QUEER AND GENDER VARIANT STUDENTS: EXPLORING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR INCREASINGLY DIVERSE POPULATIONS
AAC&U’s 2018 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Democracy: The Inconvenient Truths Conference

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HIGHER EDUCATION’S CIVIC MISSION
• Strengthen and deepen civic learning
• Enhance civic engagement experiences
• Ensure students graduate prepared to be the informed, engaged citizens that our communities and democracy need

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENTS
1985
CSULA students must take 2 civic learning courses for GE
2012
Massachusetts Adopts Nation’s 1st Statewide Civic Learning Policy 2014
CSULA students must take 2 civic learning courses for GE 2016

PRE-COLLEGE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

STUDENT LEADERSHIP
Penn State students waiting to cast their ballots in the 2016 presidential election.
What expressions of civic engagement are happening on your campus? What issues are prominent for queer and gender variant students?

WITHIN SOGI IDENTIFICATIONS

NSSE 2017; 634 INSTITUTIONS
169,736 FIRST-YEARS; 212,804 SENIORS

Sexual Orientation
N = 28,776

- Bisexual 87%
- Gay 67%
- Questioning 37%
- Lesbian 12%
- Queer 9%
- Pansexual 5%
- Asexual 4%

Gender Identity
N = 1571

- Nonbinary 33%
- Genderfluid 9%
- Another GI 54%
- Agender 9%
- Transgender 16%
- Genderqueer 10%

2017 CIRP FRESHMAN SURVEY

- 52nd administration
- 213 four-year institutions
- 1,567,302 incoming freshmen
- 896 Transgender students
- 13,045 Queer-spectrum students

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: PRE-COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

- Performed volunteer work
- Voted in a student election
- Discussed politics (frequently only)
- Publicly communicated my opinion about a cause (frequently only)
- Demonstrated for a cause (e.g., boycott, rally, protest)

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: LIKELIHOOD OF COLLEGE PARTICIPATION

- Vote in a local, state, or national election (very good chance)
- Participate in student clubs/groups (very good chance)
- Participate in student government (some or very good chance)
- Participate in volunteer or community service work (some or very good chance)

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE-LEARNING DONE OR IN PROGRESS

- Formal leadership role
- Service-learning in courses
**REFLECTIVE & INTEGRATIVE LEARNING**

- Very often or often
  - Tied to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective: 78% Queer-spectrum, 72% Straight, 84% Gender variant, 54% Cisgender
  - Included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments: 74% Queer-spectrum, 71% Straight, 79% Gender variant, 56% Cisgender
  - Connected your learning to societal problems or issues: 77% Queer-spectrum, 76% Straight, 79% Gender variant, 78% Cisgender

**PERCEIVED GAINS FROM INSTITUTION**

- Very much or quite a bit
  - Being an informed and active citizen: 89% Queer-spectrum, 87% Straight, 89% Gender variant, 83% Cisgender
  - Understanding people of other backgrounds: 70% Queer-spectrum, 73% Straight, 72% Gender variant, 68% Cisgender
  - Helping others effectively with others: 78% Queer-spectrum, 78% Straight, 77% Gender variant, 76% Cisgender

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

- Pre-Stonewall Era and the Fears of Visibility
- Student Homophile Leagues & Campus Support (1960s)
- Stonewall Riots (1969)
- HIV/AIDS and Act Up (1980s)
- Nationally-Covered Tragedies (1990s-Present)
- First National Climate Study (2003)

**STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING/SUSTAINING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

- Campus Climate: Policies, Practices, and Behaviors
- Inclusion of Queer-Spectrum and Trans-Spectrum Topics in Campus Programming around Civic Issues
- Civic Engagement Opportunities Relevant to Queer/Trans Students (Highly Visible and Discreet)
- Inclusion of Queer/Trans-Spectrum Topics in Service-Learning Coursework, readings, activities, service sites.
- Support for Student Activism - this is Service Learning!
- Leadership Cultivation OUTSIDE of the LGBTQ Student Organization and Related to Other Identities Held

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: LOCAL OR CAMPUS ISSUES**

- Very often or often
  - Organized others to work on issues: 12% Queer-spectrum, 17% Straight, 21% Gender variant, 20% Cisgender
  - Asked others to address issues: 16% Queer-spectrum, 24% Straight, 29% Gender variant, 29% Cisgender
  - Raised awareness of issues: 20% Queer-spectrum, 24% Straight, 28% Gender variant, 27% Cisgender
  - Discussed issues with others: 20% Queer-spectrum, 24% Straight, 28% Gender variant, 28% Cisgender

**THANKS FOR JOINING US!**

For more information about NSSE or to download presentation slides see nsse.indiana.edu

For more information about the Tyler Clementi Center, see https://tylerclementi.rutgers.edu/

For more information about TFS or other CIRP surveys, see heri.ucla.edu

For more information about the adjacent slide, see peter@indiana.edu

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