

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Allied Commission 2013-2014 Campus Change Team Report

Members and Chairs

Chair: Samantha Mundy

Members: Angie Nichols, George Hoagland, Dori Decker, Bob Jansen, Deborah Petersen-Perlman, Kathy Heltzer, Scott Lawrence, Lake Dziengel, Nicole Hackbarth, Kathleen Gates, Jean Farrell, Jake Caceres, Metadel Abegaz, Kate Tusha, Joanne Coffin-Langdon, Cynthia Coffin-Langdon

1. Mission Statement

The GLBTQA Commission is committed to creating a safe, welcoming, and enriching climate for the UMD GLBTQA community that enables GLBTQA students, faculty, and staff to thrive intellectually, socially, and emotionally at the university and in surrounding communities. We strive to accomplish this through education, advocacy, collaborative planning with other university and community groups, and outreach and support to members of the UMD GLBTQA community. This includes planning social events to bring members of the GLBTQA community and others together.

2. Organization

The commission is a campus-wide organization comprised of faculty, staff, students, and community members. The commission works to promote leadership, understanding, and education about queer people and issues. The commission seeks connection and partnership with the broader community.

2013-2014 Meetings

Twelve (12) meetings were held during the academic year. Meetings were typically on a biweekly schedule. In the Fall 2013 Semester, meetings were held Thursdays at 1:00 pm in KSC 355. Meetings in the Spring 2014 Semester were held Wednesdays at 12:00 pm in RDC 323.

2013-2014 Priorities from May 2013 Report

The May 2013 report provided us with ideas for this year. We had planned to do both the Coming Out Day Luncheon and the Super Gay Cabaret again. Suggestions for this year from the previous report included making stronger connections with the community and the student group, QASU, as well as addressing the issue of sexuality and spirituality.

We made stronger connections to the community and QASU primarily through Commission membership. We had two new community members join our commission this year. Both new members have important community ties to spiritual/religious groups and the GLBT Northland Elder group. We had two student members from QASU as well. One student was chair of the commission, which allowed for communication between the two groups.

We had two programs that addressed the issue of sexuality and spirituality. The film showing and discussion of *For the Bible Tells Me So*, and the panel Changing the Frame: Breaking Down Religious Stereotypes. While these were very interesting and informative, attendance could have been better. Ideas for improving attendance on this topic might be better if held in conjunction with a specific church or synagogue co-sponsoring the event at their place of worship.

2013-2014 Success and Accomplishments

1. Coming Out Day Luncheon – October 8th, 2013
 - a. Connect with faculty, staff, and community
 - i. Goal 2 pt 6 – Integrate cultural diversity...into the curriculum and campus life
 - ii. Goal 2 pt 7 – Develop partnerships with the surrounding community around diversity and social justice initiatives
 - b. Show strong support for students
 - c. Speaker Annette Wiles, UMD Women’s Basketball Coach and student Mayson Longley.
2. Housing Director Search
 - a. Letter to the Vice Chancellor of Student Life to add experience with implementing inclusive communities for GLBTQA students to the housing director search.
 - b. Greatly influenced the candidates for the search and an extraordinary hire.
3. Super Gay Cabaret – February 27th and 28th, 2014
 - a. Raised awareness of our community/queer culture through song, dance, and laughter
 - b. Celebration of queer identity in entertainment
 - c. Question power dynamics – who is in power can shape our perceptions of people
 - i. A forum for discussing this concept would be helpful. Super Gay Cabaret is a great place to introduce the idea, but not a time for discussion.

4. Campus Change Team
 - a. Helping to address all aspects of goal 2
 - b. Collaboration with other Unit Change Teams

5. Gay Days – April 5th-7th, 2014
 - a. 3 days of GLBTQA-related events (4 events)
 - b. Proud Prom – hosted and sponsored by QASU
 - c. Transgender speaker Jeanine Williams – hosted and sponsored by the Lake Superior Freethinkers
 - d. *For the Bible Tells Me So* Film Showing and Discussion – hosted and sponsored by GLBTQA Commission
 - e. Changing the Frame: Seeing through Religious Stereotypes Panel – hosted by UMD Interfaith Task Force, cosponsored with GLTBQA Commission, United Campus Ministries, Lutheran Campus Ministries, and Students Seeking Spirituality
 - f. Not a large turnout at the faith/spirituality events. Is there any way we could make these more interesting to the students?

6. Events attended/sponsored
 - a. Kathy O’Bear Diversity Training
 - b. Summit on Equity, Diversity, and Multiculturalism
 - c. Proud Prom
 - d. Fabulous Farewell
 - e. QASU member sponsorship to the Gay Games

2014-2015 Work

Events Planned:

Coming Out Day Luncheon
GLBT Film Series

Suggestions for next year include:

1. Having at least one member on the GLBTQA Commission who is a student associated with QASU. They can act as a liaison between the commission and the student group and help keep us connected.

2. Creating a publicist position on the commission. Technology using social networking seems to be best way to communicate events. Having a person who is dedicated to PR in this format will keep us better connected with the GLBTQA community.

3. Increased collaboration with other Unit Change Teams. The Diversity Commission is planning a theme to help unit everyone next year, we are excited to get on board.
4. Increased presence in the Duluth/Superior community. This has been something we have struggled with as we are typically focused on what is occurring on campus. However, it is also our mission to seek connection with the broader community. A deliberate focus on community engagement is needed. One way to increase our presence would to be a part of the “We are Everywhere” photo campaign with Kerry Gauthier, continued work with the Northland GLBT Elders group, and the Duluth-Superior Pride Committee.