# SECTION 7: FACULTY RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND ADVANCEMENT

## 7.1: 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 the recruitment process, units should be mindful not to 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)

## 7.2: 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."*

To read about Dr. Chauncey's course on US Lesbian and Gay History, see the 2019 Columbia News article "George Chauncey Defines LGBTQ Life Before and after Stonewall."

## 7.3: CULTIVATING THE PIPELINE: GROWING OUR OWN

Columbia's community 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)

## 7.4: 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.

## 7.5: 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 Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement website.

# CHECKLIST: FOSTERING AN INCLUSIVE DEPARTMENT CLIMATE FOR LGBTQ+ COLLEAGUES AND STUDENTS

## 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.