

Sheridan

Get
Creative



Gender & Sexual Diversity Survey

Summary of Themes & Findings

"We should all have our time to be uplifted."

Thank you to...

The Gender and Sexual Diversity Taskforce (GSDT) would like to acknowledge and thank the Sheridan students and employees who chose to share their opinions and comments on their experiences at Sheridan by participating in the Sheridan Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey. Additionally, the GSDT thanks those who assisted in an advisory capacity and throughout the survey design process, implementation, collection and analysis at Sheridan.

Your support has been invaluable and greatly appreciated.

About the Gender and Sexual Diversity Taskforce (GSDT)

The Gender and Sexual Diversity Taskforce (GSDT) is a voluntary advisory body comprised of members representing a diverse cross-section of our Sheridan community. The membership includes students and employees, with specific attention to ensuring taskforce participation of persons with lived experience within the LGBTQ+ communities. The mandate of the GSDT is to carry out a needs assessment of the Sheridan community with respect to issues of gender and sexual diversity.

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Executive Summary

Recognizing Sheridan's commitment to providing a learning and working environment that values the inclusiveness of our community, the Gender and Sexual Diversity Taskforce was established and tasked with the mandate to carry out a needs assessment at Sheridan.

The Sheridan Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey set out to assess the climate and identify the gaps related to gender and sexual diversity initiatives at Sheridan. The reported themes and findings will directly inform future initiatives and planning in this area and build upon our continued efforts to create an inclusive, respectful, learning and working environment

The themes and findings brought forward in the survey identified significant gaps and are grouped under five key areas of recommendation – Awareness, Climate, Resources, Safety and Moving Forward.

Introduction

The 2013-2020 Strategic Plan affirms Sheridan's commitment to providing a learning and working environment that values the inclusiveness of our community.

As part of that commitment a taskforce was formed to focus on issues related to gender and sexual diversity in the Sheridan community.

The Gender and Sexual Diversity Taskforce (GSDT) is a voluntary advisory body comprised of members representing a diverse cross-section of our Sheridan community. The membership includes employees and students, with specific attention to ensuring taskforce participation of persons with lived experience within the LGBTQ+ communities.

The following people sit as current members of the GSDT:

- Mallory Ryan, former student and current Project Coordinator, Facilities Services
- David Boudreau, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health and Community Studies
- Jean Simpson, Co-op Advisor, Student Affairs
- Catherine Sloat, Manager, Security and Parking Operations
- Margaret Sanderson, Co-Chair, Manager, Diversity and Inclusion, Centre for Equity and Inclusion

The GSDT is guided by an Advisory Committee that includes:

- Richard Finch, former Dean, Faculty of Applied Health and Community Studies
- Maria Lucido-Bezley, Dean of Students
- Megan Mascarin, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources

Former Associate Dean, Student Development, Joseph Henry, also acted in the capacity of GSDT Co-Chair until June 2015.

The mandate of the GSDT is to carry out a needs assessment of the Sheridan community with respect to issues of gender and sexual diversity. A web-based survey was chosen as the most appropriate tool to gather information for this purpose.

Purpose of Survey

The purpose of the Sheridan Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey is to:

- Assist Sheridan to identify gaps that may exist related to gender and sexual diversity initiatives.
- Inform and build our continued efforts to create an inclusive, respectful, learning and working environment.

Significance of Survey

Members of the LGBTQ+ community at Sheridan had requested that steps be undertaken to review the climate through a needs assessment in order to identify gaps serving this population. Sheridan Executive in 2013 requested the survey be developed. The summarized themes and findings are being provided to the Sheridan community in order to directly inform the development of future initiatives.

Research Design and Methods

Scope and Focus of the Survey

The survey is the first of its kind in Sheridan history. Given that its purpose was to gauge the climate at Sheridan, its scope was not limited to individuals within the LGBTQ+ community; all students and employees were invited to participate.

The focus of the survey was established within the institutional boundaries of Sheridan's campuses with a view to identify gaps related to gender and sexual diversity initiatives at Sheridan; it did not extend to the the broader Halton or Peel communities.

Research Strategy chosen for the Survey

The GSDT determined that a survey was the most appropriate method for gathering data as it is an efficient way of collecting standardized information from a number of people (respondents) over a short period of time and it allows for systematically comparing responses. All respondents were asked identical questions, with the exception of *Section C – LGBTQ+ Identity/Climate/Safety*, which requested respondents who identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community to answer the section questions.

The survey involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In simple terms, the quantitative approach emphasizes quantification (numbers) in the collection and analysis of data, whereas a qualitative approach emphasizes words rather than numbers.

Survey responses were categorized or "coded" in order to identify emerging themes and concepts open ended (qualitative) questions, and for statistical analysis of quantitative data following data collection.

An Internet ("web") based survey was chosen for a number of reasons. These include:

- A web-based survey is "cross-sectional" in nature – that is, it was carried out at one point in time only (between a set start and end date) allowing the GSDT to examine and analyze gaps related to gender and sexual diversity initiatives at Sheridan during this period of time.

- The target population of students and employees in most instances can be assumed to have computer and online network access.
- Web- based surveys also provide for greater coverage and ease of delivery of the survey to recipients and therefore are cost-efficient but also time efficient (i.e. potentially quicker response rates with the availability of “real time” results).
- Web based surveys are easy to edit and data is easier to sort online.
- Perceived ability of respondents to answer at will and with the assurance of privacy (anonymity) and confidentiality of email addresses, etc., respondents may provide more honest and candid responses to questions.
- For some persons with disabilities, a web-based survey may be more accessible and allow for greater participation. Where a technological barrier exists steps can be taken to enable participation by other means.

Background Phase

During the spring and summer of 2014, the GSDT Terms of Reference were created, members were recruited, and a web-based survey was chosen as the most appropriate tool for gathering information.

Draft survey questions were developed at this time and circulated to the Sheridan Research Ethics Board (SREB) for initial review.

The fall of 2014 saw increased taskforce activity with members meeting in small employee/student collaborative working groups to finalize the sections and specific survey questions. A final draft of the survey was presented to the Sheridan GSDT Advisory Committee in November 2014 and submitted to SREB for Ethics Board Review in December 2014.

Following approval by the SREB, the survey letter and questions were uploaded for testing to the Survey Monkey™ server in January 2015.

Pre-test Phase

In order to determine the efficacy of the web based survey instrument, a pilot test was carried out in January 2015 with student volunteers within Student Affairs.

These respondents were asked to complete the survey and report any technical or other difficulties. The results were used to refine and revise the survey questions and format prior to campus wide distribution.

Implementation Phase

Following the background and pre-test phases, and the development of an extensive communication plan (see Appendix A) in consultation with Sheridan's Director, Corporate Communications and External Relations and the Sheridan Student Union, the self-administered Sheridan Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey was carried out between January 26th, 2015 and February 6th, 2015. The survey accompanied with artwork created by the Sheridan Student Union received over 2450 responses. A copy of the survey appears in Appendix B.

The Survey Tool

The survey was administered through a web-based survey program called Survey Monkey™. Survey Monkey is an online survey site that allows for the development of web browser based surveys. The software allowed for ease of formatting the survey questions and enabled the GSDT to link the survey from an introductory research letter and store responses on the server.

Survey Design

The survey was designed to ask respondents about gaps that may exist related to gender and sexual diversity initiatives at Sheridan. The questions put forth to gather information on the general demographic of respondents, and experiences they may have had at Sheridan. As well some questions invited responses from members of the LGBTQ+ community and others sought to gather respondent's opinions on creating an inclusive and safe learning and working environment.

As presented in Appendix B, the survey was divided into six main parts:

- Definitions for the Purpose of the Survey
- Demographics
- Climate/Support
- LGBTQ+ Identity/Climate/Safety
- General
- Follow up contact information for students and employees

Survey Questions

The survey combined both closed (structured) and open-ended questions.

Section A

The first section collected information pertinent to understanding the demographic profile of respondents – student or employee, home campus, and if the respondent identified as an LGBTQ+ person according to the survey definition.

Section B

Respondents' opinions and experiences were then sought in Section B. Nine questions were posed in this area and asked respondents were asked to select the answer that "best describes" their experience at Sheridan in terms of:

- Inclusive and respectful language, terminology and atmosphere
- Availability of resources and supports available to LGBTQ+ persons
- Invitation to join a club, event or participate in an event related to LGBTQ+ persons, etc.

These questions required respondents to select from a scale of seven statements ranging from "frequently" to "don't know".

Section C

The next section of the survey – Section C - focused on a series of five questions directed only to respondents' identifying as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Respondents not identifying with this community were requested to continue to the next section.

Within Section C, the first question was intended to gauge the comfort level of respondents with respect to disclosure/discussion of aspects of their sexual orientation or gender identity at Sheridan, and the potential risks associated with this action. Respondents were required to select from a scale of seven statements ranging from "strongly agree" to "don't know". Additional space was provided for respondents to comment in their own words on what they had experienced.

The next series of questions in Section C dealt specifically with safe access to washrooms and other campus amenities, and respondents' experiences of harassment (either verbal or physical) in the last year at Sheridan because of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Respondents were asked to select their level of agreement with respect to safe access to washrooms and other campus amenities, and the level of frequency ("frequently, often, sometimes, never, etc.") with which they may have experienced harassment.

The final question in this section asked respondents to rate their confidence in reaching out to Campus Security, if in need of assistance. Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about the statement from a scale of seven statements ranging from "strongly

agree to “don’t know”. Additional space was provided for respondents to comment in their own words on what they had experienced.

Section D

In the final section of the survey, respondents were asked their opinion in regards to creating an inclusive and safe, learning and working environment. Five questions were asked including a structured and open-ended question about the importance of the visibility of the LGBTQ+ community at Sheridan. The remaining questions sought to understand respondent’s motivation for completing the survey and for learning about LGBTQ+ initiatives or projects at Sheridan or elsewhere, and to invite respondents to share what they feel is important for Sheridan to know as it plans for Gender and Sexual Diversity Initiatives.

Survey Participants/Sample

The global Sheridan e-mail address listings were used to reach the core sample of individuals for this survey.

Survey Respondents

The survey letter was addressed to Sheridan students and employees’ through their Sheridan e-mail address and included a link to the survey. This was an extremely helpful approach to locate respondents.

Respondents were also notified of the survey through a coordinated communications rollout in the following ways:

- Informal word of mouth through LGBTQ+ student clubs at Trafalgar, Davis and HMC.
- Courtesy call to Faculty and Support staff union Presidents
- Announcement in the Sheridan Insider (employees)
- Advertisement on Access Sheridan (login page)
- Advertisement on Sheridan TV
- Poster campaign on SSU campus boards
- “Slider” campaign – postcards slid under doors in all Sheridan Residence buildings
- Notices posted in Student Advisement Centres
- Digital posters uploaded to boards inside Sheridan Shuttle
- Mention of the survey at the event commemorating Canada’s National Day of Action on Violence Against Women

- President's Council members informed about the survey and asked to share this information
- Reminder e-mail delivered at the half way point of the survey release

Many instructors also promoted survey participation within their programs and courses.

Identification of Individual Survey Respondents

Locating individual respondents willing to answer the survey did not prove to be challenging. The coordinated communications rollout was very effective in generating survey "buzz" at Sheridan campuses.

Data Collection Procedures

Primary Data

The web-based survey was used to collect the primary data for this research over the period of time from January 26, 2015 to February 6, 2015.

The Process of Data Collection

The process of data collection followed the following four steps:

- Development of Web Survey
- Pilot Test of Web Survey
- Identification of appropriate email address listing (employee or student)
- Email of survey letter with link to survey

The survey was distributed in one release with a reminder email prompting students and employees to participate half way through the survey period.

Also, in order to ensure the accessibility to all survey respondents, including those potential respondents with disabilities; the survey invitation letter indicated the availability of alternate formats of the survey, upon request.

Survey Responses

A total of 2459 responses to the survey were received.

Survey Analysis

The survey data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively in order to present a complete summary of findings –i.e. to examine and summarize both the climate at Sheridan and identification of gaps that may exist with respect to gender and sexual diversity initiatives.

Quantitative Analysis

Summaries and response rates were calculated for each of the structured questions in the survey. The Survey Monkey™ software calculated this data with the results made available to the researchers in a summary spreadsheet format for analysis. Responses to each of the structured questions in the spreadsheet were then analyzed to produce descriptive statistics (percentages) and summarize the overall findings.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative methods were used in this study to allow for a greater and more in-depth understanding of the climate at Sheridan and identification of gaps related to gender and sexual diversity initiatives.

A combination of thematic and content analysis was employed. Using NVIVO software™, (with the assistance of the Office of Institutional Research), emerging concepts and themes were identified in the open ended/comments sections, and their frequency calculated. By doing this, we identified emerging patterns/themes from the data.

Survey Limitations

This needs assessment had a number of potential limitations. Most of the limitations are related to the use of the web-based survey tool.

Survey respondents were limited to those persons with access to a computer and online network in order to complete the survey. Also respondents often used casual and “point-form” language. This type of abbreviated notation was missing some of the subtlety and richness of full text sentences and at times presented some difficulty with coding, interpreting and then reporting responses to open-ended questions/comment sections.

Although anonymity was noted earlier as a perceived positive attribute of a web-based survey, it can also be considered a weakness affecting the response rate reliability and validity of some results. The validity of this study may have been partially compromised because we were not able to verify exactly who responded to the survey, and if possibly the survey was completed twice.

We also identified that although one section of the survey specifically asked only those who identified as a member of the LGBTQ+ community to complete the questions (Section C), there were respondents identifying as non-LGBTQ+ persons who proceeded to answer the questions.

The researchers have also acknowledged “bias” as a potential limitation. Some bias could include having LGBTQ+ members and allies with an interest in supporting the LGBTQ+ community. However, the identified bias may also be seen as positive in this type of qualitative research as it allows insightful interpretation of the responses.

Finally the results of this survey relied upon and were limited to only the availability, opinions and input of the students and employees willing to participate in the survey.

This section of the report described the survey design and methods that were used in the Sheridan Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey.

The next section will provide a summary of survey themes and findings beginning with themes and findings by survey section, followed by a discussion of overall themes and findings brought forward in the Sheridan Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey.

Survey Themes and Findings

The data were collected and analyzed according to the four main areas of the web survey: Demographics, Climate/Support, LGBTQ+ Identity/Climate/Safety and General.

Themes and Findings by Survey Section

The themes and findings are presented in this section under the following headings:

- Who responded?
- Sheridan experiences
- LGBTQ+ community member feedback
- Perceptions of what can be done to create an inclusive and safe learning and working environment at Sheridan

Who Responded?

The questions asked in this section gave us an understanding of the “make up” of our survey respondents.

- Almost three quarters (73%) of the respondents to the survey were Sheridan students.
- Sheridan employees reflected the balance of the respondents to the survey.
- The greatest number of respondents (70%) to the survey (70%) were 39 years of age or younger. Almost 50% of the respondents were between the ages of 20 to 29 years of age.
- Over half of the respondents named Trafalgar campus as their home campus, followed by a significant representation of respondents (one third) indicating Davis campus. Lesser numbers of respondents noted HMC campus or the Skills Training Centre as their home campus.

- Slightly over 27% of the respondents to this survey replied that they identify as an LGBTQ+ person.

Sheridan Experiences

The questions in this section were directed to all survey respondents.

Club, event or discussion participation related to LGBTQ+ persons

Approximately three quarters of the survey respondents indicated “Rarely or Never” to the following statements:

- “I’ve joined a club or participated in an event that celebrated LGBTQ+ persons.”
- “I was asked to join a discussion or participate in an event related to LGBTQ+ persons.”

Significantly fewer respondents (approximately 22%) selected “Frequently”, “Often”, or “Sometimes” as an answer to the above statements. A very small number of respondents to this question indicated they “don’t know”.

Language, Images, Terminology and the Atmosphere at Sheridan

1 in 3 respondents indicated they “don’t know” or they “rarely or never” noticed:

- “Inclusive language and positive images of LGBTQ+ persons present at Sheridan and;
- Respectful and appropriate language and terminology are used when talking to/about LGBTQ+ persons at Sheridan”

Over one quarter of respondents (28%) stated they would likely not recommend or “don’t know” if they would recommend Sheridan as a welcoming, inclusive, positive atmosphere where LGBTQ+ persons experience belonging and acceptance.

Slightly over half of the respondents feel they have not become informed and educated in regards to LGBTQ+ persons while at Sheridan.

45% of respondents stated they have “frequently, often, or sometimes” heard homophobic or transphobic remarks, or the use of incorrect gender pronouns at Sheridan.

When asked whether they have found employment and/or resources/support specific to LGBTQ+ persons the findings indicate 39% of respondents indicated “Rarely” or “Never” and 34% stated they “Don’t know”.

When asked, 41% of respondents indicated they “don’t know” if the needs and perspectives of LGBTQ+ persons are reflected in Sheridan services and resources (such as counseling services, library resources and program curriculum).

LGBTQ+ Community Member Feedback

The questions in this section of the survey were directed to respondents who identify as belonging to the LGBTQ+ community.

Feeling Comfortable

When asked about their level of comfort with respect to disclosure/discussion of aspects of their sexual orientation or gender identity at Sheridan, about half (49%) believed that they could not do so without fear of embarrassment from other students, faculty and/or staff. This percentage includes respondents who stated anything other than “somewhat” or “strongly agree”.

Further elaboration by respondents identified some key themes.

Main themes of positive responses reported include:

- Respondents are comfortable disclosing aspects of their sexuality or gender identity.
- People are generally open-minded, welcoming, and have had no negative experience.

Main themes of negative responses reported included:

- No respect and acceptance of gender identity – specific references were made to inappropriate pronoun use by student peers and employees
- Discomfort with disclosure (addressed by both students and employees)
- Experiences of harassment such as homophobic or transphobic comments.

A representation of comments received:

I come from a homophobic country, so I keep my orientation secret for social security reasons. I have told my orientation to multiple people in Canada though, including a person from the same country and studies at Sheridan. I felt safer here.

I've experienced transphobic comments from faculty and students alike.

I feel uncomfortable revealing my sexuality with my employer at Sheridan because of his religious beliefs.

There was a student club that I left because of the homophobic remarks that were going on in it. The men there seemed to find it funny to joke about how repulsive being gay is.

Feeling Safe

Approximately 1 in 5 respondents stated they felt discomfort when accessing Sheridan washrooms and other amenities.

Approximately 1 in 8 LGBTQ+ respondents noted that they have been verbally harassed in the last year because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or how they express their gender. Approximately 1 in 20 LGBTQ+ respondents reported they have been physically harassed or physically assaulted at Sheridan.

Feeling Secure

Survey participants were asked to convey their level of confidence in reaching out to Campus Security, should they be needed.

Over one third (37%) of respondents did not state that they were confident and this is reflected in the qualitative responses received.

Main themes of negative comments include:

- Slow to respond, unaware, inattentive
- Respondents feel uncomfortable approaching Security

A representation of comments received:

Security staff made me feel awkward for asking for a safe walk because I'm male.

I have heard from some of our students that they're being treated unfairly because of their orientation, especially after classes in the evening. Troubling to hear.

I feel like if I was ever in serious trouble, I could reach out for help.

Campus security is intimidating.

I find Sheridan Security to be unapproachable because they are usually not all that friendly and it feels like you are on stage once you approach that "window" to talk to someone and get several people looking at you waiting to hear what you have to say.

They were all men. I have trust issues with men, especially straight men, and more specifically straight men in uniform.

I don't like asking for help (or talking to people for that matter) but if I was in a situation where I actually needed help from Security I wouldn't hesitate to ask for help.

Sheridan Campus Security has been very helpful and appropriate so far. They do help make things feel like a safer place at times.

I feel supported enough by my program and faculty within that, that I would turn to them in the event of distress, but campus Security is usually helpful if I need them.

Perceptions of What Can Be Done To Create an Inclusive and Safe Learning and Working Environment at Sheridan

Importance of visibility, acceptance and celebration of LGBTQ+ community at Sheridan

Three quarters of respondents to this question believe that it is important that the LGBTQ+ community be visible, accepted and celebrated at Sheridan. Where respondents indicated it is important, the main themes of their comments included:

- The importance of fostering inclusion, diversity, respect, openness and acceptance
- Advocating for and supporting the LGBTQ+ community
- Educating and informing people of LGBTQ+ issues

Where respondents indicated this was not important to them they expressed the sentiment that everyone should be equally visible – “equal treatment for all community”.

A representation of comments received:

I know students who have struggled with their mental health because they felt they would not be accepted for who they are. And I know students who have blossomed because they were supported in their ability to embrace who they are. Which students do we want at Sheridan?

Do away with the labels; we are all human beings. I believe in diversity and acceptance of others, however, I'm concerned that my voice as a non-LGBTQ community will not be heard.

I believe everyone of a different cultural, ethic, diverse and social background should be celebrated. We should all have our time to be uplifted.

Your motivation to complete this survey

This question had the highest response rate in this section.

Respondents remarked that they were motivated to complete the Gender and Sexual Diversity survey primarily because this is an important issue as well as a desire that there be equality for all.

This was followed closely by a motivation to advocate for LGBTQ+ community as an LGBTQ+ person, ally or friend. Finally, less frequently reported some respondents indicated that they were motivated to complete the survey simply to participate, express their opinion or to support this initiative.

A representation of comments received:

This is an important cause. I have students who are identified, as LGBTQ+ and I want to feel confident they are supported and welcomed.

I'm the only LGBT person in my program, and feel somewhat of a disconnect in the classroom. I have experienced difficulties in the past based on my expression and would like to ease that transition for others.

Sheridan is the first place where I've truly felt like I didn't have to hide who I was to make friends or get people to like me as a person. I took this survey to show my appreciation for the environment it has created for LGBTQ people.

I'm a transgendered person who is planning to transition soon so I have a vested interest in the future of my community. I wanted to know what questions Sheridan has for LGBTQ+ people and get some insight into what exactly the initiative is.

I have an interest in including diversity into the curriculum.

I am technically an alumnus, and didn't have a great experience at Sheridan (with regards to my sexuality and gender expression). I'd love to see it improve for current/future students.

What is important for us to know as we plan for GSD initiatives?

This question had the second highest number of responses in this section.

An equal number of the LGBTQ+ identified and non-LGBTQ+ identified employees and students provided feedback in the open-ended question asking about other issues of importance for the Gender and Sexual diversity Taskforce.

The main themes reported, in order of frequency, included:

- Need for more education/information (general awareness, include in curriculum design, recognition, terminology, cultural differences, inclusive behaviour).
- Have equal initiatives/treatment for all orientations and diverse groups.
- Create equitable environments, general awareness, terminology, strategic direction, (focus on diversity initiatives).
- Better accommodation/space/use of names – desire for gender inclusive washrooms, desire for positive/safe spaces on campus for LGBTQ+ employees and students.
- Appropriate pronoun use, gender identity choice and preferred names on forms.

A representation of comments received:

Please involve all areas of the college, including the Centre for Teaching and Learning (Curriculum Development, Faculty Development, etc.) as students are supported (or not!) in a number of ways.

There should be gender-neutral washrooms. I cannot express the pain and confusion that my trans friends describe when having to decide whether they want girls giving them dirty looks and wanting to kick them out, or guys making snide remarks -and not feeling comfortable in either situation. Just eliminate the problem, please.

Activities and the social constructs of Sheridan's services need to align with diversity principles that are being taught in subject classes. In other words, the college needs to walk the talk by illustrating its support in structure of what is being taught in classrooms

People are being bullied.

We need to have a "welcome" statement to diverse students and employees on our websites- including the LGBTQ+ community with a listing of services offered

Sheridan is behind in terms of LGBTQ+ forward thinking - there is no positive space or gender-neutral washrooms - this is a HUGE setback for the community.

Hearing from you – LGBTQ+ initiatives or projects you are aware of at Sheridan or elsewhere

In response to this question, some helpful ideas, initiatives and resources were identified for future endeavors at Sheridan. The low response rate to this question may also indicate survey fatigue by this point in the survey or a general lack of awareness of LGBTQ+ initiatives on Sheridan campuses or elsewhere.

A representation of comments received:

2 out of 4 Sheridan campuses are in Peel get in on Peel Pride! Talk to the folks at East Mississauga CHC (it is part of LAMP), see how Sheridan can work with them and their programs in supporting Sheridan's LGBTQ+ students.

ROCK is an organization in Halton that deals with LGBTQ. We should align ourselves with them.

I did a placement at Get REAL a social movement started at Western University in 2011 and is now at 17 campuses across Canada, and 1 roaming leadership team based in Toronto. They speak to university and colleges about unlearning homophobic language and actions to create a safe and inclusive environment for all people.

I am no longer a student at Sheridan; I graduated and moved onto university. I attend York. I know York has an official office for LGBTQ community/club and support. The professors all have used proper terminology and the other offices that provide resources also seem to be aware and on board with their own little niche support for LGBTQ persons. (Aboriginal office etc.) At Sheridan I never saw any community spirit for any cause or population. It was sterile, unfriendly and focused on academics and sports. That is all I ever knew about when I was 17 and went there, and when I returned at age 27 and upon graduating. I never remember seeing much of anything at Sheridan mentioning LGBTQ accept after renovations, by the counseling office I believe I saw a rainbow flag or painting. That was all I saw related to LGBTQ. (Davis campus)

None at Sheridan. But at University of Toronto (Mississauga campus) the community was very visible so Sheridan can learn from them. While at Western, there was a residence life campaign that I helped organize, titled "Don't Push My Buttons" - Each word of that phrase was a different coloured button. On the Don't (blue; it said unlearn sexism). On the Push (orange; it said unlearn racism). On the My (yellow; it said unlearn homophobia). On the Buttons (green; it said unlearn ableism). And then there was a purple button that said "Unlearn; if you can learn it you can unlearn it". So people would put the buttons together on their bags etc. in the form of a phrase, and it generated a lot of discussion campus wide.

Your opportunity to share additional feedback about the survey and its questions

Some respondents commented that the survey was a good idea and important for the Sheridan community. Respondents commented that it was good to see management developing an action plan, creating awareness, confronting gaps and opening conversations about diversity.

A representation of comments received:

Thank you. Entirely supportive of this initiative. It is certainly needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate. On a side note, I had a wonderful conversation with someone in the Aboriginal Initiatives office who indicated that often students in the LGBTQ+ community visit this centre because of its welcoming atmosphere. I look forward to seeing how we can support students in a comprehensive way as this research unfolds!

I am proud to work for this college. Thank you for taking the initiative.

The questions asked in this survey, in my opinion, won't reveal any actionable initiatives. Instead, they will result in the message: Hey, here at Sheridan we don't discriminate and are doing a great job at being inclusive.

Sheridan is behind other institutions when it comes to diversity initiatives. I'm so pleased to see such surveys and hope that it will result in meaningful action beyond two-hour training programs that simply are not enough. Don't forget to address issues of race, gender,

sexual orientation, and religion. I've probably heard more phrases that are racist that is highly troubling.

Students need to be aware of the projects/initiatives taken towards LGBTQ community. Many like me wish to be a part but don't know how to! Measures should be taken to provide this information

Discussion of The Overall Themes and Findings

The following section presents a discussion of the overall themes and findings brought forward in the Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey and grouped under 5 areas as follows:

- Awareness
- Climate
- Resources
- Safety
- Moving Forward

Each area will outline “the challenge presented”, “what this means” and “recommendations for action”.

This section begins with a demographic snapshot of the survey respondents.

Demographics

Almost three quarters of the survey respondents were students. Survey participation was comprised primarily of a younger demographic. Just over one quarter of respondents identified as an LGBTQ+ person, with over half of the respondents naming “Trafalgar” as their home campus.

Awareness

The challenge presented:

Most survey respondents answered that they had never joined a club or participated in an event that celebrated LGBTQ+ persons and were rarely or never asked to join a discussion or participate in an event related to LGBTQ+ persons.

What this means:

- Lack of visibility of events/discussions
- Absence of events/discussions
- Possible program specific awareness

Recommendations for Action:

- Continue LGBTQ+ Orientation Week participation and have a presence at other campus wide events
- Establish stronger connection with student community and other campus partners
- Increase LGBTQ+ based events/discussions

Climate

The challenge presented:

One third of respondents indicated they had not noticed inclusive language and positive images of LGBTQ+ persons present at Sheridan, and they had not noticed respectful and appropriate language and terminology being used when talking to/about LGBTQ+ persons at Sheridan.

When asked if they would recommend Sheridan as a welcoming, inclusive, positive atmosphere where LGBTQ+ persons experience belonging and acceptance, over one quarter of respondents would likely not, or did not know if they would do so.

Over half of survey respondents indicated they had not become informed and educated in regards to LGBTQ+ persons while at Sheridan.

Almost half of the survey respondents indicated they had heard homophobic or transphobic remarks, or referring to a person using incorrect gender pronouns while at Sheridan.

What this means:

- Campus culture reflects the use of normalized homophobic/transphobic language
- Experiences of respondents do not reflect Sheridan values
- Absence of positive images fosters an atmosphere that may feel unwelcoming
- Sheridan atmosphere causing unease for some individuals
- Previous experience may influence level of comfort with disclosure
- Respondent's negative experiences affect how they speak about Sheridan

Recommendations for action:

- Provide training for employees at all levels of the organization
- Establish social inclusion spaces at each campus
- Increase LGBTQ+ content in course curriculum where applicable

Resources

The challenge presented:

When it comes to availability of employment resources and/or support available to LGBTQ+ persons about three quarters of the respondents have rarely or never found resources or don't know where to find them. This could indicate either a potential lack of resources available or perhaps the services and resources are not as well promoted as they could be.

There was also a gap in knowledge when asked about whether the needs and perspectives of LGBTQ+ persons are reflected in Sheridan services and resources, with 41% of respondents stating they "Don't know".

What this means:

- Lack of available resources
- Available resources are not well promoted
- Respondents unaware of LGBTQ+ issues and initiatives or where to find applicable resources

Recommendations for action:

- Audit/review of current campus services and resources specific to the LGBTQ+ community
- Cultivate internal and external connections with other colleges and universities to further enhance Sheridan's resources
- LGBTQ+ centered webpage and social media presence outlining college resources, services, policies and current events of interest to the LGBTQ+ community and their allies

Safety

The challenge presented:

There was concern raised about safety by LGBTQ+ respondents specifically when it comes to experiences and incidents of verbal and physical harassment or assault as well as safe access to washrooms and other amenities on campus.

Negative feedback from the LGBTQ+ community indicates an area of apprehension and concern when it comes to approaching campus security.

What this means:

- Lack of adherence to Sheridan's Code of Conduct and other student and workplace policies
- Single occupant washrooms not available or properly designated
- Some LGBTQ+ members perceive Security as ineffective or unapproachable

Recommendations for action:

- Further promote key message of Sheridan's Codes of Conduct & other student and workplace policies
- Continue to encourage reporting of incidents
- Campaign Security's commitment to the LGBTQ+ community
- Mandate annual LGBTQ+ training for Security
- Maximize universal washroom availability and raise awareness of these spaces for use by LGBTQ+ persons.

Moving Forward

The challenge presented:

Survey respondents appear to strongly support LGBTQ+ initiatives at Sheridan; however there is a feeling that everyone should be equally visible, accepted and celebrated at Sheridan.

For several reasons described by survey respondents there was a strong motivation at Sheridan to participate in this survey.

There is a willingness to participate and move forward with planning for LGBTQ+ initiatives at Sheridan as part of our continued efforts to create an inclusive, respectful, learning and working environment.

The Sheridan community was willing to share examples of successful LGBTQ+ programs and initiatives at other colleges, universities and within the broader community.

Generally respondents were eager and grateful the initiative was underway at Sheridan to assess the climate in order to identify gaps.

What this means:

Respondents are supportive and prepared to help move forward LGBTQ+ initiatives as part of broader diversity planning at Sheridan.

Recommendation for action:

- Report findings to the Sheridan community
- Develop an LGBTQ+ Committee with expanded membership, formal terms of reference & sponsorship
- Present an annual LGBTQ+ status report to Sheridan Executive & Sheridan community

Summary

The survey results identify significant gaps at Sheridan with respect to issues of gender and sexual diversity. Sheridan has the opportunity now to take a strong leadership role by moving forward in 2016 to address the recommendations through action. Inherent in all efforts to address the gaps at Sheridan is the continued active involvement of LGBTQ+ persons and allies. Continuing to involve LGBTQ+ persons in future efforts has the potential to build a strong foundation that reflects Sheridan's inherent values.

Communications Roll-Out: Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey

I. Overview

From January 26-February 6 2015, Sheridan will launch a Gender and Sexual Diversity Survey. The survey is a key output of the Gender and Sexual Diversity Taskforce, which has a mandate of conducting a needs assessment of the Sheridan community with respect to issues of gender and sexual diversity.

This survey is the first of its kind in Sheridan's history. Given that its purpose is to gauge the climate at Sheridan in order to identify gaps that may exist related to initiatives in this area, the survey is intended for all members of the Sheridan community and is not restricted to individuals within the LGBTQ+ communities.

II. Context & Considerations

- Sheridan's 2013-2020 strategic plan affirms the institution's commitment to providing a learning and working environment that values inclusiveness.
- Sheridan's commitment to diversity is also reflected by the participation of two administrators in Civic Action's Diverse City initiative in 2013/14 and 2014/15. The initiative was launched in 2008 to change the face of leadership in the GTA region. It offers a year-long fellowship to hone the leadership skills of up-and-comers in the public, private and non-profit sectors.
- In 2014, Sheridan launched a Centre for Respectful and Healthy Workplaces as part of its commitment to building an environment in which all employees are treated equally.
- A Gender and Sexual Diversity Taskforce was created in 2014, with a cross-institutional membership that includes employees and students, including members with lived experience within the LGBTQ+ communities.

III. Stakeholder List

All Sheridan employees

All Sheridan students

IV. Timing and Tactics

The following plan has been carefully created to ensure that the appropriate actions are taken, in the appropriate sequence. Messages will be disseminated using various channels of communication and will be delivered by different messengers.

This plan assumes that Sheridan Student Union will create the art work for the poster/post cards that can be re-used by various areas. It also takes into account the fact that Yammer is being retired on January 15, 2015 and that Sheridan's twitter account and facebook page have followings that extend far beyond Sheridan students and employees.

Appendix A

EARLY STAGE COMMUNICATIONS		
Date	Action	Lead (& supported by)
Dec. 5, 2014	Mention of the survey in remarks made at the event commemorating Canada's National Day of Action on Violence Against Women	Jeff
Jan. 8, 2015	Briefing to Executive sponsors	Maria Lucido Bezely
Jan. 12, 2015	Pride Clubs at Davis, Trafalgar and HMC asked to spread the word about the survey to their members and trusted networks	Jenna
Jan. 13, 2015	President's Council meeting – Members are informed about the survey (prior to its launch). Written memo recapping the information is shared, signed by the Committee's Executive Sponsors (Richard Finch, Maria Lucido Bezely, Lynn Rutherford). Council members are asked to share this information with their respective teams as appropriate at upcoming team meetings.	Richard/Maria/Lynn with the assistance of Christine
Jan. 14, 2015	Courtesy call to faculty and support staff union Presidents – informing them of the survey before it is launched	Megan Mascarin (HR) with the assistance of Christine
Jan. 26, 2015	Announcement of survey in the Sheridan Insider (for employees only)	Joe/Margaret/Christine
Jan. 26, 2015	Global email for students and employees with a link to the survey	Joe/Margaret/Christine
Jan. 26, 2015	Survey advertised on login page to Access Sheridan – with link to enter the survey	Christine /IT
Jan. 26, 2015	Survey advertised on Sheridan indoor TV – encouraging people to enter the survey via Access Sheridan	Christine/Sheridan Production House
Jan. 26, 2015	Poster campaign begins – posters installed on SSU boards on campus	Sheridan Student Union
Jan. 26, 2015	Slider campaign begins – post cards advertising the survey are slid under all doors in Sheridan's 3 residence buildings	Student Affairs staff/Residence staff
Jan. 26, 2015	Notices posted in Student Advisement Centres	Student Affairs
Jan. 26, 2015	Digital posters promoting the survey are uploaded to the display boards inside the Sheridan Shuttle	Sheridan Student Union
Jan. 26, 2015	Notices/posters posted in Sheridan Student Union offices	Sheridan Student Union
Jan. 26, 2015	(optional) Student Union "streeter campaign" begins and runs 2X/week during the survey period. Teams of students on each campus engage with their peers in public areas to promote the survey	Sheridan Student Union
Jan. 26, 2015	(optional) Slider campaign begins - post cards inserted into all employee mailboxes at the 4 campuses	Student Services
Feb. 3, 2015	Reminder email to all employees and students about the survey	Joe/Margaret/Christine
Feb. 5, 2015	Revised slide (different coloured background) advertising the survey uploaded to Sheridan indoor TV, shuttle buses and Access Sheridan log in page	Christine

Appendix A

POST SURVEY COMMUNICATIONS		
Date	Action	Lead (& supported by)
TBC	Thank you email to the community, especially thanking all those who participated	Joe/Margaret/Christine
TBC	Summary of findings shared with all who were invited to participate (via email)	Joe/Margaret/Christine

Gender & Sexual Diversity Survey

Gender and sexual diversity has existed throughout history and across cultures. As Sheridan College moves forward toward building our continued efforts to create an inclusive, safe, learning and working environment, we invite you to complete the following LGBTQ+ survey. This survey was developed to identify gaps that may exist related to gender and sexual diversity initiatives.

DEFINITIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY (these definition will be pop-ups within the survey when these words appear):

Gender Expression: How one conveys gender, typically through appearance, dress, mannerisms, etc. Gender expression is perceived on cultural norms, and varies in different places and contexts.

Sexual Orientation: A person's self-perception in terms of their emotional, romantic or sexual attraction, desire or affection for another person. Persons can be attracted to those of the same sex, opposite sex, both sexes, or more than one gender.

Gender Identity: One's innate sense, understanding, and experience of one's own gender, whether it be femaleness, maleness, a mix of the two, or something else entirely. Gender identity does not necessarily have anything to do with physical sex characteristics. Transgender, transsexual, bi-gender, hijra, muxe, sworn virgin, third gender, and sometimes two-spirit, are all terms related to gender identity.

LGBTQ +: This is an abbreviated acronym. L = Lesbian, G = Gay, B = Bisexual, T = Trans / Transgender / Transsexual / Two-Spirit, Q = Queer / Questioning, + = Asexual / Intersex / Pansexual / etc. The acronym is sometimes written in the longer form of "LGBTT2SIQQA" or similar. This umbrella terms also includes MSM: Men who have sex with men, but who may not necessarily self-identify as gay and Women who have sex with women, but who may not necessarily self-identify as lesbian or bisexual.

Harassment: Engaging in a course of comments or actions that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known, or should be known, to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome.

Inclusion: Appreciating and using our unique differences – strengths, talents, weaknesses and frailties – in a way that shows respect for the individual and ultimately creates a dynamic multi-dimensional organization.

Bullying: The tendency of individuals to intentionally use aggressive or unreasonable behavior or comments to hurt or isolate a person. Bullying can include such tactics as verbal, nonverbal, psychological and physical abuse, as well as humiliation and degradation. Other terms used to describe bullying could include psychological violence, psychological harassment, personal harassment, mobbing and emotional abuse.

Homophobic/Transphobic: Encompasses a range of negative attitudes and feelings toward homosexuality or people who are identified or perceived as being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). It can be expressed as antipathy, contempt, prejudice, aversion, or hatred. It may be based on irrational fear, and is sometimes related to religious beliefs.

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

The first set of questions is about collecting information that will enable us to cross-tabulate and compare subgroups to see how responses vary between these groups. Please check the appropriate box that best describes you.

1. Are you a:
 - Sheridan student
 - Sheridan employee

2. What is your age?
 - 19 years or younger
 - 20 to 29 years of age
 - 30 to 39 years of age
 - 40 to 49 years of age
 - 50 to 59 years of age
 - 60 years of age or over

3. Which is your home campus?
 - Trafalgar (Oakville)
 - Davis (Brampton)
 - Hazel McCallion Campus MC (Mississauga)
 - STC (Skills Training Centre, Iroquois Boulevard, Oakville)

4. According to the survey definition, do you identify as a LGBTQ+ person?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
 - Prefer not to answer

B. CLIMATE/ SUPPORT

This set of questions is about experiences that you may have had at Sheridan. For each question, please check the answer that best describes your experience at Sheridan.

1. I've joined a club or participated in an event that celebrated LGBTQ+ persons.
Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

2. I was asked to join in a discussion or participate in an event relevant to LGBTQ+ persons.
Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

3. I've noticed that inclusive language and positive images of LGBTQ+ persons are present at Sheridan.
Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

4. I've noticed that respectful and appropriate language and terminology are used when talking to/about LGBTQ+ persons at Sheridan.

Appendix B

- | | Frequently | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Prefer not to answer |
|----|---|-------|-----------|--------|-------|----------------------|
| 5. | I've found employment and/or resources/supports specific to LGBTQ+ persons. | | | | | |
| | Frequently | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Prefer not to answer |
| 6. | I would recommend Sheridan as a welcoming, inclusive, positive atmosphere where LGBTQ+ persons experience belonging and acceptance. | | | | | |
| | Frequently | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Prefer not to answer |
| 7. | While at Sheridan, I have become informed and educated in regards to LGBTQ+ persons. | | | | | |
| | Frequently | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Prefer not to answer |
| 8. | The needs and perspectives of LGBTQ+ persons are reflected in Sheridan services and resources (such as counselling services, library resources and program curriculum). | | | | | |
| | Frequently | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Prefer not to answer |
| 9. | I've heard homophobic or transphobic remarks at Sheridan such as "That's so gay," "faggot", "dyke", "queer", "trannie", "she-male", referring to a person using the wrong gender pronoun. | | | | | |
| | Frequently | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Prefer not to answer |

C . LGBTQ+ IDENTITY/CLIMATE/SAFETY

If you identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community we invite you to answer the following additional questions, otherwise skip to section E.

1. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, I feel comfortable that I could disclose or discuss aspects of my sexual orientation or gender identity to Sheridan colleagues (students, faculty, staff) without risking rejection, disapproval, embarrassment or harassment.

Not comfortable Moderately Comfortable Comfortable Very comfortable

If you would like to comment on what you have experienced please indicate below:

Comments:

2. I can easily and safely access washrooms and other amenities on campus:
Completely agree Agree Somewhat agree Do not agree
3. In the past year have you ever been verbally harassed (name calling, threats, etc.) at Sheridan because of:
a) Your sexual orientation?

Appendix B

Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

b) Your gender identity

Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

c) How you express your gender?

Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

4. In the past year, have you ever been physically harassed (shoved, pushed, etc.) or physically assaulted at Sheridan because of:

a) Your sexual orientation?

Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

b) Your gender identity?

Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

c) How you express your gender?

Frequently Often Sometimes Rarely Never Prefer not to answer

5. In the event you need assistance from Campus Security, how confident are you in reaching out to them?

Not Confident Moderately Confident Confident Very Confident

If you would like to comment on what you have experienced please indicate below:

Comments:

D. GENERAL

This set of questions is about your opinion in regards to creating an inclusive and safe learning and working LGBTQ+ environment.

1. How important is it to you that the LGBTQ+ community be visible, accepted and celebrated at Sheridan?

Extremely Important Very Important Moderately Important Not Important Prefer not to answer

Comments:

Appendix B

2. What motivated you to complete this survey?

Comments:

3. Is there something you feel is important for Sheridan to know as it plans for Gender and Sexual Diversity Initiatives?

Please provide your comments:

Comments:

4. We are very interested in hearing about any LGBTQ+ initiatives or projects you are aware of at Sheridan or elsewhere. Please share the details!

Comments:

5. Finally, please take this opportunity to provide additional feedback about this survey or its questions:

Comments:

SUBMIT

SURVEY COMPLETION

You have now completed the survey. We greatly appreciate the time you have taken out of your day to complete this.