ADVISING LGBTQ+ STUDENTS
A conversation with Emily Harsch, Gender & Sexuality Services (GSS) Coordinator

According to Emily Harsch, some of the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ students here at UNI include coming out (sharing with other people their sexual orientation or gender identity after self-awareness), coping with challenges during gender transition (such as not having chosen names and gender identity in their records), and being in classrooms where examples given are not inclusive of all genders.

For federal & legal compliance, UNI collects legal names and legal sex - either male or female. Students are able to update their preferred name and gender identity on MyUniverse. A student can meet with Emily Harsch if they need assistance in updating their university records or to talk about any topic related to their identity. Emily encourages advisors to become Safe Zone Allies and display a Safe Zone Ally placard in their work space. Safe Zone Allies are people holding dominant identities who are recognized by members of marginalized communities for their actions against both personal and structural bias and discrimination. It is important to remember that being an ally is not an identity. As a Safe Zone Ally you are an advocate - you are continuously evaluating yourself and always seeking more information on current issues affecting the LGBTQ+ community.

Displaying a Safe zone ally placard in your office will help students become more comfortable with opening up to you. These placards show that you are committed to supporting the LGBTQ+ community at UNI. They are issued to you after participating in the Safe Zone Ally training that is offered on a regular basis here at UNI. After the training, as a staff or faculty member, you can also be listed as a resource if you are interested.

Emily encourages advisors when working with LGBTQ+ students to listen, ask the student what resources they need, and how you can further assist them. The GSS office has a mentoring program for incoming first-year students who identify as LGBTQ+ and also for all other LGBTQ+ students seeking support. Mentors in the program are students who have had at least one year of experience at UNI within the LGBTQ+ community.

Some Gender Identity Terminology:
Agender: Identity describing someone who does not identify with any gender, and/or identifies outside of the gender binary.
Cisgender: A person who identifies with the sex, gender & gender roles assigned to them at birth. As an identity, the term is used before man or woman.
Cisgender man/cisman: Someone assigned male at birth & identifies as a man.
Cisgender woman/ciswoman: Someone who was assigned female at birth & identifies as a woman.
Man: A person who identifies as a man, regardless of their sex assigned at birth.
Transgender man/transman: A person who was assigned female at birth & identifies as a man.
Transgender woman/transwoman: A person who was assigned male at birth & identifies as a woman.

If you have questions about advising LGBTQ+ students feel free to contact Emily Harsch at 319-273-5428. You can also get in touch with GSS staff at lgbt@uni.edu.

For more information, please visit Gender & Sexuality Services webpage.

OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

SAFE ZONE ALLY PROGRAM
The goal of this two-part training is to equip those interested with knowledge on how they can best support LGBTQ+ community here at UNI. This supports UNI's goal of cultivating a diverse, respectful and inclusive environment.

Safe Zone Ally Training Dates for Spring 2020
Friday, March 6th (CME 109P): 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Thursday, April 2nd (CME 109P): 12:30 PM-4:30 PM

Please contact lgbt@uni.edu if you have questions about this training. You can sign up through this link provided.

Please note that using the “unsubscribe from this list” option at the bottom of this communication only unsubscribes you from receive the Advising Express newsletter distributed through Mailchimp.