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**THE OFFICE OF
LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL
TRANSGENDER, QUEER
RESOURCES & PROGRAMS**

2004-2005

ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted by:

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Coordinator

Executive Summary

The mandate of the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Resources and Programs is to create a positive and inclusive environment for LGBTQ students, staff, faculty and alumnae/alumni at the University of Toronto. The Office undertakes education and consultation on heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia on the University's three campuses. We provide information, support and advocacy programming for students, staff and faculty and we work to build community among LGBTQ individuals and their allies. We address both individual and systemic discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

In 2004-05 the Office worked within multiple contexts created by elements such as the growth in student population; enrolment of younger students; and the competing demands of academic life, work life and widely varying social milieus. The intersections of religion, class, race, culture and family also played out in various ways, which are reflected in the breadth of programs and resources offered, and in the several crisis cases that I addressed over the course of the year. Not unlike other years, LGBTQ student organizations on all three campuses experienced highs and lows in their struggle for visibility and acceptance.

Community development is an essential component of the Office mandate. Over the course of any year, the development of community-building processes is often subtle in nature. Building upon linkages to the academic mission and prioritizing the importance of social networks, two new initiatives were introduced in 2004-05. "Queers and Allies: Where Are All the Women?" was the first annual gathering of students, staff and faculty in response to the invisibility of LGBTQ women and allies on campus. The Office also piloted programming focused on LGBTQ-identified students and supporting academic success. The "Queers in the Learning Community" series targeted writing skills, communication in the classroom, and time and stress management. These workshops explored various strategies for LGBTQ students to develop and improve upon their academic skills.

This past spring, the Office sponsored an LGBTQ student climate survey with the purpose of gaining information and insight into the environment perceived, felt and experienced by LGBTQ graduate and undergraduate students on all three campuses at U of T. Results of the survey have yet to be released, but a brief summary is provided in the annual report.

In collaboration with colleagues and other offices, I continued to support climate change processes through development of best practice procedures, awareness events and educational

forums, anti-homophobia education, outreach to student leaders, individual consultations, and work with committees. For example, this past year, the Office worked closely with the Faculty of Physical Education and Health committee on equity to actualize many of the recommendations outlined by the Task Force on Sexual Diversity. Very exciting work is being accomplished concerning the intersection of homophobia, sport and athletics within the Athletic Centre.

The Office of LGBTQ Resources & Programs also responds to staff and faculty needs. This past year I responded in a range of capacities, from climate and environment concerns in the workplace to addressing systemic discrimination and the invisibility of sexual diversity, through individual consultations, committees and educational seminars. I continue to focus on operationalizing the inclusion of sexual minorities in collaboration with Human Resources, the Office of the Provost (regarding faculty recruitment and retention), and working committees like the Equity Issues Advisory Group and the HR Sexual Diversity Committee.

Priorities for the coming year will include:

- Continue programming focused on the intersectionality of LGBTQ-identified students of race, culture, religion, class and abilities in the academic environment
- Complete the analysis and report arising out of the LGBTQ climate student survey, and follow-up on emerging themes
- Strengthen and diversify outreach methods to new and returning students
- Offer a series of seminars focused on matters pertaining to transgender students for Student Life Professionals and Registrars
- Develop materials addressing teaching skills and managing conflict in the classroom pertaining to equity and diversity curriculum in collaboration with the office of Scarborough Academic Resources
- Expand upon on-going work pertaining to visibility and inclusion of LGBTQ staff and faculty
- Continue to develop and deliver support and resources dedicated to matters associated with equity, discrimination, and community development related to LGBTQ students and student life at the University of Toronto
- Provide support to the Provost and VP-Human Resources & Equity regarding initiatives in the *Stepping Up: 2004-2010* planning document which enhance equity and diversity at the University of Toronto for students, staff and faculty.

Background to the Office

The Office of LGBTQ Resources and Programs was created in 1999 in response to a failed referendum to solicit financial support from the undergraduate constituency for the creation of a lesbian and gay centre, and subsequent high profile incidents of homophobia at the University. In addition, there was concern from students, staff and faculty with regard to adequately addressing heterosexism and homophobia in and out of the classroom on all three campuses of the University.

In response to these and other factors, the Vice Provost, Students and the Assistant Vice-President of Student Affairs proposed the creation of a staff position to provide education and assistance to all members of the University of Toronto community, on issues related to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer (LGBTQ) student population. Further endorsement and recognition for this position was attained when the President's Office included the Office as a member of the Equity Issues Advisory Group (EIAG).

Jude Tate was appointed to the position of Coordinator, LGBTQ Resources and Programs on July 1, 1999. Funding for the Office was derived in part from student ancillary fees, via the Office of Student Affairs, and in part from the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students. In the spring of 2001, the Vice-Provost, Students and the Director of Student Affairs commissioned a limited review of the program to enable the administration to make informed decisions about the program's future role and mandate. The recommendations emerging from that review have largely been implemented and are documented in detail in the report. Recognizing the Office's role in working with faculty and staff, the mandate of the office was formally expanded to include these additional groups, and the provision of funding for a .6 FTE administrative assistant. In support of the expanded portfolio, funding and reporting responsibilities expanded to the Office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity. The Office continues to report to the Director of Student Affairs.

The core services of the Office consist of the following:

- Direct service such as informal individual support and referral;
- Information and consultation;
- Education and outreach;
- Leadership development; and
- Development and execution of programs and events to enrich members of the University

community.

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Education, consultation and/or support to students, staff and faculty continue to form a large volume of the work of the Office. The nature of requests includes workshops/seminars, complex problem solving, crisis counselling, referrals and consultations, and print materials. In 2004-05 the Office worked with students, staff and faculty within multiple contexts impacted by elements such as the growth in student population; enrolment of younger students; the competing demands of academic life, and work life circumstances in widely varying social milieus at the University of Toronto. Reflected in the breadth of programs and resources offered is the intersectionality of religion, class, race, culture and family. Over the course of the past year, several complex individual cases involving students have been addressed and were largely linked to experiences of heterosexism and discrimination from families, friends, religious or faith communities, and or classmates. One of the consistent struggles many students have is in developing new strategies of coping and developing positive sexual and gender identities. Frequently, this process affects a range of demands from fulfilling course requirements to managing finances, to finding spaces on and off campus where one can explore possibilities and establish the self.

The Office offered a new series of workshops in response to emerging needs of students involved in leadership activities across the University. These students, while doing amazing work outside of the classroom, are struggling to perform at consistently high academic standards. Piloted in the fall of 2004, the "*Queers in the Learning Community*" series targeted writing skills, communication in the classroom, and time and stress management skills. These workshops explored various strategies for LGBTQ students to develop and improve upon their academic skills. Staff from the Counselling and Learning Skills Service, St. Michaels College, and the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering facilitated the workshops. Although there was a great deal of interest by students, the attendance was less than ideal. In order to address this issue, the Office intends to offer *Queers in the Learning Community* this fall and winter in different formats and time-lines and work towards bolstering the climate between academic performance and the relationship of balancing learning inside and outside the classroom.

As mentioned earlier the Office sponsored events that were targeted at strengthening

LGBTQ communities and networks on campus. Such an event was the “*Queers and Allies: Where Are All the Women?*”, the first annual gathering of students, staff and faculty in response to the invisibility of LGBTQ women and allies on campus. The success of this event revealed that straight allies and LGBTQ identified women are not necessarily visible to each other, whether student, staff or faculty, and generally do not have occasion to relate to one another as allies. Objectives identified coming out of this event include the desire to reconvene, greater visibility, mentorship strategies for queer students and queer faculty, and creative opportunities for allies to be more visible and connected into networks.

In 2004-05 the Office of LGBTQ Resources & Programs continued in its provision of leadership skills development, education, training and awareness concerning LGBTQ equity, diversity, power, privilege and inclusivity to the University community. The Office works both formally and informally with orientation coordinators, student executives/unions, recognized campus groups, residence life staff and student life professionals in the provision of educational seminars and consultation on heterosexism or acts of homophobia. One of the emerging themes in this work is the growing sophistication of the audience who are aware of the basic concepts of inclusion but struggle with implementation. For instance, at the New U conference, Christopher Collins (former President, GSU) and I led a workshop focused on the needs of student leaders learning to address the challenges and barriers in implementing equity based policies that address inclusivity. I played a role both formally and informally over the year in educating, dialoguing, and problem solving with students about the inherent difficulties of operationalizing equity-based concepts into practice. Clear patterns emerged in these exchanges in the reasons why these practices are not always easy to implement, they involve a particular kind of commitment, tolerance to criticism, vision, and the time and skills required.

In addition and often in partnership with departments and administrators the Office provided seminars for:

Party Drugs & Gay Culture: a workshop for students and volunteers of LGBT-OUT who host the monthly homohops, and all ages dance party at a downtown bar. *in collaboration with the AIDS Committee of Toronto.*

The Trouble with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, New U 2005: the University wide student leadership conference held this year at UTSC in June 2005. This workshop was co-facilitated with Christopher Collins.

Residence Life Training: the University wide training retreat for over 200 residence dons and assistants. Additional workshops were offered to UTM residence dons and academic advisors, UTSC residence council, the da Vinci Engineering Enrichment Program (DEEP). *in collaboration with residence life coordinators and Student Affairs.*

Say It With Your Body: training peer educators in facilitation of workshops and incorporation of LGBTQ content into workshops. *in collaboration with the Sexual Education Centre.*

Choose Your Career Path: a workshop for LGBTQ and allies exploring career paths and planning. *in collaboration with the Career Centre.*

Queers in the Learning Community: a workshop series exploring various issues and strategies for LGBTQ students to develop and improve upon their academic skills.

In addition, the Office annually hosts and co-hosts the following events and programs that this past year included: Queers of Colour; World Majority: Sexual Minority; UT Pride 2005; CALSS Intern Training, Gays & Lesbians International (GLINT). As well, the Office continues to work closely and proactively with existing and emerging LGBTQ groups and initiatives on all three campuses, including:

LGBTQSC at UTSC, Kulanu (Jewish Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Group; *Inqueeries* in Education, OISEUT; OUT In Law (UTOIL); Queers@ St. Mike's (Q@SMC), St. Michael's College; Queers Of Colour at U of T; LGBTOUT – undergraduate, graduate, engineering chapters; Rainbow Trinity, Trinity College; Positive Space committees, St. George and Scarborough campuses; Gay-straight alliance at Rotman; Queers in Commerce; [OUT@UTM](#); Que(e)ring Religion; 89 Chestnut Positive Space; Phys Ed. Positive Space; Sex. Ed Centres: UTM, St. George;

In 2004-05 the Office worked closely with staff and faculty. The coordinator participated on committees such as the Equity Issues Advisory Group, Human Resource committees, individual consultations and educational seminars to address climate and environment concerns in the workplace and systemic invisibility of sexual diversity. The Office endeavored to work with staff by assisting them in their work with colleagues and students through education, developing best practices and case-by-case consultation (i.e. Registrars, Deans of Students, Chairs and Deans, residence life professionals etc.). The Office also responded to individual staff concerns and workplace environment issues including safety, harassment and isolation. The coordinator continued to focus on operationalizing the inclusion of sexual minorities in collaboration with Human Resources, the Office of the Provost (regarding faculty recruitment

and retention), and working committees like the Equity Issues Advisory Group and the Human Resources Sexual Diversity committee.

Between 2003-05 the Office of LGTQ Resources & Programs worked closely with the Library staff development committee in designing and piloting a seminar on diversity for all Library staff. Plans include diversity training for all levels of Library staff on all three campuses over the next two years. Three pilot workshops were held for senior management with the intention of offering workshops to the rest of the staff over the course of 2005-06. The workshops were put on hold pending a reassessment of the needs within the library.

The Office worked closely with the Faculty of Physical Education and Health Committee on Equity to actualize many of the recommendations outlined by the Task Force on Sexual Diversity. This past year's work entailed addressing the climate in the Athletic Centre, educating part-time and appointed staff on the intersections of homophobia, sport and athletics.

As mentioned earlier in this report, in 2004-05 the Office sponsored an LGBTQ student climate survey with the purpose of gaining information and insight into the environment as it is perceived, felt and experienced by LGBTQ graduate and undergraduate students on all three campuses at U of T. Two hundred and ninety-one students completed the survey. A majority (56%) of respondents were undergraduate students, the majority of whom are between 19-26 years old, a majority were full-time, living off-campus, male (49%), and identifying as gay (39%). Overall, students rated the campus climate as comfortable, with Scarborough students indicating a higher proportion of discomfort. A priority for the coming year will be to complete the analysis and report arising out of the LGBTQ climate student survey, and follow up on emerging themes.

There were 17 reports via the Report the Hate website, ranging from concerns about classroom environments, content of curriculum, and harassing graffiti, to overheard comments. In response to complaints about hate oriented graffiti on the St. George campus, the Office worked in collaboration with the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office, Student Affairs and the VP-Equity SAC to do an inventory and removal of "known" graffiti sites. This Office also revised its poster initiative regarding reporting hate on campus.

The Office serves as a resource to Positive Space committees on the St. George campus and Scarborough campuses and to the campaign of behalf of the University of Toronto. Each committee has chairperson(s) with whom I work closely on planning events, responding to concerns and assisting in raising the visibility of the campaign. Positive Space remains a key tool

used by the coordinator to dialogue with students, staff and faculty about heterosexism and homophobia. It remains essential to many allies as a means of raising the visibility, combating heterosexism and creating welcoming spaces. For example, in 2004-05 members of the St. George Positive Space committee met several times with the Chair of the Commerce program, student members of Queers in Commerce and executive members of the Commerce Students Association.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the support and efforts of many individuals to whom the work of the Office could not have done without:

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The Office of LGTQ Resources & Programs gratefully wishes to acknowledge its Sponsorships and Partnerships:

The Office of the President, The Office of the VP-Human Resources and Equity, The Office of Student Affairs, Student Services, The Family Care Office, The Counselling and Learning Skills Service (CALSS), The Career Centre, The Transitional Year Program Hart House, The Graduate Students Union, The Office of the Dean of Students-University College, The Sexual Diversity Studies Program, The Students Administrative Council (SAC), The Equity Issues Advisory Group (EIAG), Student Issues Committee-NSOC- Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, Student Groups: [Queers@St. Mike's College](#) ([q@smc](#)); Rainbow Trinity; LGBT-OUT; [OUT@UTM](#); LGBTQ-UTSC; LGBT-OUT-Grad Chapter;

Off Campus

The Inside OUT Film & Video Festival
The David Kelley Lesbian & Gay and HIV/AIDS Community Counselling Programs of the Family Services Association of Toronto (FSAT)
The AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT), Toronto Women's Bookstore
Pride Toronto, Supporting Our Youth & the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Youth Services of Central Toronto Youth Services (CTYS), Salaam Toronto