

College of Liberal Arts

Diversity and Inclusion Resource Module on LGBTQ Identities, Lives, and Allyship

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Introduction

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals make up about 4.5% of the American adult population¹ and the proportion of LGBTQ-identifying individuals is even larger among youth (age 18-34) at approximately 20%.² Although Americans have become more accepting of their LGBTQ-identifying friends and family members,³ this population remains especially vulnerable to many socioeconomic, social, and psychological challenges.

Socio-politically, discrimination against LGBTQ individuals continues, especially as the Trump administration and other political bodies continuously move to rescind social, legal, and political protection of LGBTQ individuals in various domains.⁴ Moreover, the general social understanding of the process of coming out—disclosing one’s sexual and/or gender identity—remain one-dimensional and the risk of outing—revealing one’s sexual and/or gender identity without consent—continue to prevent many LGBTQ-identifying individuals from leading their authentic lives. LGBTQ individuals also experience economic and health vulnerabilities specific to their sexual and gender identities.⁵ For instance, many LGBTQ youths experience homelessness due to their physical and/or mental abuse or rejection from their family members.^{6,7} Issues such as substance abuses, risky sexual behaviors, and mental health challenges also contribute to their already heightened marginality in the larger society. These vulnerabilities are further exacerbated for those with additional marginalities stemming from racial minority identity, disability status, and so on.^{8,9,10}

Being a good ally not only helps to exacerbate some of these marginalities LGBTQ individuals experience, but also create a more inclusive learning and working environment and communities. Good allyship is also vital in increasing overall awareness, educating others, and upholding values of justice. The purpose of this module is to assist those who identify as allies, regardless of one’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity, to learn about various issues related to LGBTQ individuals and understand the importance of good allyship.

¹ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/234863/estimate-lgbt-population-rises.aspx>

² https://www.glaad.org/files/aa/2017_GLAAD_Accelerating_Acceptance.pdf

³ Ibid

⁴ <https://www.hrc.org/resources/trumps-timeline-of-hate>

⁵ Campbell, S. (2013). Sexual health needs and the LGBT community. *Nursing Standard*, 27(32).

⁶ Durso, L. E., & Gates, G. J. (2012). Serving our youth: Findings from a national survey of services providers working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

⁷ Morton, M. H., Dworsky, A., Matjasko, J. L., Curry, S. R., Schlueter, D., Chávez, R., & Farrell, A. F. (2018). Prevalence and correlates of youth homelessness in the United States. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 62(1), 14-21.

⁸ Battle, J., Pastrana Jr, A. J., & Daniels, J. (2012). Social justice sexuality survey: The executive summary for the Black population. *New York City*.

⁹ Battle, J., Pastrana Jr, A. J., & Daniels, J. (2013). Social Justice Sexuality Survey: The Executive Summary for the Asian/Pacific Islander Population. *Social Justice Sexuality*.

¹⁰ Battle, J., Pastrana Jr, A. J., & Daniels, J. (2013). Social Justice Sexuality Survey: The Executive Summary for the Asian/Pacific Islander Population. *Social Justice Sexuality*.

Outline

- Overview
 - Terms and definitions
 - LGBTQ Experiences
 - Coming Out
 - Intersectional LGBTQ Lives
 - Role of LGBTQ Allies
 - Local/Regional/National Resources
- Terms and Definitions
 - LGBTQ (or LGBTQ+) is an umbrella term encompassing diverse sexual identity/orientation and gender identities
 - Sexual identity and orientation refer to one's sexual attraction and behavior (i.e., same-sex vs. different-sex) as well as identity (i.e., homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, asexual, etc.)
 - Gender identity refer to a personal conception of oneself and may not correlate with one's assigned sex at birth.
 - Gender expression refers to the ways in which one presents their gender to the world (i.e., masculine, feminine, androgynous, agender, etc.)
 - The acronym of LGBTQ+ stand for:
 - Lesbian, gay, Bisexual, Trans*, and Queer
 - Queer often used interchangeably with LGBTQ as an umbrella term to refer to all non-heterosexual/non-cisgender identities
 - In addition, we use the expression "LGBTQ+" to also include
 - Those who are Questioning, Intersexed, and/or identify as Aromantic, Asexual, and other gender/sexual identities.
 - (If need more in-depth explanation, cover following bullet points)
 - Sexuality/Sexual Orientation
 - Sexual orientation is defined as
 - Sexual identity is defined as
 - Sexual behavior is defined as
 - Biological Sex vs. Gender
 - Biological sex refers to one's assigned sex at birth, such as male and female
 - Gender refers to the conceptualization and presentation of self in the social worlds, such as man, woman, non-binary, androgynous, etc.
 - Trans* individuals are those whose assigned sex at birth does not align with their conceptualization of self.
 - Not all trans* people go through gender reassignment surgery.
- LGBTQ Experiences
 - In the United States, Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals make up about 4.5% of the adult population¹ and the proportion of LGBTQ-identifying individuals is even larger among youth (age 18-34) at approximately 20%.
 - Coming Out

- Coming out refers to the self-disclosure of one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity
 - Coming out is NOT a one-time deal; it is a process
 - Outing is problematic and deadly not only because it is a violation of privacy, but also:
 - Outing exposes one's sexual minority status without consent, making them vulnerable to a variety of discrimination, social isolation, and violence
 - For more information: <https://www.thetaskforce.org/why-outing-can-be-deadly/>
- How to support someone's coming out
 - Listen to their feelings
 - Avoid judgment and examine own biases
 - Respect confidentiality (do not out anyone)
- Pronouns Matter
 - Using someone's correct gender pronouns is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for their identity
 - Respecting pronouns create a safe environment for one to lead their authentic lives
 - For more information: <https://culture.calpoly.edu/PrideCenter/PronounsMatter>
- LGBTQ Needs and Vulnerabilities
 - Intersectionality
 - Sexual and gender identity intersects with race/ethnicity, class, religion, and other aspects of one's personal identity, social positionality, and social worlds
 - Example: Race and LGBTQ
 - Race and gender influence LGBTQ-identifying individuals' worldviews
 - Lee (2018, 2020) finds that LGB racial minorities rely on racially-specific cultural understandings of racial group membership and respectability in making sense of the legalization of same-sex marriage
 - Research also shows variation in coming out strategies among LGBTQ individuals by race, age, gender, etc. (Tan 2011; Rosenfeld 2009; Moore 2011; Marsigla et al. 2009; Acosta 2008)
 - For more demographic information and infographics: www.socialjusticsexuality.com
- LGBTQ Allyship
 - Ally refers to a person whose commitment to dismantling oppression is reflected in a willingness to do the following:
 - Educate oneself about oppression
 - Learn from and listen to targets of oppression
 - Examine and challenge own prejudices
 - Learn and practice skills to challenge oppressive remarks, behaviors, politics, and institutional structure
 - Act collaboratively with members of the target group to dismantle oppression

- LGBTQ Allies can...
 - Be aware of the power of language and match tone, use I statements, and respect preferred pronouns and validate all queer identities
 - Offer support without judgment by
 - Talking with someone, not for someone,
 - Making brave spaces, not safe spaces
 - Brave spaces encourage dialogues among participants by recognizing difference and holding each person accountable to do the work of sharing experiences and coming to new understandings - a feat that's often hard, and typically *uncomfortable*.
 - Working through own guilt & privilege
 - Practice empathy
 - Be aware of multicultural modes and spaces
 - Give space for others to speak for themselves
 - Take ownership of one's identity and position in the world
 - Be informed about different gender identities and sexual orientations
 - Examine intersectionality and their positionality in the world
 - Continue conversations but offers trigger warnings to create comfort
- How can I be a good ally?
 - Good allies recognize their personal roles in creating brave space and seek to understand their own positionality, privilege, and responsibility
 - Good allies are mindful of their own as well as others' multiple identities
 - Good allies are aware of and analyze a given situation and/or social context and take appropriate actions
 - Take accountability
- Other Resources:
 - Cal Poly Pride Center
 - The Trevor Project
 - Human Rights Campaign
 - Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
 - Gay and Lesbian Alliance of the Central Coast

Annotated Bibliography for Instructors

Books:

Butler, Judith. 2011. *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.

- Although controversial, Butler's *Gender Trouble* is central to contemporary queer and gender theory literature. This book is best known for its conceptualization of gender as social performance. Specifically, Butler argues against biological and social essentialism regarding sex, or "the female." Instead, Butler questions the category of "woman" and examines the masculine versus the feminine as social performance, not an expression of a prior reality. If further interested in the topic of gender performativity and sexuality, I recommend Butler's *Undoing Gender*, too.

Hart-Brinson, Peter. 2018. *The gay marriage generation: How the LGBTQ movement transformed American culture*. NYU Press.

- In *the Gay Marriage Generation*, Hart-Brinson takes up the sweeping change in public opinion on same-sex marriage. In particular, he argues, same-sex marriage legalization would not have happened without them. Is this because of the rise of the "gay marriage generation"? Yes, but certainly not in the ways we typically frame it. Specifically, the concept of the "gay marriage generation" is a social generation, one that has a shared collective mentality. The creation of this social generation emerged from the "interaction among activists, celebrities, political and religious leaders, and ordinary people, who together reconfigured Americans' social imagination of homosexuality in a way that made gay marriage seem normal, logical, and good" (p.28). The book is not about politics but rather the work nonpolitical actors do to make sense of same-sex marriage and how this reflects a larger social shift. This book is especially helpful in understanding why some students and/or young adults hold a certain socio-political orientation and attitudes regarding LGBTQ identities and lives.

Conley, Garrard. 2016. *Boy Erased: A Memoir of Identity, Faith, and Family*. Riverhead Books.

- *Boy Erased* is a memoir detailing Conley's experiences of growing up in the deep South as a gay son of a religious family, experiencing many hardships including sexual abuse, outing, and the so-called gay conversion therapy. This book not only reveals the inhumane nature of conversion therapies, but also details the psychological pain as well as social, physical isolation a LGBTQ-identifying young adult may experience without adequate social support. Despite all the heartbreaking details of outing, social, and familial rejections, Conley shows incredible personal resilience in his journey navigating through clashing worlds of his family, religion, and sexuality, and further advocates for the importance of love, acceptance, and community for LGBTQ individuals.

Moore, Mignon. 2011. *Invisible families: Gay identities, relationships, and motherhood among Black women*. Univ of California Press.

- Moore followed a hundred black queer women in New York City and details the ways in which race, gender, and class intersectionally impact these women's perceptions of themselves and others, how they present themselves, form families and intimate relations,

and navigate through the larger social worlds around them. Drawing from in-depth interviews, ethnographic observations, and survey, Moore finds that these women's class positions as well as the time period during which they came of age shape their thinking and how they navigate through their racial communities that are not always accepting of openly gay identities and lifestyles. This book is especially helpful in understanding how intersectional identities and multiplicative marginalities of black and Caribbean queer women shape their individual and collective identities and sense of belonging.

Articles:

DeFilippis, Joseph. N., Lisa Duggan, Kenyon Farrow, and Richard Kim, eds. 2011. *A New Queer Agenda: The Feminist and Scholar Online*. Barnard Center for Research on Women. Available at: <http://sfonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/>

- This special issue of *the Feminist and Scholar Online* provides multi-faceted overview, critiques, and visions for the larger LGBTQ/Queer social movements and agenda beyond marriage equality. Although published in 2012, all the articles included in this special issue explore topics that remain extremely relevant today, such as disability rights, health disparities, economic justice, and the welfare system. The preface written by Lisa Duggan and introduction written by Joseph DeFillipis provide a digestible overview of what the queer social movements have achieved thus far and where they have fallen short. The issue also provides recommended readings and online resources, which instructors using this DEI module could use in structuring their own lectures.

Grov, C., Bimbi, D., Nanin, J., & Parsons, J. (2006). Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Generational Factors Associated with the Coming-Out Process among Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Individuals. *Journal of Sex Research*, 43(2), 115-121.

- One of the few academic research that provides a comprehensive study of variation in the coming out processes of LGB individuals by different social, individual identities. Using a large survey data (n=2,733) collected in New York City and Los Angeles, the study reveals distinctive gender and cohort differences in the time of coming out to self as well as others. Generally, younger cohorts and men report earlier sexual debut and coming out than older age cohorts and women. Although race and ethnicity does not affect the timing of coming out, the authors find that they have important effects on to whom a LGB individual comes out—racial minorities were significantly less likely to be out to their parents.

Juan Battle, Antonio (Jay) Pastrana, Jr., and Jessie Daniels. 2013. *Social Justice Sexuality Survey: The Executive Summary*. Available at: <http://www.socialjusticesexuality.com>

- *Social Justice Sexuality* is the only large-scale national survey of LGBTQ racial minorities with data collected from all 50 states as well as Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico, with more than 5,000 respondents. Three pages each, these executive summaries organized by the researching team of the *Social Justice Sexuality Survey* provides an overview of LGBTQ-identifying racial minorities' socio-demographic information, as well as sociopolitical opinions and health-related behaviors. Prior to the legalization of

same-sex marriage, LGBTQ racial minorities largely perceived same-sex marriage to be an important issue for the LGBTQ community, but also prioritized other issues, such as economic justice. The simple descriptive statistics presented in these executive summaries alone show that race, in addition to sexual minority status, have important implications for LGBTQ-identifying individuals and the ways in which they navigate through their social worlds. On *Social Justice Sexuality Survey*'s website, the researchers also provide a list of published scholarly articles that used the data for its analysis, which could further assist instructors to find relevant academic sources.

Annotated Bibliography for Students

Feinberg, Leslie. 1993. *Stone Butch Blues*. Firebrand Books.

- This semi-autobiographical fiction chronicles the life of Jess Goldberg, a butch lesbian, from 1940s until the Stonewall Riot. Jess Goldberg's life show that police brutality and (working) class solidarity and consciousness are unignorable parts of the larger LGBT history in the United States. This book is especially valuable in that not only does it shed lights on the nuanced differences that exist within the lesbian identity—femme, butch, stone butch, etc.—but also takes the readers through socio-cultural and political tensions that queer women experienced both inside and outside their community. The book serves as a crash course in both LGBT history prior to the Stonewall Riot and American queer identity development.

Lorde, Audre. 2012. *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Crossing Press.

- This collection of Lorde's essays and speeches reveal her takes on issues regarding sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, and classism. In doing so, Lorde highlights the intersectionality among different forms of oppression and/or marginalities and further advocates that social differences could be a vehicle for action and change. In discussing rather dense topics, Lorde's lyrical prose reflects struggles and simultaneously offers messages of hope.

DeFilippis, Joseph. N., Lisa Duggan, Kenyon Farrow, and Richard Kim, eds. 2011. *A New Queer Agenda: The Feminist and Scholar Online*. Barnard Center for Research on Women. Available at: <http://sfonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/>

- This special issue of *the Feminist and Scholar Online* provides multi-faceted overview, critiques, and visions for the larger LGBTQ/Queer social movements and agenda beyond marriage equality. Although published in 2012, all the articles included in this special issue explore topics that remain extremely relevant today, such as disability rights, health disparities, economic justice, and the welfare system. The preface written by Lisa Duggan and introduction written by Joseph DeFillipis provide a digestible overview of what the queer social movements have achieved thus far and where they have fallen short. The issue also provides recommended readings and online resources, which instructors using this DEI module could use in structuring their own lectures.

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implications for LGBTQ-identifying individuals and the ways in which they navigate through their social worlds.

Taylor, Paul. 2013. *A survey of LGBT Americans: Attitudes, experiences and values in changing times*. Pew Research Center. Available at: <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/06/13/a-survey-of-lgbt-americans/>

- Using data from the national survey of LGBT-identifying Americans conducted by Pew Research Center (n=1,197), this report provides an overview of LGBT Americans' social, demographic information as well as their perceptions of various social issues, such as marriage, coming-out, identity, community, religion, and political orientations and affiliations. The report finds that while LGBT Americans believe that discrimination against sexual minorities have lessened over time, they still experience many hardships such as job insecurity and economic hardships. The number of issues covered in this report provides a valuable insight into the American LGBT public opinions.

Media Resources

Online Resources:

- LGBTQ: How you see me
<https://youtu.be/wxHHstcyP4I>
- 5 Tips for Being an Ally
https://youtu.be/_dg86g-QlM0
- Decoded TV: Can you choose your own pronoun?
<https://youtu.be/kCXY4RVPcW4>
- How to be a good ally (Vox):
<https://www.vox.com/identities/2019/6/22/18700875/lgbtq-good-ally>
- GLAAD LGBTQ Resources list:
<https://www.glaad.org/resourcelist>

TV series:

- When We Rise (ABC docudrama; available to purchase on Amazon Video)

Films:

- Milk (Available to purchase on Amazon Video)
- Paris is Burning (Available on Netflix with subscription)
 - <https://youtu.be/yNE6nv3-l1w>
- Saving Face (Available to purchase on Amazon Video)

Suggested Activity – Impact of Silence

Overview:

This interactive exercise allows participants to experience what it is like for many closeted LGBTQ people who are unsure if it is safe to come out. When LGBTQ people are not out, fear being found out, or are scared of the repercussions of coming out, they may refrain from sharing important details about their lives when having conversations with others. Some may even talk about these details in a “roundabout-way” or discuss them within heteronormative or gender-normative language. In this experiential exercise, the participants are challenged to engage in a conversation without discussing that which is most important to them.

Note: Because this exercise requires “getting to know you” work in pairs, ideally participants should be seated separately from participants whom they may know.

Objectives:

First, this exercise is meant to be an icebreaker. It allows the participants to get comfortable talking in much smaller groups prior to talking within the larger group.

Second, through interacting and learning about other participants in the training, a comfortable and safe environment can be created.

Third, through this exercise, participants learn about the experiences of those who are unsure if it is safe to come out or fear for their safety if they are “found out.”

Time Required: 15 minutes

Tools:

- Index cards or small sheets of paper for each participant
- Pens/pencils for each participant
- Time cards
- Time keeper

Instructions:

(The text in blue is instruction for the trainer, and it is not meant to be read aloud. The text in black should be read or paraphrased as instructions to the participants.)

Each person should be given about two minutes to complete her or his index card with the below information. Inform all participants that their partners should not see what they are writing on the cards.

Assure them that it doesn’t have to be wholly accurate, and what initially comes to mind is fine.

On the index cards provided, write down the following. Don’t think too hard – write the first thing that comes to your mind. Try to hide your response from others. (Instruct participants to list the following one at a time. Give them time to write each response):

- Your job and what you do.
- The three most important people in your life.
- The three most important events that have occurred in your life.
- The three things you enjoy doing the most during your free time.

Once everyone has filled in their index cards, tell each person to pair up with someone whom they do not know or know well. Trainers should participate at tables with odd numbers of participants to ensure that everyone has a partner.

Tell the participants:

- You have just met the person with whom you are paired and can't wait to tell them all about yourself. Each partner in the pair has two minutes to tell her or his partner all about her or himself, but you cannot discuss anything you wrote on your index cards. The listener should not talk very much as the speaker describes her or himself.

At the two-minute mark, tell them:

- Switch, and the person who was listening now does the talking.

When complete, tell them the following:

- Now, we will share experiences with the larger group.

Now, take about five minutes to engage in some processing and discussion questions. It may be best to ask a different question to each table.

- What did you learn about this person?
- What kind of person does the person you just met seem?
- What kind of relationship do you think you could create?
- How much energy and conscious attention did it take to talk about yourself without mentioning the items on your index card?
- What was it like to do this exercise?
- How did it feel?

After those five minutes, discuss the purpose of this exercise (if it hasn't been made clear from the conversation).

- Here is why we did this exercise: LGBTQ people who are closeted or unsure if it is safe to come out can feel overly limited in what they share with people. When you have heterosexual privilege, you can speak openly and comfortably about your romantic partner, social interests, and personal preferences.

Rhetorically, ask them:

- Can you imagine how isolating this could be?
- Can you imagine how many LGBTQ can't share some of the most important parts of their lives with people?

Ask them:

- Do you have any thoughts?
- Does anyone want to discuss his or her experiences?
- Now, let's take two minutes to reintroduce yourselves and learn about each other. If you would like to share something personal that you wished you had been able to share at your table or with your pair, please do so. If you would like to identify your sexual orientation or gender identity, we hope you feel comfortable doing so.

Suggested Activity – “That’s so gay”

Overview:

In this exercise, the participants are asked to role-play students in a class at the University. The scenario in this exercise begins after one student in the class uses the phrase “that’s so gay” to indicate that the political ad under discussion is poorly done, unintelligent, or nonsensical. In the discussion resulting from this comment, participants react to the comment and its implications from the perspective of different gendered identities and/or sexual orientations or dispositions (with each table playing one identity, determined randomly by the trainers). The “professor” in this exercise is well-meaning but woefully clueless, so she or he should be the one to make some of the statements that drive the discussion in useful ways (as students respond to the professor’s dismissiveness or bad logic in dealing with this sensitive issue).

Objectives:

First, this is an experiential exercise that asks the participants to experience the effects of hurtful and exclusionary language. As the exercise proceeds, the participants are exposed to the way that this language, which is often not considered to be prejudiced and hurtful, has a real and harmful effect on people in any classroom, workplace, or meeting.

Secondly, this exercise provides a forum for the discussion of what some possible responses could be in situations such as this one. Because we all share workplaces with people who are sometimes homophobic, ignorant, or just passive on the issue of LGBTQ rights, the discussion focuses on the possible outcomes when issues such as this arise.

Time Required:

35 Minutes arranged as follows:

- Introduction and instructions - 5 minutes
- Discussion of possible responses (led by trainers at each table) - 5 minutes
- Role-playing of the scenario - 15 minutes
- Discussion of the role-playing - 10 minutes

Tools:

- Five placards indicating sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or disposition
- The following identities must be present:
 - Heterosexual, Cisgender and Homophobic/Transphobic
 - LGBT and Out
 - Passing
 - Heterosexual Ally
 - Heterosexual with Limited Acceptance
- The following identity may be used if the audience fills more than five tables:
 - Heterosexual with Limited Acceptance
- One copy of the scenario for each table (6)
- One sheet of paper for each table (6)
- Writing instruments for each table

Instructions:

The text in blue is instruction for the trainer, and it is not meant to be read aloud.

1. This is a role-playing exercise in which we are asking you to take the role of a student in a classroom at this university. A Safe Zone Trainer will randomly provide each table with a placard that indicates that table's sexual orientation and disposition regarding sexual orientation issues. This is the role your table, collectively, will play in this exercise. You are encouraged to be stereotypical in the dispositions you are role-playing.
 - a. It will be useful to be stereotypical in the disposition (what you think about sexuality), rather than stereotypical in sexual identity (how you stereotypically perceive a person with a particular sexual orientation to act).
2. A trainer will be assigned each table and introduce her or himself. The trainer will encourage a dialogue about your concerns, thoughts, and reactions to the scenario. The trainer will assist in generating responses.

Trainer	Table	Orientation/Role
1	0	Professor (Orientation and disposition unknown)
2	1	Passing
3	2	Heterosexual with Limited Acceptance
4	3	LGBT and Out
5	4	Heterosexual Ally
6	5	Heterosexual and Homophobic/Transphobic
Note: If the training staff is limited to fewer trainers, the tables can be reduced to numbers 2, 3, & 5.		

3. Here is the scenario we will be role-playing today:
You are all students at a university who are sitting in class. The professor is asking the class your thoughts on a particular political advertisement for the upcoming election. One student exclaims, "That ad is so gay." Another student laughs in agreement. The professor then moves on with the class discussion, and s/he does not address the comment or the environment of exclusion that it creates.

The "LGBT out" student (i.e the table with this orientation or identity) in the class raises her/his hand and objects to the phrase by saying...

4. With your table, think about what and how your orientation and disposition would say and act in this situation. Create a list of those phrases, attitudes, and behaviors. Your table may rely on this list or, as the scenario plays out, you may improvise new or additional comments, reactions, and statements.
 - a. The moderator should start this exercise with some examples from one or two tables (e.g., "what is one attitude that the limited acceptance table would have to such statements, which are used so commonly in our culture?" After an answer, the moderator can rephrase the response, and then ask another member of the table for a different response, so that a list of differing responses begins to be generated. Think about comments or responses to attacks that may stimulate dialogue.

- b. The trainer at the table should ensure that a variety of responses, attitudes, comments, and reactions are generated.
- c. For those in the LGBT and Out and the Passing tables, the trainer can ask the table to think about how each of the various members of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) community may react or comment.
- d. The trainer should do his/her best to refrain from being the voice of the table. Rather, the trainer should guide the table. It may be best if the trainer faces the table and not the instructor. If needed, the trainer can assign generated responses to each member. Having a “script” may make some feel more comfortable to speak.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which phrases or comments seemed to lead to a contentious or even unsafe environment for the discussion?
 - a. What responses addressed those best (without causing more contention)?
 - b. What comments seemed to work best to create an environment in which everyone could express themselves and learn?
2. (For each table) what were some of the difficulties in playing your assigned roles?
 - a. On the other hand, did some tables have an easy time in generating responses and attitudes to the scenario?
 - b. Why might this have been the case?
3. What conclusion or result do you think is reasonable when such a situation arises in the classroom or on campus?
 - a. Can you think of any comments or responses to attacks that may stimulate dialogue in the classroom?
4. In what ways are you better able to address such issues on or off-campus?

Pitfall #1. Performative Allyship

- Performative allyship refers to when someone from a non-marginalized background professes support and solidarity with members of a marginalized group in a way that is neither helpful nor actively harmful to the group. This is a “feel good” type of allyship and activism could be easily found online on social media platforms. To avoid reproducing meaningless performative allyship, instructors must focus on actionable and meaningful ways to advocate for members of marginalized communities. Such ways include (but are not limited to), creating a brave space, calling out other people’s ignorant and/or hurtful behaviors, practices, and speeches, and staying informed of various sociopolitical issues that directly affect marginalized communities. An effective ally training should include difficult conversations about one’s own privileged positionalities and actionable ways of utilizing such privileges in being an ally. It is important to emphasize that good allyship often remain invisible and in the background, not showcased up front on one’s social media platform.

Pitfall #2. Religious audience members

- In discussing issues related to LGBTQ identities, experiences, and the importance of allyship, religious audience members often express varying levels of discomfort and/or disapprovals. It is rather difficult to get through those of orthodox and/or evangelical orientation, regardless of actual religious affiliations. However, I have witnessed pastors and other leaders of more liberal religious sectors successfully argue for the importance of love, empathy, and social justice, using the scripture. For instance, one of the more successful cases I have witnessed referred to various sins mentioned in the bible, such as smoking and drinking, and explained that homosexuality is no different from such sins. This statement was followed by how Christianity advocates for love and unity, referring to phrases such as “love thy neighbor as thyself” (Matthew 22: 39) and “If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8: 7). You may not personally agree with this perspective, but such approaches may make non-heterosexual identities and experiences more approachable and understandable for individuals whose religion is central not only to their personal identities, but also to how they navigate their social worlds. It is helpful to seek advice from liberal-leaning religious leaders, such as pastors at Unitarian Churches.

Pitfall #3 and Tips. “I’m straight/heterosexual and I don’t want to misrepresent LGBTQ experiences!”

- The fact that you are concerned about this is a good sign. Keep in mind that you will never fully understand someone else’s experiences of discrimination and marginalization, even if you are a minority yourself. By focusing on what you do know and can do, such as amplifying LGBTQ individuals’ voices, making brave and safe spaces, and educating others as well as yourself on better ways to support not only LGBTQ individuals, but also other marginalized communities and their members, you can contribute to create more diverse, inclusive, and just environment that centers around the principles of equity for all individuals. Practice empathy, ask appropriate questions to, and seek advices from experts and members of marginalized communities as needed. Being a good ally means continuously educating oneself as well as others.