families, LGBTQ+ aging, and transgender health. In 2017, Tonda Hughes was recruited to Columbia to lead the fourth priority area of sexual minority women's health. That same year, neuroscience of gender was added as a fifth priority area. Currently, the Program has funded research and training opportunities in each of these areas. For example, Project AFFIRM is a longitudinal study of transgender identity development across the lifespan that established a diverse cohort of 390 trans and nonbinary individuals in New York City, San Francisco, and Atlanta. The focus is on understanding how they respond to the challenges they encounter and learn to thrive over time. Gender-affirming healthcare, social support, and identity pride were shown to be associated with resilience, and interventions are being developed to reduce employment discrimination and improve economic opportunity. Students and postdoctoral fellows in psychiatry, psychology, sociology, nursing, and public health are involved in research with this cohort on

topics ranging from intersectionality; sexual orientation and relationships; sexual and reproductive health; mental health; and well-being. The next four years will include a focus on the prevention of cardiovascular disease. For further information, visit LGBTHealthProgram.org.

3.5: SOCIOMEDICAL SCIENCES AT THE MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

In 1968, Columbia University became the first institution in the country to offer a graduate degree in sociomedical sciences (SMS). Dr. Jack Elinson, first Chair of [SMS](#), coined the term “sociomedical sciences” to incorporate the social sciences of sociology, anthropology, economics, history, political science, and social psychology into a multidisciplinary study of health and medicine. The department’s strength in research related to LGBT health includes decades of faculty and doctoral work on HIV and sexual health, but SMS has also been the home to field-defining work on minority stress, structural stigma, mental health, substance use, and other areas related to queer health. The department currently has a number of LGBT senior faculty and is proud to have trained some of the nation’s leading researchers in LGBT health. Current structures to support work in this area include the Gender, Sexuality, and Health training grant, the nation’s only predoctoral-level training grant funded by NIH specifically for interdisciplinary social scientific work on those topics. In addition, department faculty (first Constance Nathanson, now Jennifer Hirsch) have served as co-directors of the University-wide Columbia Population Research Center (CPRC), which brings together an exceptionally diverse group of researchers across the campus working on population health and inequalities; in a 2018 survey, one-third of CPRC’s junior faculty self-identified as LGBT. Both within SMS and through structures that link SMS to other academic units, the department provides an environment in which work on LGBT health is supported and faculty and students who are themselves LGBT find a welcoming home.

3.6: SEXUALITY, WOMEN, AND GENDER PROJECT (SWG) AT TEACHERS COLLEGE



[The Sexuality, Women, and Gender Project](#) (SWG) at Teachers College was co-founded in Fall 2012 by Drs. Aurelie Athan, Melanie Brewster, and Riddhi Sandil, three professors in the Counseling and Clinical Psychology Department, with funding from a Teachers College Provost Investment Grant. SWG’s

mission is to envision and implement the next wave of theories and practices to improve well-being for LGBTQ+ individuals and women, and to play a vital role in the creation of research initiatives, innovative curriculum, and institutional programming on campus and with partners beyond Columbia University. The goals of SWG are to (1) promote learning through innovative pedagogy and implementation of LGBTQ+ and gender-specific coursework; (2) provide intensive research mentorship and production; and (3) apply gender and sexuality theories to practice settings across New York City and the tristate area, such as local schools, mental/health facilities, and community organizations. SWG works across departments and schools (e.g., Education, Counseling and Clinical Psychology, Public Health, Gender and Queer Studies, Reproductive Psychiatry, Sociology, and Law) to promote the transdisciplinary dialogues needed to solve complex, real-world problems.

3.7: BARNARD CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON WOMEN (BCRW)



The [Barnard Center for Research on Women](#) (BCRW) brings scholars and activists together through its working groups, public events, publications, and multimedia projects to advance intersectional social justice feminist analyses and to promote social transformation. BCRW is committed to vibrant and engaged research, pedagogy, art, and activism, supporting the work of scholars and activists to create new knowledge and to challenge and refine how we understand the world around us. Since its founding in 1971, the BCRW has cultivated collaborative and accountable relationships with community organizations, activists, and cultural workers in New York City, across the US, and transnationally. From its signature annual Scholar and Feminist Conference to its peer-reviewed journal *S&F Online*, unique collection of feminist social movement ephemera (housed in the Barnard College Archives), constantly expanding video archive (available on the Center’s website), and recently inaugurated Social Justice Initiative, BCRW remains committed to critical feminist engagement with the academy and the world.

Central to BCRW’s long-standing commitment to intersectional, social justice feminism is the generative and transformative work of queer and trans activists, artists, and scholars. BCRW has long-standing partnerships with former Social Justice Initiatives residents Tourmaline, Dean Spade, and CeCe McDonald and opportunities for students to work as research assistants on their ongoing projects. Moreover, BCRW has a long history of providing space to student groups working on pressing activist and creative projects related to queer and trans politics.

Perceived Legitimacy of LGBTQ+ Scholarship and Research in Health

Billy Caceres, Assistant Professor of Nursing

Over the past decade, there has been increased attention from national organizations to the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals. This has attracted greater interest in LGBTQ+ research and scholarship from both researchers that identify as LGBTQ+ and those who identify as allies to the community. Despite these gains, clear challenges remain for LGBTQ+ researchers. LGBTQ+ research remains a stigmatized field with concerns about the legitimacy and value of LGBTQ+ scholarship as an area of inquiry. Non-LGBTQ+ researchers in academia generally recognize the importance of studying HIV/AIDS as an issue that affects LGBTQ+ populations, but do not necessarily show a similar regard for other areas of inquiry such as mental health, aging, and chronic conditions. This is reflected in the disproportionate funding that HIV/AIDS has received over the past 30 years compared with other health concerns for LGBTQ+ people. For instance, although the total number of LGBTQ+ health research projects at NIH has increased by 28 percent from 2015 to 2018, more than 60 percent of total funded projects focused on HIV/AIDS. Thus, although growing, research on LGBTQ+ disparities in areas other than HIV remains low. In 2018, only 3.6 percent of NIH-funded LGBTQ+ health research focused on depression, 2.1 percent on suicide, and 1.0 percent on tobacco use.

At a time when there is great attention to social injustice in our country, it is important that we acknowledge as a research community the role that social factors play in explaining health disparities in marginalized groups. The prevailing explanation for health disparities observed in LGBTQ+ people is that they experience greater exposure to social stressors (such as discrimination and bias-motivated violence) that can negatively impact their health and well-being. Greater exposure to social stressors underscores that LGBTQ+ health issues cannot be understood simply by examining sexual behavior or attraction. Because of the ubiquity of HIV/AIDS within the field, there is limited understanding among non-LGBTQ+ scientists that health disparities in LGBTQ+ populations, including the disproportionately higher incidence and prevalence of HIV in Black and Latinx sexual minority men and transgender women, are driven in large part by social determinants of health (such as poverty, discrimination, and violence). Non-LGBTQ+ researchers should understand that, although LGBTQ+ people have unique exposures, many of the drivers of LGBTQ+ health disparities

also contribute to disparities in other minority groups.

Further, LGBTQ+ researchers often face concerns about their ability to maintain objectivity in researching a community to which they also belong. In my experience as an Afro-Latinx gay man studying various marginalized groups, but with a primary focus on LGBTQ+ populations, I have never been questioned about my desire to examine cardiovascular health disparities in people of color. My objectivity in studying people of color has never been questioned. However, throughout every stage of my career, I have had to defend my reasons for conducting research on cardiovascular health disparities in LGBTQ+ adults and whether as a gay man I could be truly objective about LGBTQ+ research. This is an experience shared by other LGBTQ+ colleagues conducting research in this area. These experiences can likely be attributed to a number of factors, including an increased recognition among researchers of the importance of studying Black and Latinx populations but less understanding of LGBTQ+ scholarship. Yet, this also highlights prejudices and misconceptions about what motivates LGBTQ+ people to do research that centers members of their community. These types of messages, especially from senior faculty, can discourage individuals early in their careers from pursuing academic careers focused on LGBTQ+ scholarship.

Another area of concern is the lack of racial/ethnic and gender diversity among LGBTQ+ researchers in the field. Although there is increased attention to the needs of racial/ethnic minority individuals within the LGBTQ+ community, research teams generally do not reflect the racial/ethnic diversity observed within the larger community. This lack of diversity in academia is not unique to LGBTQ+ scholarship, but it is particularly striking how few senior researchers of color are doing this work. This is also a concern for researchers who identify as transgender and gender nonbinary who remain underrepresented in the field. University-wide initiatives to recruit and retain LGBTQ+ researchers from underrepresented groups are needed across all career stages, particularly those working in understudied research areas. In addition, more opportunities to build community within Columbia University are essential for supporting LGBTQ+ researchers. This is especially important as LGBTQ+ researchers of color and gender diverse persons may face unique issues as members of multiply marginalized and underrepresented groups in academia. Pipeline-building efforts and mentoring programs targeted to LGBTQ+ students, trainees, and faculty can help offset this disparity. For more information, see Section 6.3 (Pipeline) and Section 5.4 (Mentoring).

SECTION 4: LGBTQ+ LAW AND POLICY

4.1: LGBTQ+ RIGHTS (US LAWS AND POLICIES)

Much progress has been made in the last 70 years in LGBTQ+ rights. Some of the highlights are:

1950

The first lasting gay organization, the Mattachine Society, is formed in Los Angeles. They refer to themselves as a “homophile” group.

1962

Illinois becomes the first US state to remove sodomy law from its criminal code.

1963

The first gay rights demonstration in the USA takes place on September 19 at the Whitehall Induction Center in New York City, protesting against discrimination in the military.

1966

Members of the Mattachine Society stage a “sip-in” at the Julius Bar in Greenwich Village, where the New York Liquor Authority prohibits serving gay patrons in bars on the basis that they are “disorderly.” Following the sip-in, the Mattachine Society sues the New York Liquor Authority. Although no laws are overturned, the New York City Commission on Human Rights declares that homosexuals have the right to be served.

Compton Cafeteria Riot breaks out at a San Francisco eatery when trans women are denied service and arrested for breaking gendered clothing laws.

1969

Police raid the Stonewall Inn in New York City in the early hours of June 28. This leads to four days of struggle between police and LGBTQ people. Transgender people, LGBTQ people of color, and youth are a major part of these “riots” that mark the birth of the modern LGBTQ movement.

1970

The first “Gay Liberation Day March” is held in New York City. Marsha “Pay It No Mind” Johnson and Sylvia Rivera are co-founders of Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries (STAR).

1973

The board of the American Psychiatric Association votes 13-0 to remove homosexuality from its official list of psychiatric disorders, the DSM-II. The resolution also urges an end to private and public discrimination and repeal of laws discriminating against homosexuals.

1977

Harvey Milk becomes the first openly gay person to be elected to public office in California when he wins a seat on the San Francisco Board Supervisors. He is responsible for introducing a gay rights ordinance protecting gays and lesbians from being fired from their jobs. Milk also leads a successful campaign against Proposition 6, an initiative forbidding homosexual teachers.

1979

An estimated 75,000 people participate in the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. LGBT people and straight allies demand equal civil rights and urge the passage of protective civil rights legislation.

1982

Wisconsin becomes the first US state to outlaw discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

1987

ACT UP, a direct-action activist group, is founded in the LGBT Community Center in New York City to bring attention to AIDS-related issues using civil disobedience.

1998

Matthew Shepard, a gay Wyoming college student, is brutally beaten by two young men, tied to a fence and left overnight. He dies six days later.

2000

Vermont becomes the first state in the US to legalize civil unions and registered partnerships between same-sex couples.

2002

NYC expands the definition of “gender” to include protections for transgender and gender nonconforming people in employment, housing, and public accommodations in the NYC Human Rights Law.

2003

The US Supreme Court overturns sodomy laws, proclaiming rights to privacy and decriminalizing “homosexual” behavior.

2004

Massachusetts becomes the first US state to legally recognize same-sex marriage.

2009

President Obama signs the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes and Prevention Act, also known as the Matthew Shepard Act, into law. The law expands the 1969 US federal hate-crime law to include crimes motivated by a victim’s actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, and becomes the first federal law to include legal protections for transgender people.

2011

The US military policy “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” officially ends. This allows lesbian, gay, and bisexual people to serve openly in the military. The repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” does not lift regulations barring many transgender people from serving.

United States Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan issues a statement clarifying that students have the right to form gay-straight alliances (GSAs) under the Equal Access Act of 1984 in any public school that allows noncurricular student groups to form. Schools must also provide GSAs with the same opportunities as other groups to convene and access resources.

2013

The US federally recognizes same-sex marriages, extending federal benefits to couples in states that allow same-sex marriage. The Supreme Court strikes down the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). On this same day, the Supreme Court also rules that California’s Proposition 8 ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional, allowing California to become the 13th state where same-sex couples can marry.

2014

The Department of Education issues official guidance to clarify that transgender students are protected from discrimination under Title IX, a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against students on the bases of sex/gender in federally funded education programs and activities.

2015

The Supreme Court rules that states are constitutionally required to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, legalizing marriage equality in all 50 states.

2016

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announces that the Pentagon is lifting the ban on transgender people serving openly in the US military.

2017

District of Columbia residents can now choose a gender-neutral option of their driver’s license. DC residents become the first people in the United States to be able to choose X as their gender marker instead of male or female on driver’s licenses and identification cards.

2019

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signs a law banning the use of the so-called gay and trans panic legal defense strategy. The tactic asks a jury to find that a victim’s sexual orientation or gender identity is to blame for a defendant’s violent reaction.

2020

The Supreme Court rules that federal law protects LGBTQ workers from discrimination. The landmark ruling extends protections to millions of workers nationwide and is a defeat for the Trump administration, which argued that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act that bars discrimination based on sex did not extend to claims of gender identity and sexual orientation.

The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals rules in favor of former student Gavin Grimm in a more than four-year fight over restroom policies for transgender students. The ruling states that policies segregating transgender students from their peers are unconstitutional and violate federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in education.

The Human Rights Campaign released a [blueprint for administrative action](#) for the Biden administration in November 2020.

4.2: COLUMBIA FACULTY CONTRIBUTIONS TO LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

If you look around the city, country, and world, you'll find contributions by Columbia faculty members to advocacy for LGBTQ+ people on an almost endless array of issues. This small sampling offers some highlights—and because the field is ever-changing, these contributions will no doubt continue in the years ahead.

“I feel like in my four years, I’ve already seen the burgeoning of a really vital undergraduate community of LGBT students who are going to go out into the world and into the city and make a big impact. And that feels very encouraging.”

(Senior faculty member, Morningside)

Transgender rights. Empirical research and expert consensus panels in which Columbia faculty participated have contributed significantly to transgender rights. Such evidence and consensus has been used to educate the courts in landmark cases on employment discrimination, family law, access to gender-affirming healthcare, and use of restroom facilities. For example, in the 2005 federal court case of *Schroer v. Billington* (McGowan 2010), the plaintiff’s team argued that Ms. Schroer, a transgender woman, was discriminated on the basis of sex when the US Library of Congress rescinded her job offer after learning about her gender transition. Walter Bockting, currently Professor of Medical Psychology (in Psychiatry and Nursing) at Columbia, testified that gender identity was one of nine components of sex and arguably the most important one. Bockting further explained that when a person experiences distress because of an incongruence between their gender identity and physical sex characteristics, psychosocial and medical interventions are available and proven effective in alleviating this distress by affirming a person’s gender identity. The defendant’s team argued instead that sex is ultimately defined by a person’s chromosomes and thus cannot be changed. In the end, the court did not rule on whether gender identity is part of one’s sex or not. However, the court did find that the Library’s decision to rescind the job offer upon learning that Ms. Schroer was transitioning from one sex to another was discrimination on the basis of sex actionable under Title VII. In 2020, the Supreme Court of the United States

came to a similar conclusion in *Harris Funeral Homes, Inc. v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission et al.*

Marriage equality is perhaps the best known of LGBTQ+ advocacy issues in recent decades, and Columbia faculty have been deeply involved in helping to illuminate the legal and historical harms caused by the exclusion of same-sex couples from marriage. Suzanne Goldberg, Herbert and Doris Wechsler Clinical Professor of Law, began her involvement prior to joining Columbia, back in the 1990s, when she was a staff attorney at Lambda Legal, a national LGBT legal advocacy organization. Since 2006, as Founder and Director of the Columbia Law School Sexuality & Gender Law Clinic, Goldberg and her students have filed amicus briefs in nearly every marriage case in the country, including *Obergefell v. Hodges*, in which the US Supreme Court recognized a constitutional right to marry for same-sex couples. George Chauncey, DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History, played a crucial role in marriage equality cases across the country as an expert witness. He submitted affidavits, testified as a witness, and contributed to important amicus briefs, all designed to put the exclusion of same-sex couples from marriage into the historical context of long-standing discrimination and hostility toward lesbians and gay men. Katherine Franke, James L. Dohr Professor of Law at Columbia Law School and Director of the Law School’s Center for Gender and Sexuality Law and its Law, Rights, and Religion Project, published the highly regarded 2015 book *Wedlocked: The Perils of Marriage Equality*, in which she explored the lessons that today’s marriage equality movement could draw from the right to marry enjoyed by formerly enslaved people at the end of the US Civil War.

Law, rights, and religion. After marriage equality was recognized, a major challenge started to take hold in the US: some business owners decided not to serve LGBTQ+ customers who wanted to purchase goods—like a wedding cake—or services, like a photographer—for their weddings. They did this even where state law prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation. Katherine Franke has played a leading role, bringing together scholars to critique the use of faith as a justification for disregard of antidiscrimination laws. She has filed briefs in a variety of cases to make the point that religious liberty rights must be recognized in a way that advances rather than impedes equality, and thus the limit of religious liberty rights can be found when they are used to deny equality to others. In another case now pending before the US Supreme Court, Franke filed an important amicus brief with other scholars of law and religion, arguing that a taxpayer-funded religious foster care agency should not be permitted to use its religious beliefs to justify the denial of services

to LGBTQ parents and unmarried heterosexual parents. Suzanne Goldberg's Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic also signed onto an amicus brief in the case, focusing on the harms to women and to gender equity that would flow from a ruling allowing private organizations to use public funding to discriminate based on sex.

Workplace discrimination is another significant issue for LGBTQ+ individuals, and Columbia Law School's Center for Gender and Sexuality Law at Columbia Law School celebrated the June 2020 ruling from the US Supreme Court recognizing that workplace discrimination against lesbian, gay, and transgender employees is prohibited by Title VII, the federal law passed by Congress in 1964 that prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Suzanne Goldberg filed an amicus brief in the case on behalf of women CEOs and C-suite executives, including Shonda Rhimes and Sheryl Sandberg, arguing that a ruling against the gay and transgender plaintiffs in the case would "cut a large hole" in the fabric of American antidiscrimination law.

The **US military** is the nation's largest employer, and discrimination in its ranks is, consequently, deeply concerning both for those who seek to serve but are excluded and for other employers that take signals from the military about which forms of discrimination are permissible. Building on a foundation that brought an end to race discrimination by the military, advocates have, over many years, argued successfully for an end to discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity. When President Trump tweeted his plan to ban service by openly transgender individuals, just as that discriminatory policy was coming to an end, the Columbia Law School's Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic, through its Director Suzanne Goldberg, took part in several cases filed around the United States. The Clinic filed amicus briefs making the point that discrimination against transgender individuals violates the Supreme Court's traditional jurisprudence prohibiting discrimination based on sex.

Discrimination at school. Working with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Suzanne Goldberg has filed several amicus briefs in cases challenging schools that ban transgender students from using restrooms consistent with their gender identity. In these briefs, Goldberg and her co-counsel made the important point that segregation in public facilities—including restrooms as well as swimming pools and recreational settings—has a long and troubling history, and that the separation of transgender students from all others was part of this invidious and unconstitutional tradition.

Advocating for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers, youth in foster care, and transgender inmates. Columbia Law School's clinics have worked extensively to represent individuals who have fled persecution on account of their sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as LGBTQ+ youth in foster care who have faced challenges related to their sexual orientation and gender identity. The Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic has also advocated on behalf of transgender individuals in NYC jails, supporting a right to protective housing.

4.3: LGBTQ+ POLICIES AT COLUMBIA

There are several offices at Columbia that provide resources for LGBTQ+ faculty and staff, and their families. As policies are frequently updated and revised, please visit their websites for the most current information. For employees of [Barnard College](#) and [Teachers College](#), please visit their respective websites.

Columbia University Human Resources

There are a number of CU Human Resources policies that affect LGBTQ+ employees and their families.

- 1. The Columbia Human Resources [Benefit Service Center](#)** supports a process-flow to establish Same-Sex Domestic Partnership (SSDP) relationships. Employees should submit a Domestic Partnership Affidavit and required documentation through CUBES (Columbia University Benefits Enrollment System). For policies and procedures regarding [eligible dependents](#), visit the Human Resources [website](#).
- 2. [Paid leaves](#).** There are established policies at the state and federal levels that provide a base for Columbia's leave policies. Columbia supplements these policies and works on a case-by-case basis to expand leaves beyond the specific definitions at the state and federal levels.
- 3. [New York City Earned Safe and Sick Time](#)** allows for taking care of domestic partners.
- 4. [Family Building Benefits](#)** include the following policies:
 - [Surrogacy Assistance Program.](#)** The Program reimburses the eligible employee up to \$30,000 per lifetime for eligible expenses.
 - [Adoption Assistance Program.](#)** The Columbia University Adoption Assistance Program is a benefit designed to help with the cost of adopting a child. The benefit is

offered to full-time, regular benefits-eligible Officers and full-time, regular Non-Union Support Staff, on or after the first day of full-time employment.

5. Tuition Programs include the following policies for Officers: [Tuition Exemption Benefit](#), [College Tuition Scholarship Benefit](#), and [Primary Tuition Scholarship Benefit](#).

Concerning Same-Sex Domestic Partners (SSDP) and their children, for each Officer's tuition benefit policy, please note the eligible dependent documentation requirements.

Note: *The value of the Tuition Programs benefits for SSDP partners and children is treated as taxable income by the federal government, and, therefore, Columbia University will withhold taxes.*

EOAA Policies and Procedures:

<https://eoaa.columbia.edu/content/non-discrimination-statement-and-policies>

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA) works to prevent and respond to discrimination and harassment by developing and implementing policies and procedures that address discrimination, harassment, and gender-based misconduct in accordance with relevant federal, state, and local antidiscrimination laws. EOAA policy expressly prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation, gender (sex), and gender identity. EOAA policy also prohibits discrimination and harassment on other axes of identity and experience that are relevant to LGBTQ+ people, including on the basis of age, alienage, or citizenship status; arrest or conviction record; caregiver status; color; credit history; creed; disability; familial status; genetic predisposition or carrier status; lactation accommodation; marital status; national origin; pregnancy; race; religion; salary history; sexual or reproductive health decisions; status as a victim of domestic violence, stalking, or sex offenses; unemployment status; veteran or active military status; and any other protected characteristic as established by law.

Columbia Faculty Handbook

The Faculty Handbook outlines essential information about policies that govern aspects of academic life for Officers of Instruction and Officers of Research at Columbia University, including appointment and promotion processes and policies, leaves, and other policies.

www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/obligations.html

The Office of Work/Life supports the well-being of Columbia University's diverse community of faculty, staff, and students in their pursuit of meaningful and productive academic, personal, and work lives through a variety of programs and services. A few of these programs are highlighted below; please visit the Office's website for more.

- School and Child Care Search Service: <https://worklife.columbia.edu/content/school-and-child-care-search-service>
- Housing Information and Referral Service: <https://worklife.columbia.edu/content/housing-information-referral-service>
- Faculty Spouse/Partner Dual Career Service: <https://worklife.columbia.edu/content/dual-career-services>
- Well-Being Programs: <https://worklife.columbia.edu/content/wellness>

4.4: NEED FOR FURTHER POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Policy development is ongoing. Some examples of areas in need of further development are:

- **Health plan coverage of assisted reproductive technology and gestational surrogacy.** Currently, coverage is based on demonstrated failure to conceive without assistance. Efforts are underway to change this infertility requirement, which often does not apply to LGBTQ+ families.
- **Continuation of domestic partnership benefits for all.** Prior to marriage equality, domestic partnership benefits were established for LGBTQ+ couples. After marriage equality was recognized, Columbia leadership agreed to not require marriage to extend benefits to domestic partners. However, eligibility for domestic partnership benefits for unmarried straight couples has yet to be secured.
- **Streamlined process for name changes** across campus systems. Students expressed frustration about their preferred name being applied inconsistently, with the name on their campus ID not matching the systems in the Library or Student Health Services or Human Resources. This creates an additional burden for students who have to explain the discrepancy.

SECTION 5: CLIMATE AND WELL-BEING

5.1: MICROAGGRESSIONS, HARASSMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION

It is well established that LGBTQ+ people in the United States continue to experience microaggressions, harassment, and discrimination related to their nonconformity in gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. In a 2017 national probability sample, experiences of interpersonal discrimination were common for LGBTQ+ adults, including slurs (57 percent), microaggressions (53 percent), sexual harassment (51 percent), violence (51 percent), and harassment regarding bathroom use (34 percent) (Casey et al. 2019). These experiences contribute to decreased physical and emotional well-being and negative job outcomes (DeSouza et al. 2017; Cech et al. 2017). In contrast, policies that affirm LGBTQ+ inclusion and prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are associated with positive outcomes, such as greater job commitment, improved workplace relationships, increased job satisfaction, and improved health outcomes among LGBTQ+ employees (Badgett et al. 2013).

Campus climate has been shown to predict retention of LGBTQ+ faculty (Garvey and Rankin 2016). In STEM, LGBTQ+ scientists appear underrepresented, encounter nonsupportive environments, and leave STEM at an alarming rate (Freeman 2020). LGBTQ+ faculty of color may experience bullying as a result of their racial and sexual orientation identities (Misawa 2015), and their increasing visibility on campus may result in tokenism and scrutiny (LaSala and colleagues 2008), which may impact issues related to tenure and promotion (Morales-Diaz 2014). The literature indicates that climate and the fear of further marginalization, tokenization, and scrutiny also may affect LGBTQ+ faculty decisions regarding whether to disclose their LGBTQ+ identity (see Section 6.3 below).

The Columbia Student Well-Being Survey grew out of Columbia's commitment to student well-being across all the University's schools and campuses. We know, from data and experience, that a strong sense of well-being is a key contributor to students thriving at Columbia, both academically and socially. The 2018 survey asked students about community and feelings of belonging at Columbia; awareness and use of Columbia resources and services; financial well-being; mental health, including stress; knowledge about sexual respect resources; and experience with sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other gender-based misconduct. More than 8,300 students

responded to the 2018 survey, which was about 28 percent of the full-time student population at that time.

Although results specific to LGBTQ+ students have not been reported, findings included information about student interactions with people who are different from them in a variety of ways. The majority of students reported often or very often interacting in meaningful ways with people who are different from them in sexual orientation and gender, but also in race/ethnicity, nationality, economic background, and religious beliefs. We encourage future survey reports to include findings from LGBTQ+ students. For further information, visit universitylife.columbia.edu/wellbeingsurvey.

In 2018, the Queer and Trans Advisory Board, a Columbia College and Columbia Engineering undergraduate advocacy group through the Office of Multicultural Affairs, surveyed a total of 985 undergraduate students, of whom 52.5 percent identified as queer and 10.6 percent as trans. Four out of 10 of these students reported feeling alone in their classes, which was twice the rate reported by their cisgender and straight counterparts. About a third felt not understood by their friend group (twice the rate of cisgender and straight students) and not adequately supported emotionally (three times the rate of cisgender and straight students). One out of three LGBTQ+ students reported sexual violence, and one out of four reported physical assault while at Columbia.



A 2019 **Sexual Health Initiative to Foster Transformation (SHIFT)**

[study](#) used a community-based participatory research approach to examine the individual, interpersonal, and structural (cultural, community, and institutional) factors that shape sexual assault and sexual health among undergraduates at Columbia University (CU) and Barnard College (BC). This study found that nearly one in four (22 percent) Columbia University and Barnard College students had experienced sexual assault (defined as unwanted/nonconsensual sexual contact) since matriculation. These rates are similar to those found at other universities. Higher rates of assault victimization were found among women; students outside the gender binary (hence referred to as gender nonconforming); and lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer students.

Focus groups of Columbia graduate and undergraduate students reported instances of being misgendered by faculty and classmates, the assumption of heteronormativity

in discussions about relationships, and an insufficient or unskilled response to microaggressions when they occur.

For transgender and nonbinary students, institutional challenges include a lack of trans- or gender-inclusive bathrooms, housing, healthcare, documentation, and policies; and they report the highest level of harassment and discrimination and lowest level of belonging (Goldberg et al. 2020). Nondiscrimination policies inclusive of gender identity and sexual orientation, offering a for-credit LGBTQ+ studies course, and the presence of LGBTQ+ stu-

dent organizations are associated with less discrimination and distress and increased feelings of self-acceptance (Woodford et al. 2018).

"I'm not sure all faculty know how to avoid microaggressions. And so I think anything that we could do to help faculty be less likely to commit those microaggressions would surely be helpful, because, in my experience, it's never intentional." (Senior faculty member, Medical Center)

5.2: INTERNALIZED STIGMA AND DISCLOSURE

Self-Disclosure in the Classroom

Amanda Irvin, Senior Director, Faculty Programs and Services, Center for Teaching and Learning

There are many facets to the conversation about the role of self-disclosure in the classroom, and while the research around how pedagogically effective it is to share personal information with students is not fully explored, one thing is certain: the choice faculty make about whether or not to come out as LGBTQ+ to their students is deeply personal and inherently individual.

If faculty feel comfortable coming out to their students, there is scholarship that points to potential positive outcomes for the classroom learning community (Mazer 2009; Henry and Thorsen 2018). In general, when faculty share information about themselves, it signals to students a stronger sense of investment in the collective learning community and may inspire a stronger motivation for students to contribute to the course both intellectually and personally. "Behaviors where teachers talk about who they are, tell stories about themselves and share personal values and beliefs have been found to be associated with increases in students' understanding of subject knowledge (Wambach and Brothen 1997), increased levels of attention (Webb 2014), and greater enjoyment of the learning situation (Sorensen 1989)" (Henry and Thorsen 2018). The operative element, though, is individual comfort in sharing personal information with students.

If faculty do not feel comfortable or safe disclosing personal information to students, they should not feel any obligation to do so. LGBTQ+ instructors in the United States have long struggled with the decision of whether or not to make their sexual orientations public, and the country's long history of discrimination toward LGBTQ+ individuals—and teachers, specifically—certainly explains why that might be the case (Machado 2014).

Classrooms are not neutral spaces, and it is important to remember that instructors and students "are not only intellectual but also social and emotional beings, and that these dimensions interact within the classroom climate to influence learning and performance" (Ambrose et al. 2010). If a faculty member feels uncomfortable or unsafe disclosing information to students, that discomfort would likely counteract any positive affordances cited above.

While Columbia has many supportive policies in place, faculty face the decision of coming out in the classroom, to students, or to supervisors, with diverging viewpoints. Some faculty do not feel safe to come out; others feel that they have to in order to establish credibility. Though the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is one resource for faculty to broach these conversations, it is a largely personal decision.

Experiences of coming out may vary by discipline:

"In humanities disciplines or languages there is usually a content focus that includes aspects of one's identity. They have a much easier time because it's part of the curriculum. [In contrast], our colleagues in the sciences often consider themselves content agnostic or identity agnostic. They teach numbers, and numbers don't have genders or sexualities or races. And so why do they need to talk about these things? It's in those disciplines that I have encountered faculty most vexed about coming out." (Administrative staff, Morningside)

Finally, there is a question about how much faculty should open up to students about their identities and related vulnerabilities. Here, guidance and support from mentors could be especially helpful:

"I still am navigating this idea of how much to advertise my own minority-ness to my students. I have to leave myself in a certain position of authority. I can't appear too vulnerable to students. There is that potential for me to be a role model, but I don't know where that line is." (Junior faculty member, Morningside)

5.3: CREATING SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

Columbia provides opportunities to be part of a community of LGBTQ+-identified scholars. However, the presence and visibility of LGBTQ+ faculty members may vary by department or school. While visibility and support for LGBTQ+ faculty is a priority for every corner of Columbia, certain disciplines may have greater representation than others and/or lend themselves more toward faculty whose work includes LGBTQ+ scholarship. Section 3 features a number of examples where LGBTQ+ scholarship is thriving at Columbia.

LGBTQ+ in STEM

The STEM sciences are an area where LGBTQ+ visibility and climate need improvement (Freeman, 2018). Estimates suggest that LGBTQ+ people are 17-21 percent less represented in STEM fields than expected (Freeman 2018; Freeman 2020). LGBTQ+ people in STEM fields report more negative experiences in the workplace than those working in other fields (Cech and Pham 2017). Forty percent of LGBTQ workers in STEM are not out to colleagues; and 69 percent of sexual-minority STEM faculty who are out at work, report feeling uncomfortable in their department (Partridge et al. 2013). Most faculty do not know of another LGBTQ faculty member from the universities where they got their degrees (Yoder 2016).

Potential factors driving LGBTQ+ disparities in STEM include bias and discrimination, misalignments of occupational interests with STEM stereotypes, and STEM norms of impersonality that isolate LGBTQ+ people (Freeman, 2020). LGBTQ+ retention shares common psychological processes with female and racial minority retention such as STEM identification and belonging (Freeman, 2020). LGBTQ scientists are also less likely to be open at institutions that do not offer same-sex partner benefits or support name changes during a gender transition (Yoder and Mattheis 2016).

Advocacy groups such as Out in STEM and the US National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals are doing important work to connect LGBTQ scientists. Expanding diversity initiatives to include those who identify as LGBTQ would increase visibility in the greater scientific community (Cech et al. 2017; Hughes, 2018; Partridge, Barthelemy, and Rankin 2014; Yoder and Mattheis 2016). Other recommendations include broadening survey measures in the federal STEM census to include sexual orientation and gender identity and including LGBTQ+ status when considering underrepresented groups for diversity programs.

Strategies to enhance networking and support

The following strategies have proven successful in enhancing opportunities for professional networking and support.

- 1. Connect with LGBTQ+ faculty across departments and schools.** Beyond one's own department and school, Columbia offers opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to connect across disciplines and workplaces, such as shared interest groups (organized by CUI-MC HR), events (such as Queer Disruptions), or other programming from interdisciplinary centers (IRWGS, WGSSC, BCRW, and others). See the Appendix for more information.
- 2. Connect with LGBTQ+ faculty and scholars across universities and in your field.** Many professional organizations have LGBTQ+ interest groups, and interuniversity initiatives can bring people together from across the country and the world. For example, in 2019, the Columbia School of Nursing hosted a summit bringing together leaders from nursing schools and organizations (e.g., American Academy of Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Nursing) to create a national health action plan to raise awareness of and improve LGBTQ+ health.
- 3. Join or create an Out List.** Many institutions have "out lists" that faculty can join to indicate that they are available for mentorship and networking with other LGBTQ+ faculty, staff, students, and other trainees. The Mailman School of Public Health has recently launched an OutList as part of its [LGBTQ+ Resources](#).

Support for faculty, staff, and students who are changing their gender expression or are transitioning

Transgender and nonbinary members of the Columbia community may change their gender expression and/or transition to using different names and pronouns. They may also embark on gender-affirming medical interventions, such as hormones and surgery. Columbia is committed to providing support at every step along this process. It is important to note that changes in gender expression and transition are highly individualized; what is involved differs from person to person, and people will go about any of the possible changes at their own pace. Therefore, it is paramount that we follow the transgender or nonbinary person's lead. Some tips for allies are:

Support. For some people, transitioning can be a lonely, challenging process; therefore, they are encouraged to seek support within their social circles, including at work and in school. Let the person who is transitioning know that you are available to take on a supportive role. While your attitude may be implicit in your conduct, a verbal show of support goes a long way. For example, say, “I want you to know that you have all my support. If you need help with anything, I’m here for you.”

Talk about it with discretion. Along the same lines, let the person who is changing or transitioning know that you are available to talk about their experience if they choose to do so. Transitioning is a personal experience—some people may benefit from sharing it with others, while others may decide against discussing it. Either way, let them know that you are available to listen to them if they opt to do so. If something isn’t clear, ask questions respectfully. Be self-aware regarding what is helpful to know about transitioning and what is just curiosity.

Avoid assumptions. People transition in different ways. Avoid formulating assumptions regarding the pathways, reasons, and outcomes of transitioning as they differ from person to person. While people transition, it is particularly important to listen to how they talk about themselves and to refer to them with their chosen name and pronouns. Keep in mind that names and pronouns may change at the beginning of the transition or at a later stage.

Be aware and take care of your feelings. Transitioning doesn’t happen in isolation. Depending on your relationship with the person who is changing their gender expression or transitioning, you may experience a range of feelings such as happiness, surprise, confusion, or even fear. Be aware of these feelings, and if you need to, discuss them with someone other than the person who is transitioning. If you need support, don’t be afraid to ask for it. Take time to learn more and research the subject. If you make mistakes, apologize, and learn from them.

For additional resources, please see the Appendix.

5.4: LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING

Columbia’s student and trainee body is diverse in sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. It is also increasingly diverse in race/ethnicity, including LGBTQ+ students and trainees who are black or brown and LGBTQ+ (see Section 7). An important goal of the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement is to promote diverse representation across all Columbia communities, including faculty and administrators.

“Historically, we’ve had very, very few people of any kind of minority in very significant leadership positions in the University. That’s the environment. And I’m not saying that’s coming from a decidedly negative place. But I just think that the institution has lacked a diversity of thought, and that predictably puts it in this kind of place. Because when you have people who haven’t been in the minority in a real kind of way in their life, making, you know, hiring policy, benefits, educational policy, they don’t know what they don’t know.”
(Midcareer faculty member, Medical Center)

In the interviews we conducted with faculty to inform the content of this guide, the value of LGBTQ+ visibility and endorsement by individuals in leadership positions was seen as critical for fostering an environment in which LGBTQ+ individuals feel included and affirmed. For example, the support from department chairs, school deans, and central administration for events on LGBTQ+ topics served as important acknowledgements of Columbia’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, and of the issues relevant to the LGBTQ+ community.

“We have greater diversity lower on the ladder; we need to nurture and promote them. Race proportions flip with staff and clinical coordinators; many are LGBT, Latinx, younger. Are we losing them?” (Junior faculty member, Medical Center)

Mentoring

At the heart of academic life are the relationships we have with colleagues. Over and over again, LGBTQ+ faculty at Columbia shared that the single most important factor that allowed them to succeed in pursuing their passion for teaching, research, scholarship, and service at Columbia was their relationships with academic mentors. In 2016, the Office of the Provost created a *Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Mentoring*, but for LGBTQ+-identified faculty and students, mentorship takes on additional meaning in the context of the stigma that remains attached to LGBTQ+ identities and scholarship today. For students,

this includes mentors who were open about their LGBTQ+ identity and/or who demonstrated a genuine interest in the lives and well-being of their mentees. For mentors, this included the rewarding experience of seeing their mentees flourish and contribute to the field, whether this was in LGBTQ+ scholarship or unrelated fields. Mentor-mentee relationships were able to ease fears on both sides related to internalized stigma.

“In so many ways, the advisor-student relationship is kind of like a parent-child relationship. There are a lot of similarities there. [An advisor may] share details about their own life, for example. And they encouraged me to be social during a time in my life that I was 100 percent focused on class and research.”

(Junior faculty member, Morningside)

Faculty mentors may be in need of support for themselves. Faculty spoke to us about the feeling of having to be a rock, a role model, strong for their students and for the communities they represent.

“As a professor, I have meetings all day, every day, with students, and I have to be the rock for them. So I can see how for some professors that might just beat or batter you down after a while. Always displaying strength for your students and never attending to your own needs.” (Junior faculty member, Morningside)

Faculty with multiple minority identities may experience added burden in this regard. This is further amplified by the fact that these faculty are often called upon for various roles and initiatives to represent their respective communities.

“And so that’s a huge piece of the service. And it’s not really accounted for. But it’s an integral part of you because somebody helped you, and you feel that obligation to help others. We’ve got to find some way of acknowledging that.” (Junior faculty member, Morningside)

“We call on the same people when it comes to supporting diverse faculty; how do we broaden that support without burdening/causing burnout for the same people? We need a larger group of people who have competence to provide support as allies.” (Karen Fife, Director, Higher Education Recruitment Consortium)

Forming relationships with potential mentors can also be facilitated through the networking resources outlined in [Section 5.3](#) and professional organizations listed in the Appendix. The [Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Mentoring](#) is a valuable resource for units and individuals who are looking to establish or enhance formal and informal mentoring programs.

Peer Mentoring

In addition to senior mentor/junior mentee relationships, peer and near-peer mentoring relationships, as outlined in the above-mentioned guide, “remove the inherent senior-junior power dynamic defined by roles and rank, and may permit freer reciprocal exploration of career issues. Such relationships may be particularly important to women and underrepresented minority faculty.” (Mott, 2002)

One example of programming to respond to this need is the LGBTQ+ peer mentoring program initiated in Fall 2020 by the office of Dr. Anne Taylor, Senior Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Career Development for CUIMC. The goals of this program are to provide mentorship in various aspects of career development for LGBTQ+-identified faculty and to provide networking opportunities. For its first meeting, over 50 faculty registered from across CUIMC schools and participated in break-out discussion groups on such topics as how to best support LGBTQ+ mentees, gaining a deeper understanding of LGBTQ+-lived experiences within higher education, and LGBTQ+ family planning and benefits. For more information, [visit their website](#).

5.5: CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND HUMILITY IN HEALTHCARE DELIVERY AND TRAINING

In healthcare settings at Columbia, engagement in a process of cultural competence and humility is key to communicate and work effectively with patients and colleagues of diverse cultural backgrounds, including in terms of gender and sexuality. According to Campinha-Bacote (2018, 2019), five components of cultural competence can be distinguished:

1. *Cultural awareness* is the process of conducting a self-examination of and critical reflection on one's own biases toward other cultures and the in-depth exploration of one's cultural (organizational and individual) background. Cultural awareness also involves being aware of the existence of documented "isms," such as sexism, cisgenderism, heterosexism, and racism, and acknowledging the privilege and power inherent in one's position.
2. *Cultural knowledge* is defined as the process in which the individual and the organization interconnect to seek and obtain a sound educational base about culturally diverse groups, including LGBTQ+ communities.
3. *Cultural skill* is the ability to conduct a cultural assessment to collect relevant cultural data, including on sexual orientation and gender identity, regarding one's organization and the students, other trainees, patients, and employees they serve.
4. *Cultural encounters* encourage individuals and organizations to directly engage in face-to-face interactions and other types of encounters with LGBTQ+ individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds to modify existing beliefs and to prevent possible stereotyping.
5. *Cultural desire* is the motivation needed to seek cultural encounters and further the process of becoming culturally aware, knowledgeable, and skillful in interacting with LGBTQ+ individuals and their families and communities.

Organizations and individuals cannot engage in cultural awareness, knowledge, skill, encounters, and desire without operating from a cultural humility lens (i.e., a lifelong process of self-reflection and personal critique; Tervalon and Murray-Garcia 1998), that is continuously being infused throughout each one of these five components.

SECTION 6: FACULTY RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND ADVANCEMENT

6.1: ENSURING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

A welcoming work environment is one that reflects the diversity and values of the University. Diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, should be an integral part of the ongoing effort to create and sustain an inclusive environment. The strategies and tools in the checklist at the beginning of this guide can facilitate an LGBTQ+-welcoming environment. **Visibility** is critically important for recruitment, particularly for the recruitment of LGBTQ+ faculty.

“When I was interviewing, seeing people among my potential new colleagues who were visibly queer was a selling point. That was really a bonus. Sometimes that may make or break the decision to take the job.”

(Administrative staff, Morningside)

During recruitment, ensure that you do not make statements that presume a candidate’s sexual orientation or gender identity, for example, assuming that a spouse/partner is male or female. If candidates do bring up their relationship status, ensure that their partner/spouse is invited to recruitment activities as any other spouse would be, and if they express interest in meeting LGBTQ+ faculty or students to discuss school climate, arrange for such meetings.

“I think of the community that we serve, the student population, so many of them, at the undergraduate level, are exploring their gender identity and have come to a place that provides them a fresh start for that. Students are coming with the expectation that they’d be welcomed. This pushes our faculty and staff to be more thoughtful about diversity in gender identity and expression.” (Karen Fife, Director, Higher Education Recruitment Consortium)

“The Dean is absolutely supportive of LGBT health, wants to grow it with more faculty who identify as LGBTQ+ and who do work in this area. I can’t really imagine being in a much more welcoming place.” (Senior faculty member, Medical Center)

“I was recruited because of my work, and my identity goes along with that. And, you know, that was very clear. My partner at the time was invited . . . to make sure that we liked New York.” (Senior faculty member, Medical Center)

“Nursing is a powerhouse in LGBT health in terms of predoctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty. We have a group that meets monthly of about 12 to 15 people. So, you know, we’re closely connected . . . There are several other LGBT faculty and lots of students. From this standpoint, it’s a very friendly place to be.” (Senior faculty member, Medical Center)

“I was one of Dennis Mitchell’s LGBT Provost Initiative hires, and so I felt very, very good about the recruitment process. I had never been recruited before as an LGBT person for a job that was oriented toward LGBT issues. You know, I taught them, but I was never really recruited for a job that focused on that. So, that felt amazing.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

“I think that if there’s one thing that brought me here, and one thing that will keep me here, it’s feeling valued. My value professionally was known, but I did not always feel valued as a person, and I didn’t realize how important that was to me. But that’s critical to me. I think what will keep me here and at any institution, quite frankly, would be the importance of feeling valued.” (Midcareer faculty member, Medical Center)

“I knew that (Columbia) was a conservative university, but that LGBT hiring initiative from the Provost’s Office persuaded me that there was an actual real commitment to LGBT issues on campus. No other school in the country has made the effort that Columbia has made in recent years.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

6.2: TARGETED RECRUITMENT AND CLUSTER HIRES: COLUMBIA'S LGBTQ+ SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE

In 2016, then-Columbia Provost John Coatsworth established the LGBTQ+ Scholarship Initiative as part of a larger effort to support the University's diversity goals and climate of inclusiveness. The \$3 million initiative called for proposals from University schools, departments, and units to advance the recruitment of outstanding faculty engaged in LGBTQ+ scholarship. This was the first initiative of its kind in the United States. Submissions were solicited via a University-wide request for proposals, and a committee of seasoned faculty members, from both the Morningside and Medical Center campuses, conducted the review.

To date, the following faculty members have been successfully recruited with support from the LGBTQ+ Scholarship Initiative:



George Chauncey, DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History and Director of the Columbia Research Initiative on the Global History of Sexualities, works on the history of gender, sexuality, and the city, with a particular focus on American LGBTQ history, and teaches the course *Sexuality in the City*. He is the author of *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*.



Jack Halberstam, Professor of Gender Studies and English and Director of the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality, teaches on such topics as queer failure, sex and media, subcultures, visual culture, gender variance, popular film, and animation, and recently published *Wild Things: The Disorder of Desire* (2020).



Tonda Hughes, Henrik H. Bendixen Professor of International Nursing (in Psychiatry) and Associate Dean for Global Health, has a distinguished career in substance abuse research focusing on women's mental health and is an internationally recognized expert in sexual minority (lesbian and bisexual) women's health. Her pioneering studies on the predictors and consequences of alcohol use among sexual minority women have received NIH funding since 1999 and have grown into the world's longest-running longitudinal study of alcohol use and health among sexual minority women.



Yannik Theim, Associate Professor of Religion, examines how the meanings and possibilities of worlds and experience are shaped through textual, ritual, architectural, aesthetic, embodied, and spatial transmissions, and how such meaning-making and investment with value are bound up with gender, race, sexual desires, ability, coloniality, class, and age. Their current project is entitled *Queer Nuisances: Race, Religion, Sex, and Other Monsters*.

About his Columbia experience, Dr. Chauncey shared the following:

“I have to say I’m a pretty happy camper. I feel that with the LGBT Cluster Hire Initiative, Columbia has made a pretty powerful statement that’s still very new in the world of the academy. I hear from my students that they’re thrilled to have a class like mine. They’re thrilled to have some of the other classes offered through Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. It gives them a chance to think about these issues in a serious, rigorous, scholarly way. The fact that’s becoming more a part of the curriculum. I mean, just earlier this afternoon, I was meeting with two students who both made that remark. I think that is an important thing. It’s not just about social issues or healthcare issues, but intellectual life, a deeper understanding of social issues. All the reasons that we have pushed for African American history and Asian-American history courses over the years. I think that’s right. It does have a real effect.”

For Dr. Chauncey’s course on US Lesbian and Gay History, see <https://news.columbia.edu/news/george-chauncey-defines-lgbtq-life-and-after-stonewall>.



6.3: CULTIVATING THE PIPELINE: GROWING OUR OWN

Columbia’s body of students and other trainees is among the most diverse of our peer institutions. In addition to the recruitment of new diverse faculty to Columbia, nurturing this talent holds great promise to achieve the University’s goals to diversify the professoriate. To foster the career development of our LGBTQ+ students and trainees, visibility of role models, an active community of diverse scholars, mentorship, and opportunities for development are key.

Institutional and individual training grants can provide such opportunities. For example, at the Mailman School of Public Health’s Department of Sociomedical Sciences, the Gender, Sexuality, and Health training program prepares students for research and teaching careers focused on the

historical, social, cultural, and psychological dimensions of gender and sexuality as they impact on the health of sexual and gender minorities, both nationally and globally.

“I think where we probably need to work potentially harder is for bringing in those new people that we can mentor and bring up through the system. PhD students, postdocs, young people . . . Anything, you know, that we can do to make people feel valued.”

(Senior faculty member, Medical Center)

6.4: RETENTION

Just as important as recruitment are retention efforts to support the career development and satisfaction of LGBTQ+ faculty. Columbia’s [Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Retention](#) is an excellent resource to optimize retention for faculty in general and includes a helpful checklist and strategies to implement these retention efforts. Below, for each of these efforts, we provide suggestions to promote the retention of LGBTQ+ faculty.

Monitor School/Departmental Health

- Include the sharing of resources for LGBTQ+ faculty, staff, and students, such as this guide.
- Conduct surveys to measure job satisfaction, and include questions about gender identity, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation in these surveys.
- Review and discuss LGBTQ+ faculty’s workload with respect to service on diversity committees, ensuring that it does not result in added burden.
- Examine data for faculty appointments, promotions, and resignations for any disparities, including disparities for LGBTQ+ faculty.
- Review decision-making processes, checking for any biases (potential biases include heterosexism and cisgenderism).

Establish a Supportive and Welcoming Climate

- Provide all faculty, staff, and students with orientation and training in diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
- Provide opportunities for LGBTQ+ faculty in department and school governance, not limited to issues of diversity and inclusion. Avoid tokenism.
- Facilitate networking opportunities for LGBTQ+ faculty to provide opportunities to connect and decrease isolation.
- Share Columbia resources (including this guide) and policies that address LGBTQ+ faculty needs, including family leave, family-building benefits, tuition programs, and health benefits.

Support Faculty Professional Development

- Celebrate and recognize diverse contributions and outstanding performance, including in LGBTQ+ scholarship.
- Acknowledge and reward contributions to diversity and inclusion goals of the University.
- Support faculty development for continued improvement in teaching practices, with resources including the Center for Teaching and Learning. Incorporate training that reflects diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

6.5: ADVANCEMENT

At Columbia, faculty advancement initiatives provide opportunities for all faculty to receive professional development, to network with peers from other departments or schools, to establish interdisciplinary collaborations, and to join or create communities of support. For faculty whose identities have been historically marginalized, and who may feel isolated in their units, such programs can be especially valuable in terms of retention and overall well-being.

The [Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement](#) offers centralized programming, including faculty development sessions on topics from networking and negotiation to navigating the tenure process, and hosts sessions on safe spaces and LGBTQ+ allyship. The office sponsors Junior and Mid-Career Grants programs for faculty who contribute to the University's diversity goals, as well as [Faculty Seed Grants](#) under its [Addressing Racism: A Call to Action for Higher Education](#) initiative, and supports awardees throughout and beyond the completion of their projects. As we seek to have diverse identities, perspectives, and scholarship represented, LGBTQ+ faculty are encouraged to apply for these grants. For more information, [visit the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement website](#).

SECTION 7: INTERSECTIONALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

7.1: LGBTQ+ MARGINALIZATION AS PART OF LARGER SOCIAL INJUSTICE

LGBTQ+ marginalization occurs within the larger context of social injustice. This is a particularly opportune time; we are witnessing a momentous increase in awareness and motivation to contribute to social justice.

“Rather than just feel neglected, marginalized, and prone to despair, how do you transcend a marginalized identity? Your experience tells you negative things about you, but you have the power to change society.”
(Senior faculty member, Morningside)

7.2: INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES AND OPPRESSION

“[There are] so many efforts around combating racism. I think that taking an intersectional approach to supporting all of people’s different identities and recognizing that . . . they do intersect—that people carry multiple identities and need to be supported in different ways. Like when I think about my LGBT people of color colleagues . . . there’s a lot on their shoulders right now.”
(Midcareer faculty member, Medical Center)

“In general, I think when we talk about academia, we have to address the fact that it is saturated with whiteness and . . . elitism, and making it accessible is part of the queering of it, right, because if we don’t make it accessible to the populations for which it speaks about, then really . . . we can’t . . . take the steps that are actually going to make it, you know, work in populations.”
(Graduate student, Morningside)

In 1989, Columbia Law Professor Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term **intersectionality**, defined as “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.”



“Understanding how these issues are an intersection—that’s always important. Especially for folks of color. We’re always navigating race and sexuality, and it becomes awkward at some moments because most of my identity is wrapped around being Black and because of the ways in which being gay isn’t accepted in many of the spaces or hasn’t been accepted in media spaces that I’ve occupied. It’s always this choice of ‘Am I going to ascertain my Black or LGBTQ identity today?’ and ‘How do I do that?’ Offering opportunities for Black-identifying LGBT folk to figure out these things together, because we really don’t have opportunities to talk about it. I think having some type of fusion of this intersectional piece of it all is going to be really important because, honestly, sometimes I wonder if, when we say LGBTQ, if most folks just think about White people.”
(Faculty member, Morningside)

Kevin Nadal (2019) outlines the limited research around the experience of LGBTQ+ people of color in higher education in his article “Queering and Browning the Pipeline for LGBTQ Faculty of Color in the Academy: The Formation of the LGBTQ Scholars of Color National Network.” For students, this includes the negative impact of the historic centering of the experiences of white people in queer theory, the obstacles in coming out and finding social support, navigating campus environments in which resources are based on singular identity spaces, and lack of resources and representation (Kumashiro 2001, Duran 2018). Aguilar and Johnson (2017) found that LGBTQ+ faculty and staff faced the double burden of mentorship and service for LGBTQ+ students and students of color. Nadal

also highlights studies that found high levels of resilience among LGBTQ+ people of color, and the positive impact of social support for LGBTQ+ individuals in the academy, in particular through networks.

“My school is good about bringing in like-minded younger faculty. And so I came in with folks, we don’t share research interests, but we just have similar backgrounds. We were all folks of color. And we just bonded, and I can’t tell you how important that has been because it’s not only a resource for how to navigate tenure and be productive, but it is also a social piece that we do outside of our academic work that makes this place livable and hospitable. So when moments come up, you know what I’m going to do. Everyone in my small group has had an opportunity to leave and to go to an equally elite space and we’ve all stayed because we have each other.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

In focus group discussions, Columbia students emphasized the need for spaces and support, as well as programming, for LGBTQ+ persons of color. Students also pointed to the need to address economic hardship, including food security. Some LGBTQ+ students experience a lack of financial and emotional support from their families. And in individual interviews, LGBTQ+ women faculty highlighted the impact of sexism on their experience:

“A story of oppression in the academy for me has been around gender as a woman, and then as a Black woman, and not so much around sexuality. Maybe that’s because I’m a feminine-presenting woman. I don’t know. I know some women who are not feminine-presenting, who are more androgynous or masculine identified . . . You know, I think for me, my hurdles are around sexism in the academy, especially in more conservative schools like Columbia.”

(Senior faculty member, Morningside)

“I would say I’ve experienced more issues in my department as a woman than as a lesbian.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

“With the standards [that University administration] has, which I would say privilege men over women still, if you look at what they value as leaders in sexuality research, I would say they probably lean more toward men who are doing this work [LGBTQ+ studies] nationally and internationally.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

7.3: ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL CHANGE

“You know, they say, like when you improve things for certain groups, you often end up improving them for everyone.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

Community and public engagement and activism can be meaningful in transcending a marginalized identity, in creating a sense of purpose, and in building resilience. An LGBTQ+ identity is one example of such an identity. Furthermore, it is crucial that LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of any initiative to promote social justice. Our broader ongoing effort remains to foster a climate in which each member of the Columbia community—regardless of role, seniority level, or identity—can flourish.

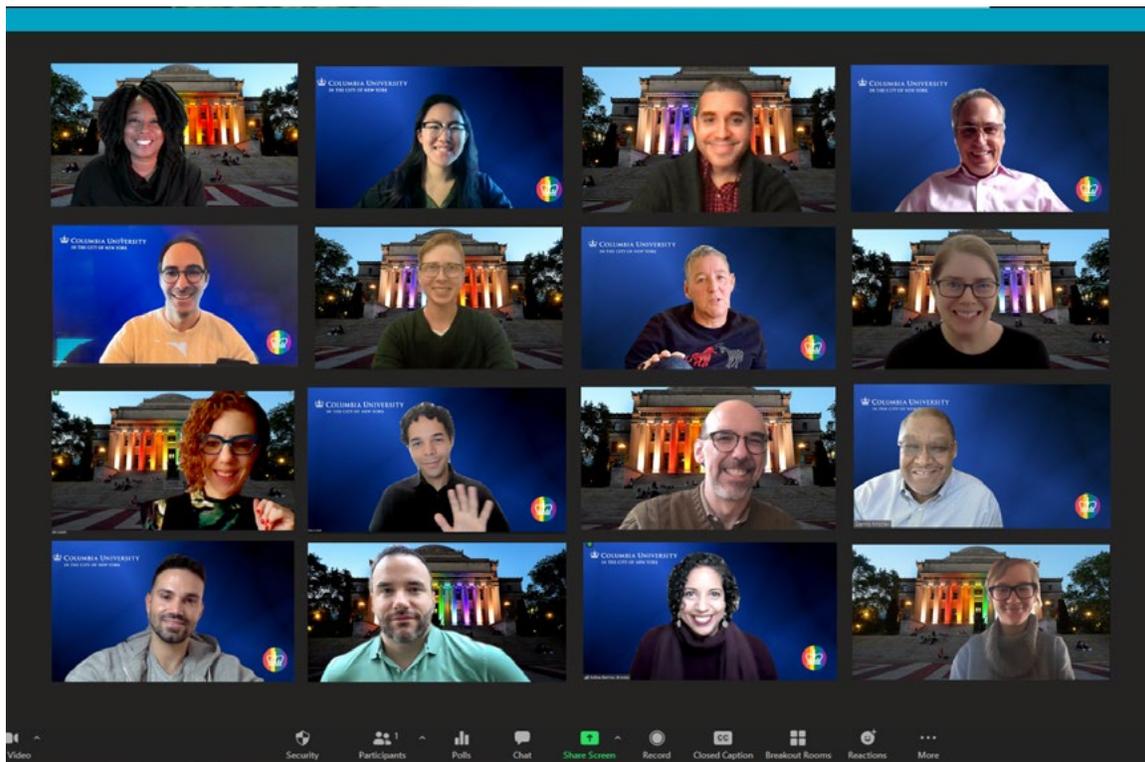
According to the University’s Fourth Purpose, as described by President Bollinger, universities must push beyond their original pursuits of research, teaching, and public service to fulfill a new mandate: to leverage insights from the academy to address real-world challenges. This time in our history, with the COVID-19 epidemic and the flash point brought about by the police murder of George Floyd, has brought us to new understandings about oppression and justice:

“Life goals, purpose, and what people want to do has become transformed since the beginning of the year as a result of societal-level changes, toward having lives of meaning and purpose. So we have an opportunity, at Columbia, to support students in connecting with their communities and with the broader social issues and challenges in the country. And within that, is LGBTQ.” (Senior faculty member, Morningside)

CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

Despite having faced significant challenges and discrimination, LGBTQ+ Columbians, with their activism and scholarship, have contributed to the intellectual and social fabric of our community. In sharing this guide, we seek to honor and highlight their work and raise a call to action for the broader Columbia community toward greater equity and justice.

We want to hear from you. Tell us how your unit or organization is implementing this guide, give us feedback on its content, or join others on campus who are working to improve LGBTQ+ life at Columbia by contacting our office at facultyadvancement@columbia.edu.



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