The Women’s Outreach Center empowers and advocates with and on behalf of women for their safety, wellness, and equality. We help all students reach their full potential and explore new perspectives.

The OU Writing Center welcomes all writers and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, veteran status, or disability. We consider difference to be a seed for learning, writing, and a just society.

become a faculty ally
Join the growing Sooner Ally community…

by attending this faculty-focused workshop and learning ways to be an ally to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students in the classroom and beyond. As of fall 2013, over 200 faculty members representing 50 departments or colleges across our campus have participated.

Faculty Ally is an extension of the Sooner Ally program, established in 2007. In 2011, the Women’s Outreach Center, along with the Sooner Ally Faculty Advisory Board, launched a program specifically for faculty members. The workshop offers a basic LGBTQ overview, including discussion of current terms and issues; faculty also learn effective strategies to interrupt bias in the classroom, to create inclusive classrooms, and to incorporate LGBTQ issues into the curriculum. For more information or to register for the next session, visit lgbtq.ou.edu or contact us at lgbtq@ou.edu.

Rationale

A positive school climate offers physical safety, is socially and emotionally supportive, promotes feelings of acceptance, and helps students feel valued. A positive school climate has been associated with decreased depression, suicidal feelings, substance abuse, and unexcused absences among LGBTQ students. A positive school climate offers more than just the classroom experience.

What the Ally program can do for you

Being an ally comes with benefits that can enhance the overall OU experience for our student body, faculty, and staff. Issues of bias come up in the classroom setting; this training can help prepare faculty for those eventualities and provide tools for approaching difficult and sensitive issues. Faculty Ally training provides on/off campus resources to aid in the development and needs of students. In addition, faculty members are connected to other allies with similar interests and invited to campus events geared towards LGBTQ awareness.

Why students need your commitment

Educational research shows that a positive campus climate offers physical safety, is socially and emotionally supportive, promotes feelings of acceptance, and helps students feel valued. A positive campus climate has been associated with more inclusive classrooms and teaching that moves students toward empathy. With these actions in place, researchers find decreased depression, suicidal feelings, substance abuse, and unexcused absences among LGBTQ students. Your commitment to educational equity can be expressed through your role as a Faculty Ally.

“...my professor told the class he had participated in the Faculty Ally training. I could see everyone was smiling and nodding. I think it just helps to know that. It reminds everyone that this is supposed to be a supportive environment.”

OU Student

Ways that faculty and graduate teaching assistants can be allies

Faculty can make a significant impact on our campus community by becoming allies. Allies can create inclusive classrooms where students feel safe to learn free from bias and homotransnegativity. Faculty members may be the only resource some students regularly see, and a faculty member’s role as an ally might make the difference when students are coming out, seeking support, or becoming more involved in the academic and campus community.

Some faculty members include course content on LGBTQ issues; others indicate that they are allies in the syllabus or on D2L. Allies in the classroom help communicate that our campus is welcoming and affirming to all.