

Final Report of the Boston University Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff

29 May 2019

Executive Summary

Boston University was founded on principles of inclusion and has been open to all, without regard to race, sex, creed, or other irrelevant criteria, since 1869. Sexual orientation was added to our non-discrimination policy in December 2004, and gender identity was added in November 2011. In 2017, our new Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion extended a University-wide welcome to the LGBTQIA+ community, signaling Boston University's broad commitment to a supportive workplace environment for people of all genders and sexualities. In October 2018, this Task Force was charged with facilitating a set of University-wide discussions and making recommendations for how Boston University can accelerate our progress to become a more LGBTQIA+ inclusive community for faculty and staff. Over the past 8 months, the Task Force has learned from LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff and allies throughout the University, assessed the landscape of LGBTQIA+ inclusion practices across peer and peer+ institutions, and gathered detailed information on effective practices from leading institutions. We found areas of excellence and efforts underway in multiple academic and administrative units at Boston University as well as many opportunities for improvement.

This final report addresses three key themes. **I.** To improve LGBTQIA+ **visibility, communication, and community**, we make nine recommendations, including establishing a professionally staffed center and website, investing in scholarship, and enhancing training opportunities. **II.** To make **employment practices** more inclusive, we make six recommendations, addressing multiple structures and processes. **III.** To make **benefits** more equitable, our recommendations include expanding transgender health coverage and providing domestic partner benefits. We also suggest internal and external mechanisms and metrics to assess our progress toward our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

Table of Contents

Membership and staff of Task Force	3
Recommendations in brief	4
Charge and Task Force process	5
Improving LGBTQIA+ inclusion at BU – recommendations in depth	6
Theme 1. Visibility, communication, and community	6
Theme 2. Equitable and inclusive employment practices	12
Theme 3. Equitable benefits for an inclusive workplace	16
Needs assessment conducted with BU faculty and staff	19
Community meetings	19
Online survey	21
LGBTQIA+ inclusion practices at other leading universities	25
Comparator landscape analysis	25
Effective practices for LGBTQIA+ inclusion	26
Historical and global context	29
Appendix 1. Complete charge to the Task Force	31
Appendix 2. Online survey questions	32
Appendix 3. Faculty and staff comments from survey and meetings	33

Membership and Staff of the Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff

Co-Chairs

Judi Burgess, Director of Labor Relations

Karen Warkentin, Professor of Biology and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies, College of Arts & Sciences

Task Force Members

Willow Burke, Financial Analyst, Disability & Access Services

Derek Howe, Vice President, Budget, Planning & Business Affairs

Terence Keane, Professor of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology and Assistant Dean for Research, School of Medicine; Director of the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Associate Chief of Staff for Research & Development, VA Boston Healthcare System

Steve Marois, Director of Faculty Actions, Office of the Provost

Merav Opher, Associate Professor of Astronomy, College of Arts & Sciences

Anthony Petro, Associate Professor of Religion and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies, College of Arts & Sciences

Michelle Porche, Clinical Associate Professor of Applied Human Development, Wheelock College of Education and Human Development

Stacy Ulrich, Director of Student Programs and Leadership, College of Arts & Sciences

Robert Volk, Associate Professor of Legal Writing, Director of Legal Writing and Appellate Advocacy Program, School of Law

Jacob Vukelich, IT Systems Administrator II, College of Arts & Sciences

William Waters, Associate Professor of German and Comparative Literature, Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Europe, College of Arts & Sciences

Ann Zumwalt, Associate Professor of Anatomy & Neurobiology, School of Medicine

Staff

Abby Burmeister, Administrative Coordinator, Diversity & Inclusion

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

THEME I. VISIBILITY, COMMUNICATION, AND COMMUNITY

- R1. Establish a professionally staffed LGBTQIA+ center serving faculty, staff, students and alumni at Boston University across both campuses.
- R2. Create and maintain a centralized, dynamic LGBTQIA+ at BU website.
- R3. Offer opt-in self-identification of gender identity and sexual orientation and opportunities to subscribe to relevant communications.
- R4. Invest in, value, and promote LGBTQIA+ scholars, scholarship, and teaching across both campuses.
- R5. Increase the positive visibility of gender and sexual minorities throughout Boston University's media presence.
- R6. Build inclusivity by providing education, training, and resource materials focused on gender and sexual minorities.
- R7. Develop and apply inclusive communication guidelines.
- R8. Participate in external programs to evaluate, inform, and publicize our inclusive practices.
- R9. Make a visible commitment to inclusion by advocating that the city rename Silber Way and by renaming the Yawkey Center for Student Services.

THEME II. EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

- R10. Include gender and sexual minorities as an essential and beneficial component of diversity in all diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.
- R11. Implement actively LGBTQIA+ inclusive recruitment, orientation, retention, mentorship, and promotion practices.
- R12. Report, recognize, and reward service to BU's LGBTQIA+ community.
- R13. Establish and maintain processes to measure LGBTQIA+ inclusion and parity, as well as campus climate metrics.
- R14. Continue efforts to provide all-gender facilities, including but not limited to bathrooms, throughout BU.
- R15. Establish a simple, streamlined process for changing names and gender markers.

THEME III. EQUITABLE BENEFITS FOR AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

- R16. Expand and support access to gender-affirming health care coverage.
- R17. Provide domestic partner benefits matching those of peer institutions.
- R18. Improve communication of benefits available to LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff.

CHARGE AND TASK FORCE PROCESS

On October 10, 2018, Provost Morrison and Senior Vice President Nicksa charged the *Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff* with gathering information and making recommendations to improve the workplace experience of Boston University's LGBTQIA+¹ faculty and staff, consistent with our principles that *all* employees work in a supportive environment where they feel valued and respected.

In brief, the Task Force was directed to **facilitate University-wide discussions** about how Boston University can become a more LGBTQIA+ inclusive community and develop recommendations to accelerate our progress through a multi-faceted effort that considers the current environment, as well as new approaches to programming, recruitment, retention, professional development, support and network-building. We were also directed to **gather information** on effective LGBTQIA+ inclusion practices from other major research universities and corporations. Because another group at BU is focused on these issues for students, we were directed to focus on employees but, as relevant, to note areas of overlap with potential student-focused efforts. (See [Appendix 1](#) for the complete charge.)

Specifically, our charges were to **recommend ways for Boston University to:**

1. Improve the working environment and quality of life for LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff, including faculty recruitment, retention, and promotion
2. Foster holistic inclusiveness at BU for people with LGBTQIA+ and intersectional identities (race, nationality, religion, ability, etc.)
3. Integrate and expand any current activities focused on LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff
4. Build ties with local & regional LGBTQIA+ groups
5. Develop effective, multi-faceted ways to communicate with LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff.

To engage and learn from our community, the Task Force held a series of six *LGBTQIA+ at Work* Community Meetings on the Charles River and Medical Campuses in November 2018 and disseminated an anonymous online survey. We also engaged in many individual conversations with colleagues. Faculty and staff across both campuses and at all levels have been highly engaged and appreciative of this initiative, and have been willing to work to make BU a more welcoming and inclusive environment for LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff. For detailed [Community Meeting](#) and [Survey](#) results, see pages 19 and 21.

To gather information from outside sources on effective LGBTQIA+ inclusion practices, the Task Force researched activities, resources, policies, and benefits at 16 strategic peer-plus and Boston-area universities. For more in-depth understanding of effective practices, we interviewed LGBTQIA+ Program Directors at three selected universities and examined the websites of an additional 17 AAU member universities for LGBTQIA+ related content. We also interviewed a corporate leader in LGBTQ diversity and inclusion. For detailed [results](#) of our research, see page 25.

¹ An inclusive term referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other gender and sexual minorities; preferred terminology for identity categories varies among people and changes over time.

HISTORY AND CONTEXT IN BRIEF

In 2019, we celebrate the [50th anniversary](#) of the Stonewall Uprising and five decades of effort and progress in LGBTQIA+ rights, visibility, and inclusion. In keeping with our founding principles of inclusivity, Boston University was an [early leader](#) in welcoming sexual minorities, as the first Boston-area university to approve a student homophile organization, in 1969. However, our progress was limited during the Silber era, from 1971-2003. Similarly, across [the nation and the world](#), progress toward LGBTQIA+ inclusion has been uneven; substantial barriers and challenges remain. Boston University expanded our non-discrimination policy to include “sexual orientation” in 2004 and “gender identity” in 2011. We now seek to accelerate our progress to make Boston University inclusive and welcoming to LGBTQIA+ people, building on the efforts and successes of many individuals, departments, and administrative units throughout the University.

IMPROVING LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION AT BOSTON UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS IN DEPTH

We present our recommendations organized into themes, including context and rationale for each recommendation. While our recommendations focus on faculty and staff, many will also benefit students. Investment in community building, visibility and communication would particularly benefit from vertical integration across faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Moreover, many things that would improve the lives of LGBTQIA+ students would also send positive signals to faculty and staff who share these identities, and vice-versa.

THEME I. VISIBILITY, COMMUNICATION, AND COMMUNITY

Gender and sexual minorities are often invisible, even to each other. LGBTQIA+ people rarely grow up in LGBTQIA+ families and instead must find and build community in other ways. This is essential for our well-being and mutual support. Addressing LGBTQIA+ visibility is crucial to accelerate our progress toward inclusivity at Boston University.

Comprehensive, representative data on our community is scarce. The US [national census](#) still does not include questions about sexual orientation or gender identity, although the 2020 version will allow identification of same-sex couples. In academia, neither BU’s Institutional Research nor the Association of American Universities (AAU)—through which BU compares itself with other leading research universities—collect comparative information on LGBTQIA+ participation.

LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff are present throughout BU, but mechanisms through which community members can connect are in short supply outside of a small set of actively inclusive units. As a result, the vibrant spectrum of the University’s LGBTQIA+ community remains largely hidden, both within BU and to prospective faculty and staff. BU faculty and staff repeatedly commented that this [invisibility](#) was pervasive and interpreted it as indicating an unwelcoming environment.

In addition, the limited opportunities to share information relevant to LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, and allies create barriers to community building and leave individuals feeling excluded. The challenge of communication and community building is compounded by the

geographical distance between the Charles River Campus and the Medical Campus.

R1. Establish a professionally staffed LGBTQIA+ center serving faculty, staff, students and alumni at Boston University across both campuses.

We propose the creation of a vertically integrated LGBTQIA+ Center (tentatively, the “Q-BU” Center) as a physical campus space where the LGBTQIA+ community—including faculty, staff, students, and alumni—can network, share experiences, and engage in intellectual interchange, professional development, scholarship, and community-building. Dedicated professional staff would offer educational programming and consult with academic and administrative units on LGBTQIA+ and intersectional inclusivity. The Center would both serve BU’s LGBTQIA+ community and function as an outward facing symbol of the University’s commitment to diversity and inclusion. All 28 comparator institutions have such centers, with professional staff. Some are mainly student-oriented, while others are vertically integrated. Several have existed for decades.

We envision Q-BU Center staff working collaboratively with—and serving as a point of knowledge and connection among—BU faculty and staff across various units, along with initiatives already being implemented in Organizational Development and Learning in HR. Staff would have an integral role as point people to consult for LGBTQIA+ related news stories and other communications. The Center and its staff would also serve as a point of connection between BU and other local and regional LGBTQIA+ groups.

The Center should serve faculty and staff, as well as students and alumni, and foster the creation of new groups and networks among them. We suggest creation of an LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff Employee Resource Group and an LGBTQIA+ Alumni Group. Moreover, we expect a variety of other LGBTQIA+ and intersectional groups and networks to form through community-building activities. Boston University can support and facilitate these activities by providing space at the Center for groups to network and host programs relevant to LGBTQIA+ community members.

A vertically integrated LGBTQIA+ Advisory Board for the Center, consisting of faculty, staff, students, and alumni, would be useful to guide the Center’s direction and programming. In other universities, such advisory boards have been critical to address problems in real time and enhance opportunities for the LGBTQIA+ community. In addition, we recommend that LGBTQIA+ liaisons be created at a school, college, or unit level. The Center would draw information from liaisons to guide programming and social media, and they would help disseminate information and resource materials. Implementing consistent best practices across units would help the University improve the culture, climate, and experiences of both employees and students.

Because the Center would serve the whole University, the geography of CRC and MED campuses creates challenges. We suggest having both CRC and MED campus locations, with Center staff splitting time across both campuses.

R2. Create and maintain a centralized, dynamic LGBTQIA+ at BU website.

The second critical element for community building, visibility, support, and communication is a website. A centralized website would provide easy access to information and resources

for LGBTQIA+ staff, faculty, job seekers, students, and others. The website would link to Boston University resources, policies and benefits relevant to BU's LGBTQIA+ community. In addition, the website could include a calendar of events relevant to the community. All 28 comparator institutions have such websites. Some are more student-focused but many are vertically integrated (e.g. [Syracuse](#), [Rochester](#), [UC Berkeley](#), [Michigan](#)). A Q-BU website, maintained and updated by dedicated staff, would serve as a virtual community space, bringing the CRC and MED campuses together in a unified online presence to facilitate networking across BU.

In addition, as a quick-to-implement mechanism specifically to promote events relevant to BU's LGBTQIA+ community, the University could **add an "LGBTQIA+" tag** to the [BU Calendar](#) submission page. Currently, events can be tagged for "Diversity & Inclusion" or "Special Interest to Women" but no LGBTQIA+ tag exists.

R3. Offer "opt-in" self-identification of gender identity and sexual orientation and opportunities to subscribe to relevant communications.

To facilitate information-gathering and targeted communication, we recommend that BU include "opt-in" self-identification of sexual orientation and gender identity as a part of the onboarding process, with opportunities to update information for current employees, along with self-identification of race, ethnicity, first generation at college status, etc. Similarly, we recommend that BU offer opportunities to opt-in to university-wide communication relevant to LGBTQIA+ community members, including allies. Moreover, as part of LGBTQIA+ targeted communications, we recommend that faculty, staff, students, and alumni be able to sign up for a **Q-BU newsletter** that provides regular updates about LGBTQIA+ life on campus. Staff at the Q-BU Center could produce this newsletter, drawing in part from the website's event listings. These are standard practices at many comparator universities.

R4. Invest in, value, and promote LGBTQIA+ scholars, scholarship, and teaching across both campuses.

A key component in making BU welcoming to gender and sexual minorities is robust and visible scholarship and pedagogy in sexuality and gender studies, including LGBTQIA+ studies. This inherently interdisciplinary work contributes to other University goals, building bridges across disciplines. In 2019, the Charles River Campus boasts a thriving Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program and Gender & Sexuality Studies faculty group, new courses addressing LGBTQIA+ topics, and internationally renowned LGBTQIA+ scholars in many fields. Boston University faculty in the Center for Transgender Medicine and Surgery are national leaders in research to advance gender affirming care. All three schools on the BU Medical Campus (Medicine, Dentistry, Public Health) have health disparity programs. The School of Public Health offers an MPH Context Certificate in Sex, Sexuality, and Gender. A Vertical Integration Group focusing on Gender and Sexual Diversity is examining the School of Medicine curriculum to improve how we teach LGBTQIA+ health and healthcare. These many efforts and areas of excellence could benefit substantially from greater interchange and visibility, as well as from additional resources.

We recommend the University **recognize, promote, and increase support for work on gender and sexual minorities**. Public lectures, awards, and conferences can help build a culture of inclusion. Repeated, clear messaging from university leaders and unit leaders can substantially aid in advancing inclusion by conveying the value of gender and sexual minority faculty, staff, and students, as well as of related scholarship and service.

We recommend that that BU highlight the contribution and the richness of the LGBTQIA+ community with a series of **annual interdisciplinary symposia**. The symposia would bring together LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, and students and those working on LGBTQIA+ topics, creating opportunities to build community and accelerate interdisciplinary scholarship. A good example is the University of Michigan’s [LGBT Inclusion as Researchers and in Research](#) symposia. This type of interdisciplinary work would signal that Boston University values LGBTQIA+ scholars and scholarship, and that all are welcome here, as well as strengthening connections between campuses.

We suggest that BU **establish two endowed professorships to support LGBTQIA+ scholarship**—one to be held on the CRC and one on the MED campus—to accelerate academic growth in LGBTQIA+ related research areas. These “Rainbow Professorships” could be held for periods of 1–3 years to augment awardees’ individual research and/or to initiate or advance larger interdisciplinary initiatives. The LGBTQIA+ professorships would enhance existing, known concentrations of strength, such as in gender and sexuality studies and in transgender medicine, as well as foster new opportunities to enhance and highlight LGBTQIA+ scholarship throughout BU. They would build bridges and academic community across currently isolated areas of LGBTQIA+ scholarship in different schools and colleges, enabling scholars to capitalize on our collective strength. For instance, addressing the well documented health and mental health disparities experienced by the LGBTQIA+ community could provide a nexus for interdisciplinary research and scientific centers of excellence involving Public Health, Medicine, Social Work, Education, and Psychology, among others. Rotating endowed professorships on both campuses would highlight Boston University’s support for and prioritization of scholarship in this area, and could serve as a Development goal.

As another mechanism to build interdisciplinary strength in LGBTQIA+ scholarship across campuses, BU could choose to hire a cluster of faculty in the area of transgender studies (as, for instance, the [University of Arizona](#) has done) or spearhead a competitive grants initiative to support LGBTQIA+ scholarship of our current faculty (as [Columbia University](#) has done).

R5. Increase the positive visibility of gender and sexual minorities throughout Boston University’s media presence.

The University should publicize and celebrate the contributions of LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, students and alumni to all areas of scholarship and service, as well as the contributions of individuals—regardless of personal identity—working on scholarship or service that is relevant to the LGBTQIA+ community. As part of this initiative, we should work to **reframe our history, highlighting positive elements**, and recover inclusive stories from the LGBTQIA+ history of BU. For instance, one historical resource is [The History Project \(THP\)](#), Greater Boston’s LGBTQ history archive. Mark Krone, CFA Assistant Director of Graduate

Affairs and THP board member, also writes a blog on [Boston Queer History](#). These stories should be presented through widely distributed BU communications, including BU Today, Bostonia, and BU Research (as appropriate). They should also be collected in an easily accessible digital archive on the Q-BU Website.

R6. Build inclusivity by providing education, training, and resource materials focused on gender and sexual minorities.

There is a broad need for BU to provide additional resources for education and training with respect to LGBTQIA+ issues for all faculty and staff. In our Community Meetings and online survey, both allies and members of the LGBTQIA+ community expressed significant [interest in such resources](#), and concern over their absence. Topics requested included general sensitivity and diversity training, training in the use of appropriate language and terms, and resources to facilitate inclusive pedagogy and communications.

LGBTQIA+ resource professionals at leading institutions emphasized that multiple levels of training must be continuously available, as well as offered on request, to build a holistic culture of inclusiveness. One-off training sessions alone are not sufficient. Compared to peer and peer+ institutions, Boston University has, to date, taken relatively few institution-wide steps to signal that LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff are welcomed and supported here. Providing a comprehensive, thoughtful, well-designed, well-publicized, and easily accessible set of resources for the BU community would send a strong signal and better enable employees throughout the University to accelerate the desired change.

We recommend that the University continue to offer workshops and trainings on gender and sexual diversity, drawing initially on local expertise, such as the recent Organizational Development and Learning (OD&L) Choose to Learn – Live [Gender Diversity event](#) and presentations by [SpeakOut Boston](#). Once a Q-BU Center exists on campus, Center staff could collaborate with training experts in OD&L, sharing the responsibility for developing and providing education, training, and resources. The culture change we envision will require widespread involvement of faculty and staff. Although not all who would benefit from such trainings will choose to participate, we do not advocate mandatory trainings. Rather, we suggest promoting training as an exciting opportunity to build BU's capacity to attract and nurture diverse talent. We also emphasize that LGBTQIA+ related training and resources should include intersectional content and framing, as part of our broader inclusivity efforts.

New hires to every position at the university should receive some basic training in sensitivity to gender and sexual minorities, including in particular the emerging etiquette of pronoun use (i.e., how to speak or write without assuming that everyone identifies as “he” or “she” or that an individual’s gender is obvious from appearance or legal name).

All faculty and staff should have access to trainings and resources, including “active ally” training, as well as training tailored to specific needs. Such trainings could be regularly available in-person or online through e-Terrier development and other similar University resources. We envision a multi-layered approach that encourages continuing interest, provides resources to address individual needs as they emerge (e.g., a lecturer who desires training in appropriate pronoun use, an office manager who learns their employee is transitioning, etc.), and offers resources tailored to unit needs. We urge BU to also confront

the challenge of ensuring that part-time instructors are included in training on gender and sexual minorities.

Special populations: We recommend that the University prioritize training for those in leadership and communications roles, as well as for those whose work faces outward or reaches across the University. Potential units to focus on are Human Resources, Marketing and Communications, Admissions, Development and Alumni Relations, Events and Conferences, the Center for Excellence in Teaching, and Health and Counselling Centers. In some cases basic training is needed; in others, higher level training could help key employees positively influence the broader climate.

BU's training initiative should also include identifying and sharing available resources on LGBTQIA+ issues with employees seeking guidance, as well as developing additional resources tailored to the needs of the University. Existing documents such as [BUMC's Policy on Diversity Categories](#), Medical Campus Pride's [LGBTQI Glossary](#), or SPH's guide to [Creating a Gender-Affirming Classroom](#), as well as Organizational Development & Learning's [Gender Diversity](#) program are excellent starting points.

Finally, while the University should not prescribe course content, we recommend it gather, develop and maintain—potentially via a collaboration between the Center for Teaching and Learning and Q-BU staff—resources for faculty seeking to incorporate current, research-based LGBTQIA+ and intersectionally inclusive practices into their pedagogy.

R7. Develop and apply inclusive communication guidelines.

We recommend that BU work to remove heteronormative, cis-normative, and non-inclusive language and imagery from BU documents and digital presence, and replace it with language and images that demonstrates positive inclusion of the spectrum of diversity in gender and sexuality, as well as intersecting diverse and marginalized identities. To implement this recommendation at the local level, units should review their communications from a diversity perspective and implement changes as websites and documents are revised. To facilitate such revision, we recommend that BU develop inclusive communication guidelines and resources to assist units in updating language and images. These could begin with existing external resources (e.g. [GLAAD Media Reference Guide](#)) in conjunction with internal resources through our Office of Diversity & Inclusion, as well as HR's Organizational Development & Learning team, and be customized for BU in a collaborative process.

R8. Participate in external programs to evaluate, inform, and make visible our inclusive practices.

Boston University continues to make steady progress toward becoming a more welcoming place for LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff and students; however, the University is not recognized as an LGBTQIA+ friendly institution in university rankings and indices. For instance, a prominent list of the top fifty "[best LGBTQ schools](#)" includes a number of peer and peer+ institutions, but not BU. Boston University is absent from [several other lists](#) ranking universities on the basis of their LGBTQ inclusivity, including the [Campus Pride Index](#), the premier national benchmarking tool. Similarly, BU is not rated among the "[best places to work](#)" in the [Corporate Equality Index](#) compiled by the [Human Rights Campaign](#).

We recommend that BU participate in external programs that evaluate and rank LGBTQ inclusivity, including the [Campus Pride Index](#) and the LGBTQ survey of the [Council for Advancement of Standards](#) in Higher Education. This step would complement BU's current participation in the AAAS SEA Change program to foster diversity and inclusion and the recently announced Action Collaborative to stop gender-based harassment (through the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine). As we undertake substantive efforts to improve our inclusive practices, BU's participation in these evaluations will provide an effective mechanism to showcase and benchmark our progress.

R9. Make a visible commitment to inclusion by advocating that the city rename Silber Way and by renaming the Yawkey Center for Student Services.

We recommend BU acknowledge the past in order to move forward. As a strong public statement with respect to diversity and inclusion, it is important to remove symbols and relics that do not reflect a culture of inclusion for LGBTQIA+ people—and one of BU's bedrock principles. Accordingly, to acknowledge the harm done to Boston University's LGBTQIA+ community during the Silber years, and to clearly separate our current policies of inclusiveness from this legacy, as well as engage LGBTQIA+ alumni who lived through that era, we recommend BU advocate for the renaming of Silber Way. We realize that this would entail substantial public conversation, providing many opportunities for BU to affirm its commitment to diversity and inclusion. Equally, we strongly encourage the University to consider renaming the Yawkey Student Services Building, given the racist elements of Red Sox history connected with the Yawkey name.

THEME II. EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

R10. Include gender and sexual minorities as an essential and beneficial component of diversity in all diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.

Employment practices focused explicitly on attracting LGBTQIA+ candidates and fostering full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ employees throughout the University will be essential to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment. Across institutions and programs in the USA, gender and sexual minorities frequently do not “count” as a desired form of diversity, and LGBTQIA+ representation is rarely measured. Thus, unless specifically welcomed, LGBTQIA+ individuals may not feel included in broad diversity initiatives. Moreover, given legitimate concerns about potential biases, they may choose to keep their minority status private. Specific attention to LGBTQIA+ retention, professional development, and career fulfillment are therefore necessary to develop a culture of full inclusion that embraces all aspects of our community, and creates more opportunities for growth, particularly for those who have intersecting identities. A critical component to leveraging this opportunity necessarily involves the ability to obtain useful data about current employees, former or departing employees, and job candidates, including those who do not choose BU as their employer.

R11. Implement actively LGBTQIA+ inclusive recruitment, orientation, retention, mentorship, and promotion practices.

a. Recruitment

We recommend focused recruitment activities for LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff, and other candidates with records of inclusion. Job postings should use **gender-inclusive language** such as “the candidate” rather than binary “he or she” gender references.

BU should request a **personal diversity statement** from all faculty candidates and, to the extent possible, also from staff candidates. The Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion already recommends this practice for faculty searches. Asking for such statements invites candidates to communicate how they understand diversity and highlights how they could help to foster an inclusive environment. A well-crafted request for a diversity statement signals to all applicants that BU welcomes and values diversity and records of inclusion. Such requests must **explicitly include gender and sexual identity among the areas of diversity** we value and support, along with intersecting forms of diversity.

During campus visits, faculty candidates should (if they wish) have an **opportunity to meet with current LGBTQIA+ faculty**. This opportunity should be coordinated through the Office of the Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion, separate from the hiring department, as is done with the Recruitment Committee for underrepresented minority (URM) faculty. Note that ARROWS offers a similar service to the University to help recruit female STEM faculty. Faculty participation in any of these diversity and inclusion recruitment committees should be recognized as service to the University.

b. Orientation

It is important that new employees feel welcome as soon as they join BU. We recommend that HR continue to review current orientation practices to ensure that materials are inclusive and sensitive to issues affecting the LGBTQIA+ community (e.g. gender-neutral language, pronoun awareness, understanding of LGBTQIA+ benefits/resources). HR should also continue to offer private opportunities for new employees to ask questions, since some LGBTQIA+ individuals may not be comfortable asking specific benefits questions in an open setting.

c. University-wide mentorship program for LGBTQIA+ faculty

Mentoring should be offered to all incoming faculty, including LGBTQIA+ and other minorities, at all levels including researchers. Our survey indicated that **satisfaction** with mentoring and professional development opportunities is lower for LGBTQIA+ employees, and particularly those with intersecting POC and/or Hispanic identities. Specific mentorship from senior colleagues who share intersecting minority identities would help junior colleagues navigate the unique issues they may face. Mentors could be recruited from LGBTQIA+ colleagues, or colleagues who share other intersectional identities, from across the University; they need not come from the mentee’s home discipline. Again, for mentors, this should be recognized as a service to the University.

d. Tenure and promotion processes

Faculty and administrators should recognize that members of the LGBTQIA+ population, particularly those with intersecting minority identities, are affected by both explicit and implicit bias. These biases may impact evaluations of scholarship and teaching. Thus, while academic freedom is important for all faculty, it may be particularly relevant for faculty who identify as LGBTQIA+ or who work on gender and sexuality topics. We therefore recommend the University specifically consider LGBTQIA+ scholars and scholarship in developing robust practices of academic freedom.

We are concerned that several faculty members reported being [advised](#) to limit scholarship and teaching on LGBTQ+ topics, to avoid using “queer” in publication titles, and to remove gender and sexuality-related publications from their CV for purposes of promotion and tenure review here at Boston University. We heard variants of this account multiple times, spanning multiple departments and many years. The incidents appeared to be well-intentioned efforts to advise colleagues on how to succeed at BU, but the advice is clearly not aligned with the University’s current diversity goals. These comments also infringe upon the University’s commitment to academic freedom, especially for faculty who are untenured or not on a tenure track. **The University should make clear to all faculty—with special attention to chairs, directors, and faculty mentors—that it values high-quality research and teaching, including research on LGBTQIA+ topics, and will protect the academic freedom of faculty working in such areas.**

Regardless of area of scholarship, studies indicate that students’ implicit biases and perceptions of faculty members’ minority sexuality, gender identity, or gender presentation, as well as other minority statuses, can negatively affect [student evaluations](#) and [perception of learning](#). The possibility of implicit bias should therefore be considered, if relevant, in teaching evaluations. **Multifaceted, holistic teaching evaluations** should help identify and avoid effects of potential bias.

R12. Report, recognize, and reward service to BU’s LGBTQIA+ community, along with other efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Across disciplines, schools, and colleges, openly LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff serve as formal and often informal mentors for LGBTQIA+ identified students, or as the *de facto* diversity resource for their department. Such faculty described how their extra service as gender and sexual minorities (mentoring, advising, organizing activities to foster LGBTQIA+ inclusion etc.) goes unrecognized. Others expressed concern for the potentially heavy [service burdens](#) on queer and trans colleagues.

To reward and motivate diversity, equity, and inclusion service, including to BU’s LGBTQIA+ community, such service should be included in standard assessment and review processes. We recommend specifically asking both in annual merit/performance evaluations and promotion reviews whether faculty and staff have contributed to diversity and inclusion and, if so, how. Whether or not an employee identifies as a minority, the University should recognize and value their work to welcome, support, and include the LGBTQIA+ community and other intersectional minority groups. In a similar vein, managers should be held accountable for their diversity and inclusion efforts, or lack thereof, in annual performance evaluations. While it is currently possible to list such

service on Faculty Annual Reports within the framework of “service to department, service to university, or service to profession,” inquiring in a specific section about contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion will highlight and clarify the value the university places on such service. In addition, systematically collecting information on employees’ diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts will create opportunities to recognize and highlight exemplary service, for instance through annual awards.

R13. Establish and maintain ongoing processes to measure LGBTQIA+ inclusion and parity, as well as campus climate metrics.

Currently, the University has no way to identify LGBTQIA+ applicants, new hires, or employees, nor to systematically assess their equity with cisgender heterosexual peers. We recommend that the application process for faculty and staff positions include the option for candidates to provide information on their gender identity and sexual orientation, along with race, ethnicity, disability, and other demographic data that are already collected. These data would be kept confidential from the hiring unit and used to assess the demographics of the applicant pool. In addition (as noted above in R3) BU should enable employees to indicate their gender identity and sexual orientation at hiring and to add or update this information at any point in their career at BU. **Opt-in self-identification** will also facilitate [communication](#). The same opportunity should be provided when employees leave the University, in exit surveys. In all cases, self-identification categories should be broad and multiple, including an individualized write-in option.

Because little is known about the gender identities and sexual orientations of existing faculty and staff, it is currently impossible to analyze parity between LGBTQIA+ employees and their straight, cisgender peers in terms of compensation and opportunities for professional advancement. If and when data becomes available that would allow for an **equity analysis**, we recommend that the University examine this issue.

Departing employees can provide candid feedback that current employees may be unable or unwilling to voice. Thus, we recommend that BU institute an **exit survey**, similar to the existing CRC Faculty Exit Survey, to ask departing employees for their feedback and suggestions. The survey should request self-identification information (race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.) and include questions related to benefits satisfaction and diversity and inclusion on campus.

When the University undertakes a comprehensive **Climate Survey**, the Task Force recommends that the University include questions to allow for self-identification of LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff and ask all respondents about the University’s diversity and inclusion practices impacting the LGBTQIA+ community. Broad, representative data will be crucial for the University to identify areas of concern and opportunities for improvement, particularly for those with intersectional identities.

R14. Continue efforts to provide all-gender facilities, including but not limited to bathrooms, throughout BU.

We appreciate that BU is making progress on providing all-gender facilities in campus buildings, and has a plan for continued improvement in this area, including a map to indicate locations of all-gender facilities. These improvements address a need that came up

in every Community Meeting and many survey responses. We encourage BU to continue to move forward aggressively in making these much-needed improvements to the accessibility of our facilities.

R15. Establish a simple, streamlined process for changing names and gender markers.

The process of updating a name, gender marker, and BU alias in various records systems can be challenging, even after a person’s name and gender marker have been legally changed. This should be streamlined to improve the experience of those who are transitioning and ensure that information is consistent across systems. This was a [repeated request](#) in Community Meetings and surveys.

Moreover, changing one’s legal name is a complex process, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community may use a preferred name that differs from their legal name. Being called by a non-preferred legal name can cause significant distress for trans people and inadvertently “out” them. We recommend that BU implement a **preferred name policy**, enabling faculty, staff, students and alumni to indicate their preferred first and middle names. Most communications—including BU Directory, BU Works, Course Management Systems and Student Records—should show the preferred name, rather than the legal name, reserving the legal name for use only when required, such as on official tax documents. We recommend that students be able to communicate their preferred names and pronouns to faculty through official University records, so that they appear in course rosters.

We understand, from HR personnel, that initiatives are in progress to better support gender diverse employees including a Gender Identity/Expression Policy, Toolkit, and Support Guide. Moreover, we understand that a new Student Information System is in the works and recommend that it include expanded options for self-identification. We hope and expect that these changes will substantially improve the work and educational environment for gender diverse member of the BU community.

THEME III. EQUITABLE BENEFITS FOR AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Based on meetings with colleagues from the Benefits Office, Boston University’s employee benefits programs are in most respects competitive with peer institutions. Nonetheless, repeated themes in the Community Meetings and online survey, the experience of Task Force members, and our Comparator Landscape Analysis indicate two key areas for the improvement of benefits relevant to the LGBTQIA+ community—transgender services and domestic partner benefits. In addition, information on benefits relevant to the LGBTQIA+ community is not easily accessible or adequately disseminated; thus, communication should be improved.

R16. Expand and support access to gender-affirming health care coverage.

The need for better access to health services and insurance benefits for employees who are transgender was a prevalent theme in Community Meetings and [survey responses](#). In

addition, the challenges trans employees face in accessing health insurance benefits to which they are already entitled are exacerbated by multiple transition-related issues.

The University currently covers many medical procedures and prescription drugs for our trans population. Boston University and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) have been progressive regarding LGBTQIA+ health coverage, but certain gender affirming services (transgender services) are not covered. Addressing these would have a large impact on the trans community. The most imperative is **facial hair removal for trans women**. Because most insurance companies still categorize hair removal as “cosmetic” for all patients, regardless of transgender status, this procedure is not currently covered. Second, our policies do not cover **voice therapy or vocal surgery** under gender affirming services. Both practices are defined as **medically necessary** by the [World Professional Association for Transgender Health](#). Gender-affirming health care is evolving and both attitudes and coverage will likely change over time. To contribute to positive change, we recommend that BU **advocate with BCBSMA to cover these procedures** and/or consider a University reimbursement model.

In addition to providing coverage, it is important that HR **support trans employees in obtaining the coverage for care to which they are entitled**. While HR can assist any BU employee to obtain benefits from our designated suppliers (BCBSMA, OptumRx, etc.), trans employees may particularly need such assistance and may be unaware that the University offers it. For instance, insurance for covered medical procedures commonly required by trans people is automatically denied when legal gender does not match bodily organs (e.g., a transman would be denied coverage for procedures involving female organs). Obtaining coverage requires appealing the denial. Similarly, annual renewal of required, covered, hormone prescriptions should be a routine medical and insurance process but instead **often requires “a fight”** with insurance companies. Until access to covered insurance benefits for trans employees imposes no additional burden, BU should **assist these employees in obtaining their benefits and clearly communicate the availability of this assistance**.

Finally, although BU employee benefits coverage for trans health is relatively comprehensive, our coverage for students is poorer. This issue in turn affects faculty who are recruiting top graduate students. To be competitive, BU should improve these student benefits.

R17. Provide domestic partner benefits matching those of peer institutions.

Based on data provided by HR, Boston University is currently not competitive with our peer universities—most of which offer domestic partner benefits—since we offer health benefits to neither same-sex nor opposite-sex domestic partners. HR has noted that the peer institutions already offered domestic partner benefits prior to the legalization of same-sex marriage. This notwithstanding, domestic partner benefits are a recognized best practice and key benchmark for LGBTQIA+ inclusivity. Their absence at BU was discussed at all of our Community Meetings and in many survey responses.

The legalization of same-sex marriage did not erase marriage’s legacy of cisgender heteronormativity, nor did it remove many other obstacles facing same-sex couples and

individuals (see [Global Context](#)). Thus, many same-sex couples in long-term relationships opt for domestic partnerships rather than marriage.

To support sexual minority employees equitably with their heterosexual colleagues, to effectively compete for talent with peer institutions, and to demonstrate our institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion, we recommend that Boston University extend health insurance, tuition remission, and other benefits to domestic partners, equivalent to what we offer married spouses. There are many peer and peer+ institutions, as well as major corporate employers, which Boston University can look to for models in implementing domestic partner benefits. The Human Rights Campaign also offers recommendations through its [Corporate Equality Index](#).

R18. Improve communication of benefits information for LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff.

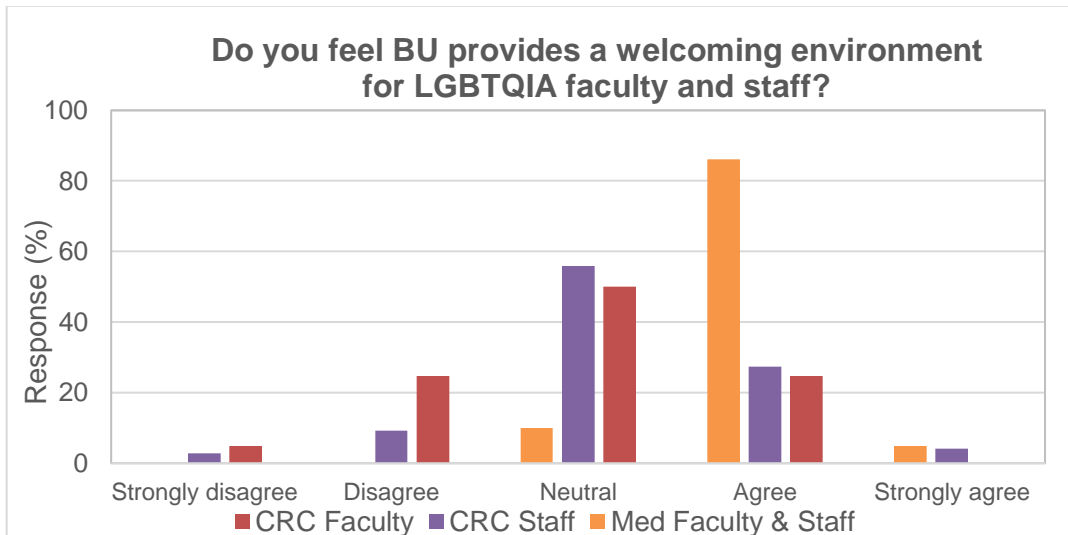
The experience of Task Force members, as well as information shared with us at Community Meetings and through the survey, indicate that there is significant misunderstanding of benefits available to LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff. Providing information on relevant policies in a way that makes them more transparent and readily available online will reduce confusion among existing employees, highlight BU's strong benefits programs to prospective LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff, and make a public statement of BU's support of its diverse employee body.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED WITH BU FACULTY AND STAFF

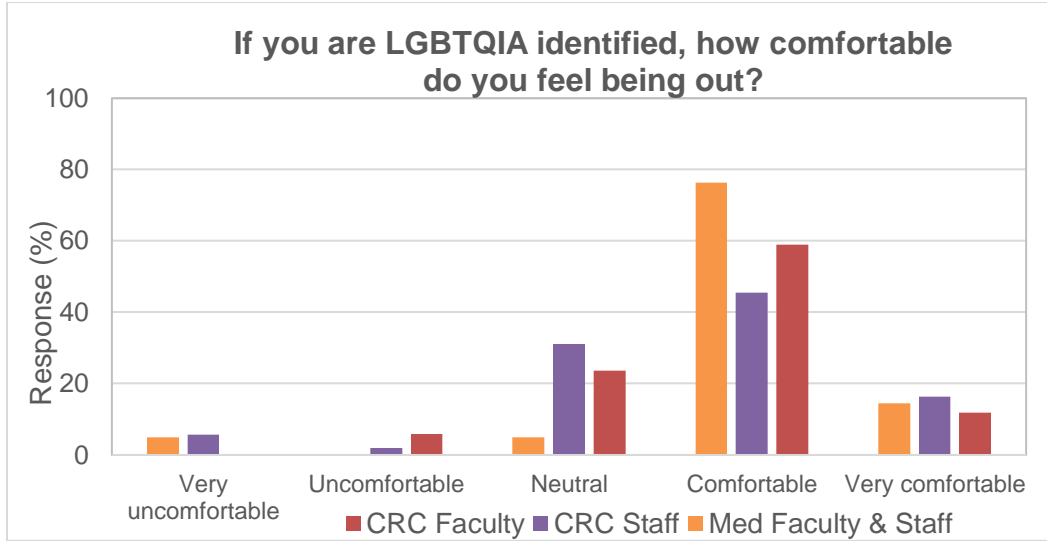
We used a mixed methods approach to conduct a needs assessment of the LGBTQIA+ community. We gathered quantitative and qualitative data through a series of community meetings and through an online survey. Descriptive statistics, from live polls conducted at community meetings and from close-ended survey questions (see [Appendix 2](#)), are included in this section. We also conducted a thematic analysis with the detailed notes of community meeting discussions and responses to open-ended survey questions. Themes helped to frame the report and representative quotes are included in [Appendix 3](#).

Community Meetings

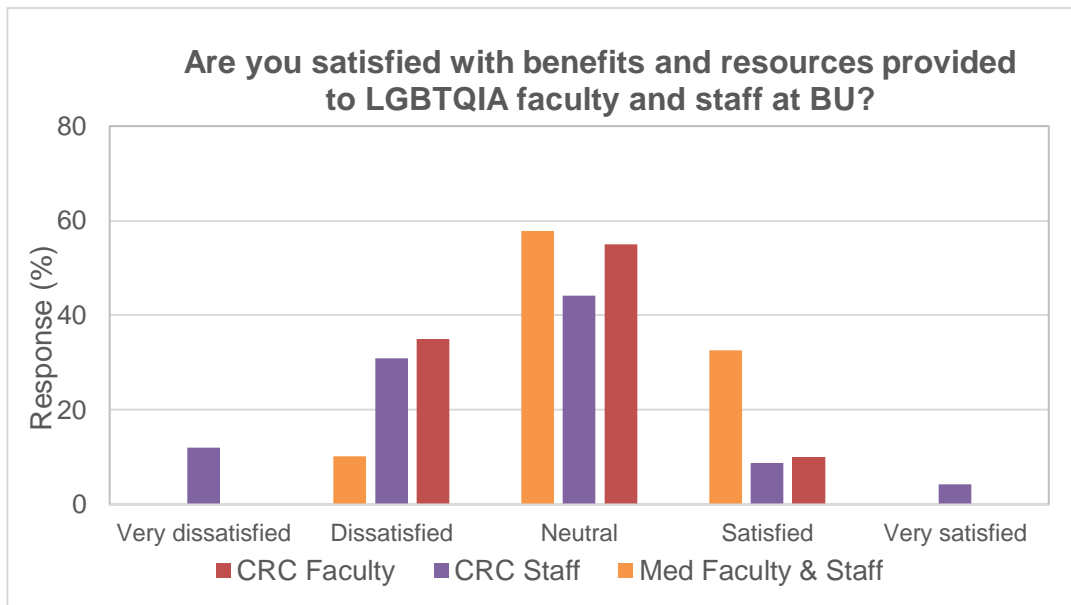
Approximately 150 faculty and staff participated in six **LGBTQIA+ at Work** Community Meetings, four on the Charles River Campus and two at the Med Campus. Over 90 CRC staff, about 30 CRC faculty, and about 25 MC faculty and staff attended the 90-minute meetings. Each meeting included a live online poll, comprised of three questions to which a subset of participants responded using their smartphones; some declined to participate or did not have a device with them. Responses grouped by CRC faculty (N=20), CRC staff (N=68), and Med campus faculty and staff (N=21) are presented below. Although these sample sizes are small, and the experiences of LGBTQIA+ employees who chose to attend a meeting may differ from that of employees who chose not to attend, the larger patterns appear to be consistent with information from other sources, including verbal statements by meeting participants and online survey responses.



First, there is substantial variation in how welcoming the BU environment is perceived to be for LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff. Most CRC respondents gave a *neutral* response, indicating neither unwelcoming nor particularly welcoming. In contrast, most Med respondents *agreed* that BU is a welcoming environment. Nonetheless, some employees on both campuses – including 30% of CRC faculty respondents – *disagree* or *strongly disagree* that BU provides a welcoming environment.



Second, there is also substantial variation in how comfortable LGBTQIA+ employees feel being out at work at BU. In keeping with their perception of an overall welcoming environment, most Med employees reported feeling comfortable being out at BU. On the CRC, despite their perception of the overall campus environment as less than welcoming, many employees feel comfortable being out at work. This fact highlights the benefits of positive interactions with colleagues and a welcoming local work environment, within a unit. Nonetheless, on both campuses some faculty and staff feel uncomfortable or very uncomfortable being out. Because such discomfort substantially reduces the probability of an employee coming to a community meeting, 5–8% is likely to be an underestimate.



Ratings of satisfaction with benefits and resources again revealed a broad range of responses, centered on *neutral*, with somewhat greater satisfaction among MED employees and greater dissatisfaction among CRC employees. Note that “benefits and resources” include a wide range of things – from formal benefits, such as health insurance and family

leave, to programs, events or groups that create opportunities for LGBTQIA+ visibility, community-building, and mutual support.

Discussion in community meetings revealed substantial variation in LGBTQIA+ employee experiences among units within BU. Some units were reported to actively welcome members of the LGBTQIA+ community through their recruitment process and availability of mentoring and networking opportunities. Strong units offer training and programming that includes gender and sexual minority issues in a broader diversity framework, and conduct scholarship focused on improving LGBTQIA+ experience. Their leaders publicly express support for the gender and sexual minority community, setting a positive standard of valuing diversity, and a commitment to inclusion is evident from their public-facing websites. LGBTQIA+ community members perceive such units as comfortable and inclusive work environments, where they can be themselves. These units could serve as examples to the rest of the institution.

In contrast, some LGBTQIA+ community members reported feeling unwelcome in their work environments at BU. For example, one individual expressed palpable fear at the thought of being out at work. This person did not attend the LGBTQIA+ lunches hosted by the Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion due to fear of discovery, described their work area as not a safe place for LGBTQIA+ individuals, and feared job loss or non-promotion should co-workers discover their sexual orientation. It seems likely that others share elements of this experience and have avoided contact with the Task Force due to their fears.

Many participants at the community meetings described units as neither hostile nor specifically welcoming to gender and sexual minorities. In practice, this silence (in contrast to actively welcoming diversity) limits opportunities for minorities to comfortably disclose their identities, increasing LGBTQIA+ invisibility. Tellingly, some colleagues who had worked in the same department for years learned only at the first LGBTQIA+ luncheon that they shared this marginalized identity. In this light, it is not surprising that even in “neutral” units, we heard about isolation and lack of community.

Beyond this, we heard from faculty about graduate student recruitment failures due to non-competitive benefits, about both faculty and staff leaving BU because of perceived offensive treatment based on their sexuality, and about concerns over unequal treatment that could affect tenure and promotion processes. The experiences of LGBTQIA+ community members also vary with intersecting minority identities, and particular experiences of non-inclusion or inequity that is multiplied by combined oppressed identities.

Online Survey

The Task Force created an online **LGBTQIA+ at Work** survey ([Appendix 2](#)), asking participants for demographic information, and to “*indicate the amount of importance you place on and your level of satisfaction with ...*” a set of 23 factors relating to LGBTQIA+ inclusivity at BU and the experience of LGBTQIA+ employees. We disseminated a link to the survey at the Community Meetings and via email, asking people to share it with other BU employees who might wish to respond, particularly LGBTQIA+ community members and allies. In total, 297 BU employees completed the survey. Respondents included 144 CRC

and 137 Med campus employees, of which 117 were faculty, 137 were exempt staff, 27 were hourly staff, and 9 were postdocs; another 7 did not specify campus or position.

Our data presentation below focuses on the 244 respondents who provided at least three key pieces of demographic data: campus (N = 134 CRC, 110 Med), self-identification as a member of the gender and sexual minority community (152 LGBTQIA+, abbreviated below as Q) or not (82 cisgender heterosexuals/allies), and racial/ethnic self-identification. Excluding respondents who chose not to self-identify on one or more of these variables did not appear to substantively change the overall patterns. Due to small sample sizes in certain identity categories, we present the data grouping together all gender and sexual minorities and grouping together all racial and ethnic minorities. We were unable to further analyze differences by gender and race/ethnicity because of small sample sizes.

We conducted a screening analysis (in JMP Pro 13) looking for differences in response by campus, Q/not-Q identification, racial/ethnic minority identification, a campus x Q-identification interaction (N = 42 CRC/not-Q, 92 CRC/Q, 40 Med/not-Q, 60 Med/Q), and a Q-identity x racial/ethnic minority identification interaction (N = 15 POC + Hispanic/not-Q, 77 white & not Hispanic/not-Q, 19 POC + Hispanic/Q, 133 white & not Hispanic/Q). We used conservative statistical methods, factoring in the number of comparisons to control the false-discovery rate. Note that the wording of each factor is shortened for graphic presentation; see [Appendix 2](#) for complete wording of questions.

Note that this is a convenience sample of BU employees who chose to respond to our survey, with a relatively high response rate of LGBTQIA+ employees. Extrapolating from the recent [Gallup estimate](#) that 4.5% of American adults² identify as LGBT to the BU faculty and staff population of 9500 would suggest that an estimated 430 employees identify as gender and sexual minorities. Thus the 152 LGBTQIA+ who responded to our survey may represent an estimated 35% of LGBTQIA+ employees. When the University plans and administers a comprehensive climate survey, it should include questions addressing the experience of LGBTQIA+ members of our University community to gain a more comprehensive picture.

Importance analysis. No subgroup effects met our conservative criteria for false discovery rate indicating that respondents across both campuses and all identities rank the importance of the various factors we asked about relatively similarly. We therefore present below simply the overall mean importance rankings (\pm SE). Response options for importance ranged from 1 (*low*) to 5 (*high*). *Both* gender and sexual minority faculty and staff *and* cisgender heterosexual colleagues placed substantial importance on *all* queried factors, with inclusivity of the overall campus climate, benefits and HR practices, and comfort being out to supervisors and to colleagues ranked highest.

² Gallup estimates that 8.1% of American Millennials identify as LGBT.

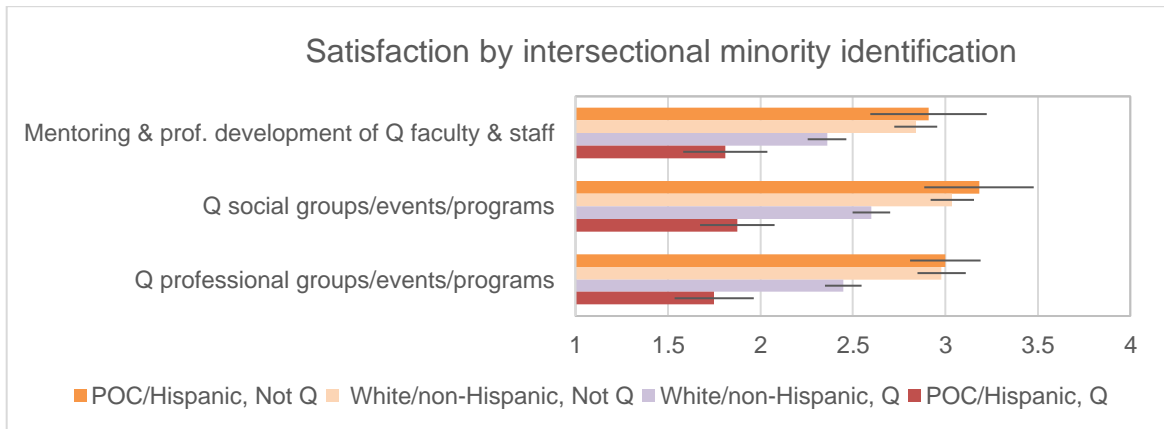
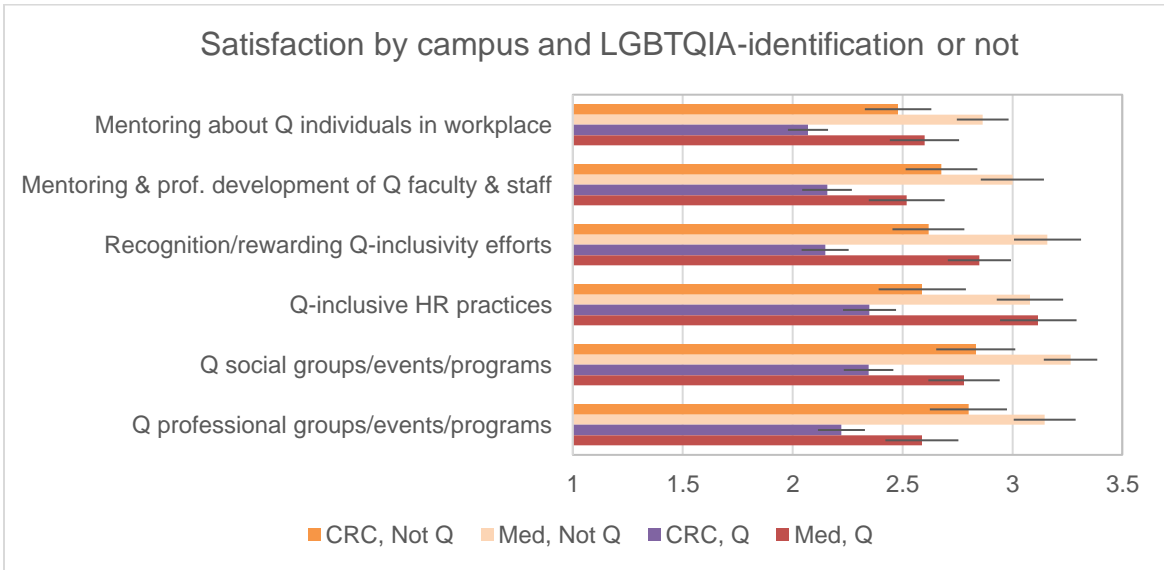


Satisfaction analysis. Response options for satisfaction ranged from 1 (*low*) to 5 (*high*). For the 17 factors above there were no strong subgroup differences. Overall mean satisfaction levels ranged from a high of just 3.3 for LGBTQIA+ *inclusivity in respondents’ day-to-day work environment and comfort in coming out to colleagues* to lows of 2.3 for LGBTQIA+ *representation in University leadership* and 2.6 for LGBTQIA+ *inclusivity in work-related training*.

For six factors there was significant variation in satisfaction with the intersection of LGBTQIA+ identity and campus (see graph below). In all cases LGBTQIA+ employees on CRC were least satisfied, and Med campus cisgender heterosexual employees were most satisfied.

For three factors—mentoring and professional development of LGBTQIA+ employees, and both social and professional groups/programs/events for LGBTQIA+ employees—the intersection of LGBTQIA+ and racial or ethnic minority identity affected satisfaction. Cisgender heterosexuals across race and ethnicity were most satisfied (3 on a 5-point scale). In contrast, white/non-Hispanic LGBTQIA+ employees were significantly less satisfied, and employees who identified as POC/Hispanic *and* LGBTQIA+ were least

satisfied. Given BU’s diversity and inclusivity goals, these findings highlight the importance of creating specific opportunities to support mentoring, professional development, and opportunities to build community connections for this group of employees.



We also tested whether there was a difference in satisfaction of LGBTQIA+ employees associated with years of service at Boston University. We found no difference in the satisfaction of long-term (16 or more years, i.e., Silber-era) vs. more recently hired LGBTQIA+ employees. This indicates that these employees’ history at BU is not a strong determinant of their current perception of the work environment, and it supports the need to accelerate initiatives that improve the workplace experience for all LGBTQIA+ employees.

LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION PRACTICES AT OTHER LEADING UNIVERSITIES COMPARATOR LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Given Boston University’s location, its founding principles, and its commitment to diversity and inclusion, the University should be at the forefront of LGBTQIA+ higher education workplace practices. The Task Force researched and compared resources, policies, and benefits among the University and 16 other institutions (strategic peers and local peers). This effort helped to contextualize where the University’s diversity and inclusion practices and efforts need to be not just more up to date, but also more forward-thinking.

As is evident in the table below, the major theme we found was that LGBTQIA+ visibility and dedicated resources at the University fall short compared to our peers. All of the other institutions have both staffed support services and websites dedicated to supporting their LGBTQIA+ communities. This visible resource commitment helps signal the importance of LGBTQIA+ diversity and inclusion to current and potential faculty, staff, students and alumni. Having a single dedicated online portal that effectively and continually gathers and organizes information for the LGBTQIA+ communities both facilitates the development of these communities and communicates their vitality and importance.

BU has clear opportunities to benefit from the development of LGBTQIA+ alumni groups and from university-wide training on sexual and gender diversity. Many of our peer institutions also have standing LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committees, which we might consider.

	Paid Staff for LGBTQIA+ Support Services	LGBTQIA+ Alumni Group	Standing LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee	Dedicated LGBTQIA+ website	Training Opportunities for New Faculty/Staff on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity Issues
Boston University	No	No	No	No	Limited to local efforts
American University	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Boston College	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Brown University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case Western Reserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
George Washington	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Harvard University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Johns Hopkins	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MIT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York University	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Northwestern University	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Syracuse University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tufts University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Michigan	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
University of Pennsylvania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
University of Rochester	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
USC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Employment and benefits practices play a crucial role in recruiting and retaining excellent and diverse faculty and staff. As is evident in the table below, the University offers competitive LGBTQIA+ benefits with the exception of domestic partnership benefits. Fifteen out of 16 comparator institutions offer health care and other benefits to domestic partners. We recommend that the University provide such benefits.

The University includes gender identity and sexual orientation in its non-discrimination statement; however, there is no simple process for changing an employee’s name or gender marker. Most comparator institutions have such processes in place. The issue of non-binary self-identification options is also relevant in the recruitment and retention process; here BU has the opportunity to lead.

	Domestic Partner Benefits	Trans Healthcare Coverage including Counseling and Hormone Therapy	Simple Process for Changing Name and Gender Markers	Non-binary Gender Self-Identification Options	Non-Discrimination Statement Inclusive of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
Boston University	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
American University	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Boston College	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Brown University	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Case Western Reserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
George Washington	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Harvard University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Johns Hopkins	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
MIT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
New York University	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Northwestern University	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Syracuse University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tufts University	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
University of Michigan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Pennsylvania	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
University of Rochester	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
USC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FOR LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION

The Task Force contacted Associate Provosts for Diversity & Inclusion at three Association of American Universities (AAU) peer universities recognized as leaders in LGBTQIA+ inclusion—University of Michigan, Brown University and the University of Rochester—to ask about their existing LGBTQIA+ programming, most successful practices, and lessons learned. In each case, the Associate Provost referred us to the Director of their LGBT+ Center for specifics. We also reviewed 17 additional AAU University’s websites for their approaches to addressing the needs of this community (eight private: Columbia, NYU,

George Washington, Duke, Stanford, Northwestern; and nine public: UC Berkeley, UCLA, UCSD, U Washington, Texas, Rutgers, Virginia, UNC-Chapel Hill, Wisconsin).

A Center for LGBTQIA+ programming. In all cases (i.e. all 20), the universities allocated physical space for LGBTQIA+ programming. In many, but not all cases, the space for a Center was located in the Student Union and usually on an upper floor to add a sense of privacy. In other cases, the center was located near other culturally oriented groups – African American, Hispanic, International students, etc. Space allocations were not consistent across institutions.

Staffing and budgeting. In all cases, the Centers were staffed with multiple full time professional staff, as well as part time employees, including undergraduate and graduate students. Among the three leading universities contacted, budget allocations for the Center ranged from \$240K to \$550K, primarily funding staff positions. Partnerships with other campus programs that address diversity appeared to be the norm at all sites, with additional funding for programming available through collaborations. Funding from alumni also contributed to programming (annual lectures, visiting professorships, activities, etc.).

Program administration. In most cases, LGBTQIA+ programming falls under the Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion, with a specific Director responsible for programming. In a few cases it falls under Student Affairs/Life, when programming is centered on undergraduates. For the strongest positive impact on faculty and staff, programming at BU should be directed to the entire University community on both campuses, not focused solely on students, with specific topics serving narrower constituencies as relevant. We also recommend investing in data collection to help drive specific programming decisions.

Highest impact and most innovative programs. At University of Michigan, the Spectrum Center has been in place since 1970. The Center benefits greatly from Michigan's Institute for Survey Research (ISR) which regularly provides an evidence-based barometer of University life at all levels. The Director of Spectrum Center, now in his tenth year, informed us that many of the Center's initiatives derive from ISR's climate surveys; these provide Spectrum staff with evaluations of existing programming and inform future directions. Many universities have a clear preference for LGBTQIA+ programming to operate in conjunction with other similar social justice entities on campus, providing LGBTQIA+ expertise for intersectional initiatives. Individual-level intervention (guidance and counseling) is available at most places, yet every university's LGBTQIA+ website listed considerable University and community resources that are available to complement the resources their Center provides. Moreover, Center staff work with liaisons within academic and administrative units to inform programming and also to disseminate resources and information about best practices to support LGBTQIA+ recruitment, retention, and inclusion.

Web-based resources for community. All 20 universities have a robust website for the LGBTQIA+ community, with most including a list serve that is readily available for communication. Many also issue a weekly or monthly newsletter describing activities ongoing at the University, the neighborhood, and the community. NYU and Columbia present a remarkable array of social and intellectual offerings routinely brought to the

attention of students, faculty and staff. A cohesive, thoughtful, and detailed website of resources and events that is carefully and regularly updated is essential and of the highest priority to the success of any future initiatives at Boston University.

Opportunities for philanthropic support. Each university we polled indicated that they have experienced growing philanthropy coming from alumni, parents and other stakeholders for the LGBTQIA+ community. Endowed professorships, student scholarships, lectures, and research can be targets for Development. Boston University should strongly consider the LGBTQIA+ community as a potential affinity group with great untapped capacity.

Organizing and supporting faculty and staff. There are many ideas contained on each University's website to improve the lives of faculty and staff who are LGBTQIA+. Effective approaches include: a) Affinity Groups (Employee Resource Groups); b) Faculty Alliances, c) LGBTQIA+ Groups in Medicine, d) Inclusive social events, e) Faculty and Staff Mentorship opportunities and f) opportunities to create visibility for the scholarly achievements of faculty and students. Some leading universities effectively use "LGBTQIA+ Scholars and Scholarship" symposia, integrating disciplines and specialties, to highlight the many academic contributions made by LGBTQIA+ students and faculty. These events also provide a social and intellectual bridge across schools, colleges, departments, and campuses. Several universities additionally provide opportunities for students (such as minors or certificates) to pursue interdisciplinary studies focused in the LGBTQIA+ world.

Administrative services. Given the critical role of Human Resources in the development of policies and procedures, all Center Directors interviewed emphasized the importance of ascertaining that policies regarding inclusiveness address the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community, especially those in the community who are transgender.

HISTORICAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXT

Both the history of Boston University and the larger US and global context for gender and sexual minorities affect the experience of LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff. As we write this report in 2019, [Boston](#), the United States, and the world are preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. This event, in June 1969 in Greenwich Village, New York, was a [pivotal moment in LGBTQIA+ history](#) and is widely recognized as the start of the gay liberation movement. Since then, 50 years of organized effort have dramatically improved the status and lives of gender and sexual minorities in the United States, and in many other countries, while other forces have resisted these changes.

Boston University History

Boston University rightly takes pride in the fact that it has been open to all, regardless of race and gender, since its founding. In 1969–70, BU was also setting precedents for the inclusion of sexual minorities. BU was the first Boston-area university to officially approve a student homophile organization, the BU Homophile Committee, on [December 4, 1969](#), and was the first to allow public meetings of homosexuals on campus. Soon thereafter, BU became the first Boston university to allow gay dances (June 1970 [newsletter](#) of the Student Homophile League). In 1970, BU again made history when a meeting held at the George Sherman Union brought together all of Boston’s LGBTQIA organizations, for the first time, and served as the founding moment for many new organizations; in the summer of 2019, The History Project and Boston Pride will highlight this contribution as part of the [Stonewall 50](#) project.

Moreover, BU has trained leaders in the struggle for LGBTQIA+ rights. For instance, John Ward, a graduate of BU Law, founded [Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders \(GLAD\)](#) in 1978. This organization went on to change the landscape for LGBTQ rights throughout the country in myriad ways. John was also one of the hosts of [Gay Way](#), a [trailblazing radio program](#) that aired on WBUR [from 1973–1980](#), until it was shut down by President John Silber.

In 1971, John Silber became the President of Boston University. During the Silber era—as President 1971–1996, Chancellor 1996–2002, and President 2002–2003—BU enjoyed tremendous growth and success but was [not a welcoming place](#) for the LGBTQIA+ community. In 1989, Massachusetts became the second state in the nation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. Nevertheless, despite requests by [students](#), [faculty](#), and [staff](#), “sexual orientation” was not included in BU’s nondiscrimination policy.

Silber publicly [opposed teaching children about sexual diversity](#) and, in 2002, ordered the BU Academy to [disband its Gay-Straight Alliance](#), a group [initiated by students](#) to work against discrimination. At the time, there were many Gay-Straight Alliances at public high schools in Massachusetts, funded by a state program to address high rates of bullying and suicide among gay teens. In justifying his decision, Silber affirmed organizations’ [right to discriminate](#) based on sexual orientation.

While it has been 16 years since the Silber era, there are aspects of BU’s climate and culture that are still affected by this anti-LGBTQIA+ legacy. For many members of BU’s LGBTQIA+ community Silber Way serves as a constant reminder of this aspect of our history.

When Aram Chobanian became president in 2003, BU began to change its policies toward LGBTQIA+ people in a positive direction. In 2004, fifteen years after Massachusetts enacted its sexual orientation anti-discrimination statute, “sexual orientation” was added to BU’s non-discrimination policy. “Gender identity” was added in 2011, concurrently with the change in Massachusetts law, and the environment for gender and sexual minorities has continued to improve. Some units within BU have made substantial efforts to include and support LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, and students, and to contribute to the well-being of the LGBTQIA+ community beyond BU. However, the 2018 lunches and listening sessions hosted by the new Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion were the first time a University-wide welcome was extended to the LGBTQIA+ community. These gatherings provided an important launching pad for the Task Force’s work, beginning a process of larger-scale networking and community building. Moreover, President Brown’s 2018 Thanksgiving letter, emphasizing BU’s commitment to equity and inclusion expressly including gender and sexual minorities, was very well received and viewed as a significant positive sign of institutional support for BU’s LGBTQIA+ community. The work of this Task Force represents an opportunity to initiate public, institution-wide changes that build on the work of individual units and help create a BU-wide climate of inclusion.

Outside BU – LGBTQIA+ Rights in the United States and Globally

BU is a global university. While gender and sexual minorities currently benefit from substantial legal protection in Massachusetts, members of the BU community have professional and personal connections in other jurisdictions, where they are affected by laws and practice that vary across the nation and the globe. For instance, same-sex partners can marry throughout the United States, and the US House of Representatives recently passed a comprehensive LGBTQ civil rights bill (the [Equality Act](#)). However, [discrimination](#) in housing, employment, or services based on sexual orientation or gender identity is still legal in 30 states. Internationally, 68 countries [criminalize](#) consensual same-sex sexual activity, with penalties including death (12 countries, with the recent addition of Brunei) and 10 years to life imprisonment (25 countries). Joint adoption by same-sex couples is possible only in 14% of UN member states (27 countries). So, while same-sex marriage is now legal in 26 countries, taking advantage of that legal recognition in one jurisdiction can place individuals who travel nationally or globally at risk of discrimination or worse in others. Moreover, the current [legal status of LGBT Americans](#) is far from secure.

Thus, the workplace experience of Boston University’s LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff, and the educational experience of our LGBTQIA+ students, are situated within a broader social context of great progress and substantial insecurity, as well as the particular history of our institution. In Provost Morrison’s charge to the Task Force, she recognized that “It is vital to Boston University’s impact and relevance as a global research institution and major regional employer that all of our faculty and staff enjoy a supportive work environment.” Provost Morrison committed the institution to “devoting greater focus ... to the workplace experience of our faculty and staff who are LGBTQIA+” to achieve this goal. The recommendations of this Task Force provide a clear path to accelerate our progress toward full and holistic inclusion of LGBTQIA+ employees in the Boston University community.

APPENDIX 1. Charge to the Task Force on LGBTQIA Faculty and Staff

It is vital to Boston University's impact and relevance as a global research institution and major regional employer that all our faculty and staff enjoy a supportive work environment that is consistent with our stated principles of employees' feeling valued and respected. To achieve this goal, we will be devoting greater focus in the year ahead to the workplace experience of our faculty and staff who are LGBTQIA+.

Through a multi-faceted effort that considers the current environment, as well as new approaches to programming, recruitment, retention, professional development and support and network-building, we are seeking to accelerate our progress. To this end, I am establishing a Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff. The Task Force will be charged with facilitating a set of University-wide discussions about how Boston University can become a more LGBTQIA+ inclusive community for faculty and staff, and with developing recommendations to help us meet this objective. Because there is already an established group focused on these issues for BU students, this Task Force will focus its attention on the experience of our employees. Where necessary, however, this Task Force can point to possible areas of overlap and/or opportunities for future exploration.

The charge to the Task Force includes the following:

1. Gather information about effective practices from other major research universities that are also focused on improving the working environment for LGBTQIA+ faculty, including recruitment, retention, and, when and if appropriate, promotion. Likewise, gather information about effective practices from other major research universities and/or corporations that have successfully developed programs and interventions to improve the quality of life for LGBTQIA+ non-faculty staff members. In particular, the Task Force's recommendations should be sensitive to the differences in rank and type of employee at the University to ensure that recommendations and strategies are as inclusive as possible.
2. Suggest specific ways we can elevate the importance of and relationship between LGBTQIA+ and intersectional identities (race, nationality, religion, ability, etc.), and inclusiveness at Boston University, including recommending strategies to implement promising approaches toward enhancing our culture of holistic inclusiveness.
3. Gather information about any current formal and informal activities at the University—both on the Charles River and Medical campuses—that are focused on LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff. Suggest ways to integrate or expand current activities that may be siloed and/or nascent.
4. Suggest specific ways Boston University can create stronger ties with Boston-based and regional LGBTQIA+ groups and networks.
5. Given the historical complexities regarding the collection and maintenance of identifying lists, gather information about effective intra-group and organization-wide communication practices at other large organizations. Additionally, suggest multi-faceted ways we can develop effective communication strategies with LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff that are sensitive to the limited use of University-wide communications.

APPENDIX 2. Questions asked in anonymous online survey

1. Demographics

Employee type [multiple choice of employee type and campus]
How long have you been employed by Boston University? [multiple choice up to 16+ years]
Race/ethnicity [multiple choice]
Gender [multiple choice]
Gender: Self-describe [text]
LGBTQIA+ Identity [multiple choice]
LGBTQIA+ Identity: Self-describe [text]

2. Importance and satisfaction

Indicate the amount of importance you place on and your level of satisfaction with the following ...
[all multiple choice, 1(low) to 5(high)]

LGBTQIA inclusivity in the recruitment process
LGBTQIA inclusivity in the hiring process
LGBTQIA inclusivity in work-related training
LGBTQIA inclusivity in your day-to-day work environment
LGBTQIA inclusivity on campus as a whole
Mentoring on issues related to LGBTQIA individuals in the workplace
Mentoring and professional development of LGBTQIA individuals
Promotion (and tenure, if applicable) prospects for LGBTQIA faculty and staff
Recognition or rewarding of LGBTQIA-inclusivity efforts by groups or individuals
Fostering and valuing of LGBTQIA-related scholarship
Comfort level of faculty and staff to come out as LGBTQIA to students
Comfort level of faculty and staff to come out as LGBTQIA to colleagues
Comfort level of faculty and staff to come out as LGBTQIA to supervisors or University leadership
LGBTQIA visibility among faculty and staff
LGBTQIA representation in University leadership
LGBTQIA inclusive Human Resources practices
Individual benefits for LGBTQIA faculty and staff
Partner/family benefits for LGBTQIA faculty and staff
Counseling available for LGBTQIA faculty and staff
Health services available for LGBTQIA faculty and staff
Inclusivity of campus services (FITREC, campus police, etc)
LGBTQIA social groups/events/programs

3. Open-ended questions

Would you like to share any particularly positive or negative experiences related to the LGBTQIA faculty and staff experience at Boston University?
How could Boston University better serve LGBTQIA faculty and staff?
How could Boston University improve LGBTQIA inclusiveness across intersectional identities (race, nationality, religion, socio-economic class, ability, etc.)?
Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX 3. Comments from BU faculty and staff, from community meetings and online survey open-ended questions

THEME 1. VISIBILITY, COMMUNICATION, AND COMMUNITY

Pervasive Invisibility

I just don't see any visibility of LGBTQIA identities at BU.

*Until very recently, there was **no** visibility of the LGBTQ faculty and staff as a community.*

Seems to be a quiet and unknown population on campus from a staff perspective.

I think that it's crucial that BU finds ways to bring LGBTQ faculty/staff together so we get to be face-to-face and can start organically building the sense of community that we so desperately need and so noticeably lack here right now.

Encourage in all ways possible LGBTQIA visibility, networking, social connections – these are so, so essential for a low-visibility minority. Why? In any setting where LGBTQIA presence is not repeatedly, insistently, and affirmingly made visible, the world will always revert to the assumption that everyone is straight and cisgender. Consequently, gender and sexual minorities are inevitably always MADE invisible, put back into the closet, again and again and again. We have to come out again every day and every hour for each new person, each new setting. In this way, so many of our issues are very different from those of many other minorities, and visibility matters more for us than for most others.

Many departments might not be hateful, but they aren't supportive, and they might be uneducated; having people in leadership positions who are out would greatly help visibility and the overall feeling of acceptance.

Need for LGBTQIA+ Center, website, and programming

Having a designated LGBTQIA center is long overdue. There needs to be a space where the community can gather to meet, build support systems, and receive information in regards to LGBTQIA support services both on and off campus.

FUND a position for a point person for LGBTQIA issues on campus. Good ideas and goodwill are great, but absent dedicated staff with committed, ongoing resources, all of this effort will go exactly nowhere!

The medical campus is lacking a LGBTQIA-focused organization to bring together faculty and students for support and networking.

An office, a website, SOMETHING to direct people to when they need resources or support. We have so many little pockets of activity across the two campuses that individuals may have very different experiences. It is silly that in this day and age there is no single place for people to go to find info about LGBT activities, resources, etc., at BU.

Creating a dedicated space for LGBTQIA students and allocating the resources to provide that space with at least one dedicated professional staff member that can work with other departments and centers on intersectional programming

There should be a visible, fully staffed office devoted to supporting our LGBTQIA students. Not just a student-run group in the basement of the GSU. I think it says a lot to how much

the university cares about a population based on how visible the support is for that population and how much funding is devoted to it.

Having a website, staff person/office, and coordination between schools and campuses would create a better sense of community, increase communication, and keep things going, even when some people leave or get too busy.

I am an ally but I know very little about what is available to LGBTQIA faculty and staff.. maybe those services need more visibility.

There was no communication between BMC and BUSM, they had 2 separate efforts; in the future they should combine forces – duplicated efforts

All BU websites lack LGBTQIA+ framing

Have a mechanism for connecting people

The university doesn't have a way of keeping track of LGBTQIA+ students or alums, so how are they supposed to know who to reach out to? They have to rely on people coming and telling the university that they are LGBTQIA+ and would like to be involved... There are currently only about 300 known

There are no programs, outreach, or annual gatherings for LGBTQIA+ Alumni

Have greater visibility of programs geared towards this constituency to form connections among those that identify as LGBTQIA

There should be an organization that puts on social gatherings for faculty and staff. Something small and informal. This would create a much more welcoming environment.

There should be an LGBTQIA+ group similar to the Women's Guild. Follow their successful models; lunches, books, academic focus.

Invest in, value, and promote LGBTQIA+ scholars, scholarship and teaching

On the positive side: Prof. Warkentin's University Lecture was a high point of my experience at BU. It was refreshing and deeply gratifying to see LGBT+ research and identity validated by the leadership of the university in this way.

The university could provide more overt positive support to LGBTQIA+ faculty, students, and staff so that we are positively affirmed as an important part of the university.

Greater visibility, from faculty and staff programming and mentoring efforts being recognized and rewarded, to recognition of LGBTQ research, to elevation of LGBTQ studies through greater support for hiring, research, and teaching in these areas.

Highlight LGBT+-focused research in its publications

Overall, I do not feel that there is any particular focus on LGBTQIA faculty, which means that they are treated equally or they are underrepresented. It would be interesting to see which of those options are accurate.

grant/research opportunities for studying gender/sexual minorities

Communications

Communicate services, groups, and support systems that are available! You never know whom identifies as LGBTQIA so there needs to be great diffusion of the university's support through the BUMC spaces.

Provide university-supported activities, highlight accomplishments of LGBTQIA employees, perhaps in BU Today.

There are notable LGBTQIA+ alums who could be great resources/donors, but aren't talked about at all in BU Today or anywhere

Promote the use of preferred pronouns in all BU faculty and staff signatures

Normalizing the use of pronouns in one's email signature would also be helpful. I don't want to be the first one to do so in my department because I'm already self-conscious about how visibly queer I am.

Clearer and more frequent communication from the top (university leadership) down that promotes inclusivity on campus and denounces discrimination of LGBTQIA people.

The history and ever-present ramifications of John Silber on the LGBTQIA+ community at BU has not been sufficiently and thoroughly addressed by the administration [in communications] to staff, faculty, students, and particularly to alums. I hear about the lingering effects constantly from many of these groups of BU communities and until it is addressed, the wrongs of the past can't be fixed.

Silber sent some very homophobic and misogynistic messages back when he was president that would be damaging to the university even now, if they were to come to light; on the contrary, Pres. Brown's Thanksgiving letter was great and moving

Need for Training

There was no mention at all of LGBTQ inclusiveness in my hiring or training.

HR job descriptions, hiring materials and training did not include LGBTQ inclusive messaging, images, references.

Orientation didn't provide any resources.

More campus-wide professional development for all faculty/staff to become more knowledgeable about LGBTQIA issues and language.

Do online trainings like the one on sexual harassment and violence that talks about how to use non-gendered language in class.

The Title IX/Sexual Harassment training was more inclusive than the onboarding process/orientation.

I supervise a trans student whose name hasn't legally changed yet. Here in my area, we all call this student by their preferred pronouns and new name, however as a supervisor I wasn't sure how best to go about confirming pronouns and name use and wound up asking the student about it in front of other student employees. In hindsight, I probably should have pulled the student aside, asked their preferences, and worked from there, but this is my first supervisor job ever, and I've had no LGBTQIA training re how to be inclusive and

supportive as a supervisor. Some training on how to approach these things would be excellent. We've also had issues with talking to the payroll coordinator as the coordinator sees the student's legal name and so regularly uses the wrong name/pronouns to refer to this student despite multiple reminders. I'm not sure if there really is a solution to that, but it's been frustrating.

NEGATIVE: HR calling me to tell me I had made an error when I listed my wife as my beneficiary, and then being rude to me when I explained that I hadn't made an error.

BU was one of the first to produce rules on how to include Trans student athletes; many other schools have asked to see and follow our guidelines

THEME 2. EQUITABLE & INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Inclusive Recruitment and Hiring

I just feel like it's not talked about. It's not prioritized but it's also just kind of not spoken of or emphasized like URM recruitment/experience.

We are losing highly qualified people to other schools – both incoming students and current students and employees.

Lack of visibility (marketing, signage, buildings), HR does not welcome, engage, excite any population through the new hire process, non-inclusive language in job posting, CHRO has not done anything to drive D&I forward, Benefits are non inclusive, policy and best practices for appropriate behavior in the work place are not clear, HR BPs use non inclusive language, inclusion is not driven from the top but through local experiences – this needs to change.

HR needs a revamp in its leader, HR needs a revamp in its approach to recruiting and onboarding, a visible space (building/center) for this community would be helpful, modern thinking across leadership to promote inclusiveness at work through systems, process, content.

Mentorship

Mentoring programs for staff and faculty, or at least folks that volunteer to be available to questions from others in a formal list or page that people could reach out to.

More mentorship, employee resource groups, etc. so we don't have to create our own informal ones when we finally find folks that we share identities with. For example, there is a Rainbow Room and POC Space for SPH students.

On a separate note, employee resource groups which I have seen at other companies have been useful to build social gatherings and networking opportunities in addition to professional development opportunities. These thrive when backed publicly by leadership (and funded) and would offer an opportunity for community building.

I wish I had more support and professional development opportunities about how to navigate my identity, particularly as an instructor.

Tenure and Promotion

In our interactions with students, there is sensitivity about self-identification as LGBTQIA+ and how that may enhance communication and connection with students, while also acknowledging that it may make faculty more vulnerable to marginalization and unfair critique in course evaluations.

Negatives: have been advised not to work on "queer" topics in scholarship

Neutrality and silence are suppressive when it comes to tenure and promotion

Told to leave queer papers off of their CV, and was told to avoid doing too many queer studies/publishing too much on that topic if they wanted any potential for future promotion/tenure

Tenure and being out – someone was advised against coming out at another school because they weren't tenured, and others worried that they might be overlooked for it if they did come out; now they are out at BU for "politics".

Service Burden

A particularly negative ongoing problem has been how faculty/staff can support queer students who have very real complaints but are not taken seriously by the university. Queer faculty and staff that do support these efforts are not compensated and there is no paid support staff currently to help these students with things like gender-neutral housing or other very real concerns.

I have found no support for transgender issues at BU. I have many transgender students, some of whom are in crisis, looking for faculty support. I try to do what I can but I am not transgender—we need more transgender faculty. We need to make sure that we do not exploit those faculty members.

We need more transgender faculty. We need to make sure that we do not exploit those faculty members, recognizing their unique intellectual and service contributions to the university.

Work Environment

I have found the process [of] reported incidents being dealt with to be slow, not transparent, and frustrating.

[In relation to LGBTQIA+ staff encountering donors and clients who express overtly anti-LGBTQIA+ attitudes] Supervisors put a lot of effort into finding a work-around (getting someone else to work with the donor/client, etc.) instead of telling them that we don't want their money because of conflicting values.

We need to have a way to step in and let people know that certain things are not appropriate.

It is beyond my comprehension that the university has not moved forward with the identification and mapping of gender neutral bathrooms. If the university cannot commit to this easy and low-cost process, how can any of us (faculty and students) feel that the university is inclusively minded? Unless/until this basic of human needs is satisfied, I fear that the findings of the task force will fall on deaf ears.

Transition Logistics

Make transition logistics easier. It's hard enough of a process, but to have to threaten to sue in order to get HR to process a name change request is absolutely ridiculous.

There is extreme difficulty with transition while at BU, compared to coming in after transitioning.

I worked with a student this year who is a trans woman, but was still in the long legal process of changing her name. BU requires students to use their legal names in the Student Link – why is this? By doing this, BU is outing trans students to their faculty & fellow students, which 1) fails to support our trans students & 2) outs our students as trans, which could potentially put them in physical danger.

THEME 3. EQUITABLE BENEFITS FOR AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Trans Health Benefits

Some employees who are trans have trouble accessing health services.

I would really appreciate more support for benefits such as adoption services, parental leave, and medical coverage for trans medicine.

Difficulty accessing Transgender related insurance benefits.

We need medical benefits for Trans employees...

My spouse (who also works at BU) has had an incredibly difficult time with a number of transition-related issues, including name change, insurance coverage (he has to fight OptumRX every year to get his medically necessary medication covered), and the logistics around his needed surgeries (he needs more than 12 weeks off because there will be more than 1 surgery in a year; we have to go out of state for the surgeries, etc.).

And provide greater flexibility for faculty/staff who have to go to extraordinary lengths to deal with necessary medical issues. We will spend probably \$10,000 out of pocket on top of what insurance will cover. BU shouldn't have to pay for that but I don't think anyone with benefits decision-making has any idea of this.

Domestic Partner Benefits

I wish BU offered spousal benefits (such as health insurance) for unmarried partners. For various reasons—including my strongly-held sense of marriage as a heterosexist institution—I did not want to get married, and I resent having had to do so in order to become eligible for spousal benefits.

Provide domestic partner benefits as some of us don't fully agree with the concept of marriage but are in long term relationships.

I was surprised by the fact that domestic partners aren't covered under the health insurance plan.