



BEYOND NORMS – ON EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

REPORT OF THE STUDY SESSION

held by
ANSO – ASSOCIATION OF NORDIC LGBTQ STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

in co-operation with the
European Youth Centre of the Council Of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest
20 – 26 April, 2008



This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.

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Acknowledgements

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the main aims and long-term goals of ANSO is working on equality of Higher Education by fighting heteronormativity. ANSO works also on strengthening LGBTQ student activists and organizations by exploring heteronormativity and providing tools to counteract heteronormativity, the basis of discrimination. In order to be able to actively work on these issues the organization initiates a few events every year in order to deepen its members' knowledge on heteronormativity and find new ways of counteracting it. One of them was a study session organized in cooperation with European Youth Centre in Budapest, Hungary during 20 – 26 April 2008.

The preparatory process started a few months before the event when a team met in a prep meeting in January in Budapest, Hungary accompanied by the Educational Advisor of the Council of Europe, Iris Bawidamann. The aim of the meeting was to define aims, objectives and finalize the program of the study session, agree on external experts and prepare the call for participants. The meeting was successful and very productive, leaving the team motivated and ready to take up the challenge of the first ANSO study session.

The process of selecting participants was quite complex and difficult. ANSO sent the call for participants using its internal network, as well as external partners and taking use of Internet database of student organizations of the Council of Europe member states. The team received many applications, which number highly exceeded available seats for the event. The team selected participants basing on their experience, motivation, multiplying abilities, gender, and geographical balance. As a result, 32 young participants representing 22 countries were present in the study session in Budapest.

The session took place as planned following the program finalized by the team during its preparatory meeting. All sessions went according to plan meeting needs and expectations of the participants. Event though the topic has been quite sensitive and challenging, there were no problems or issues among participants. The event's program has been built in a way to first make participants familiar with the notion of heteronormativity in order to build on this knowledge later on to go deeper in the topic as well as develop different tools in counteracting discrimination. Among issues discussed were intersectionality, queer pedagogy, tolerance pedagogy, norms in Higher Education, policy making, as well as cooperation with student unions and international solidarity.

The team together with the Educational Advisor and external experts delivered the program successfully providing the participants with a lot of new information but also learning from them as well as providing safe space for the participants to learn from each other and be able to work on their group projects.

There were quite many outcomes resulting from the study session. Throughout the whole event there were working groups preparing and developing different projects. The complete list and detailed descriptions of the outcomes is available in this report. However, to mention just few of them it is necessary to say about a toolkit “Need a Partner”, which is a tool on how to create partnerships between LGBTQ organizations and student organizations in order to fight heteronormativity in Higher Education; and also about a workshop on heteronormativity in Higher Education, which is a training for students, faculty staff and people involved in Higher Education and working with young people. Generally speaking the session has been very successful and full of positive emotions, both for participants and the team. The event empowered, motivated and enriched the participants, which are one of the most important elements when working with issues such as LGBTQ, heteronormativity and equality.

The preparatory team would like to thank Iris Bawidamann, the Educational Advisor from the Council of Europe for her invaluable help, support, assistance and facilitation of the team’s and participants’ work.

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will briefly outline:

- background of the study session
- aims and objectives of the study session
- profile of participants
- program flow and main issues discussed

1.1. Background of the study session

One of the main aims of ANSO, Association of Nordic LGBTQ Student Organizations, is fighting heteronormativity in Higher Education. ANSO believes that Higher Education is a key factor in changing society but also reproducing norms, and as long as academia do not welcome all students, or ignore the reality of many citizens, prejudice will be reproduced over and over again. The goal of the study session was to provide the participants with knowledge about discriminatory structures in seemingly neutral contexts and with arguments on why Higher Education needs to address heteronormativity, and make visible strategies to counteract inequalities.

Heteronormativity provides the basis for discrimination based on sexual orientation or/and gender identity. We argue that if we fight heteronormativity, we also fight the fundamentals of hate crime, of stereotypization, of gender roles, of limitations of whom one can be and whom one is allowed to love. By applying *queer* as an academic theory, one can study the norms of society, instead of the so-called deviants. By introducing students and activists working with Higher Education to this approach, they can influence change in structures and strategies in their local environments.

When fighting heteronormativity one must be aware of the level of hostility that might be encountered from those one tries to influence, and that not always the same strategies will be possible to be used. The level of hostility does not only depend on geographical position, but more importantly on the “culture” of the “environment” that one tries to influence. The level may for example be a lot different between the gender studies department and the electronic engineering department. One of the goals of the study session was to identify different strategies to deal with different levels of hostility and/or strategies of resistance. This was achieved through so-called “Action Groups”. The aim with these groups was that participants were supposed to dive deep into

certain themes and/or plan concrete actions, which would be realized when at home. Themes of action groups were based on ideas presented in the applications, especially from the section where participants would present their motivation and ideas on how to multiply the knowledge gained during the study session.

As heteronormativity in Higher Education is something that concerns all students, the study session was intended to reach as many students and student activists as possible. The participants were chosen for their ability to multiply and disseminate the results of the study session and they were chosen from two different groups:

- LGBTQ-student activists (or LGBTQ-activists interested in student issues)
- Student union activists

The goal was for these young people from different backgrounds to come together, and from different perspectives create a common ground from which to tackle heteronormativity in their respective countries and higher education institutions. ANSO felt LGBTQ – activists and student union activists had some mutual grounds to work from, but different approaches. Where student union activists might have a great deal of experience in influencing policy making and creating change in higher education, LGBTQ-activists might have different approaches based on their work with minority groups.

1.2. Aims and objectives of the study session

Aim: To fight heteronormativity in higher education

Objectives:

- To understand different structures of student policy making, on local (not so much national) and European level
- To introduce the concept of heteronormativity
- To understand consequences of heteronormativity in general and in Higher Education in particular, especially on levels such as:
 - Personal/individual
 - Educational
 - Research
- To identify strategies to counteract heteronormativity on:
 - a personal level

- a structural level
- To create new alliances
- To introduce Human Rights (concept of HR, instruments to safeguard HR)
- To enable participants to identify problems and develop concrete actions for their contexts.
- To introduce an intersectional approach to equality work

1.3. Profile of participants

Participants have been chosen carefully on basis of their submitted applications and their profile can be defined by means of a few specific points. The participants were:

- LGBTQ- student activists
- LGBTQ-activists with an interest in student issues
- Student union activists
- Local activists, both LGBTQ and student union
- Participants from member states of the Council of Europe, and no more that 15% of participants from non-member states
- Those who were motivated to take part in the activities and interested in contributing actively in the achievement of the objectives of the session
- Those who wish to gain knowledge on the structures and consequences of heteronormativity, and on how to counteract heteronormativity
- Those who wished to share their knowledge and create new allies and partnerships
- Aged between 18-30

1.4. Program flow and main issues discussed

The program has been built in a way so that it would progress smoothly and fluently from one point to the other building up on participants' experiences and also taking into account their expectations and needs. The elements that were crucial parts of the program and issues discussed were:

- official opening
- presentations of participants, ANSO, the Council of Europe, and program of the study session

- establishing ground rules
- introducing heteronormativity with an intersectional approach
- consequences of heteronormativity
- action groups
- home groups
- BRYT! - workshops with tolerance exercise
- quality issues - Examples of tolerance research and heteronormativity within different academic fields
- exhibition of material from different organizations
- student policy making
- queer pedagogical strategies in different contexts
- evaluation

2. PROGRAM – INPUTS AND DISCUSSIONS

2.1. Outline of the content of the discussions

The discussions that took place during the study session were closely connected to the inputs provided by team members and other experts, and above all they were connected to the Working Groups, which provided the participants with the opportunity to create projects, campaigns and workshops. The session has been designed in this way in order to provide the participants with a chance to understand the concept of heteronormativity better and also to create means of multiplying the knowledge gained during the study session.

The most important points of discussion were the following:

- **Human rights** in connection to different roles and contexts in society based on who we are. The discussion touched upon the importance of not adding different value to, or to distinguishing between different human rights as they are all connected in a wider context and grounds for discrimination often coincide. Human rights are universal and cannot be taken away, but there is a difference between having human rights and being able to access them in the sense that firstly you have to be aware of your rights and them also be in a position to benefit from them.

- **The heteronorm** and the way it structures who we are, how we behave, and who society allows us to be. The difference in expectation and hierarchy was discussed and it was commented that if a woman were to adapt masculine characteristics it would be considered more *normal* than if the boy would take up feminine characteristics. In western society it's for instance encouraged for women to be more outspoken, thus adapting the masculine characteristics. Using masculine characteristics are appreciated more because it still means climbing up the stairs of the power structure. Thus femininity on the male body means falling down those stairs.
- **Consequences of heteronormativity** were addressed during discussions about the different organizations represented at the study session. Participants were encouraged to examine the vision of their own organization, evaluating if they are safe enough for others and us, who is welcomed to these organization, etc. One of the conclusions the group arrived at was that certain groups are not involved in these different organizations. Straight people might be excluded from LGBTQ organizations, and Student Unions might assume that none of their members are from the LGBTQ community simply because no one is outspoken about it. Examples of cooperation between different groups and inclusion of new groups were given, and ideas exchanged on how to make safe spaces for all groups.
- **Education** became a focal point throughout the study session and was intertwined in almost every discussion as a finish line where all the activities and efforts would ultimately come together. Also the quality in higher education was examined, with discussions on three different levels; Institutional Level, National Level, and European level.
It was stressed that blindness to the LGBTQ community creates false results in science, for instance through questionnaires which assumes heterosexuality and only two gender categories, and reinforces the idea that there are no LGBTQ-people, and that there is only one type of family.
- **Literature in Higher Education** when talking about heteronormative literature. The article "A helping hand" based on a case from Sweden was used to facilitate the discussion. In Sweden there were a lot of problems with gay unfriendly words in course literature at the university. This was in some cases successfully fought by the national LGBTQ organization

(SFQ) along with its partners. In the document there is also a list of questions that help to revise the material and find the heteronorm in literature.

- **Queer pedagogy** was introduced as one of the tools for change. This approach turns things upside down, and does not examine the deviant, but the norm which creates the normal vs. the abnormal. Queer pedagogy was a new approach for most of the participants, and the discussions thus focused on understanding different pedagogical strategies which are used in education, in order to understand how queer pedagogy differs from the more common approaches, such as Tolerance Pedagogy. This strategy has the norm or the majority as its starting point and examines this group's prejudice with the aim of reducing discrimination. However, tolerance pedagogy does not attack power relations it rather reinforces them. Queer pedagogy on the other hand aims at attacking the power relations, and thereby changing the structures, which creates discrimination.

2.2. Inputs of team members, external experts and lecturers

- **Presentation of ANSO by Ásta Ósk Hlöðversdóttir – (Monday April 21st)**

Objectives of the session:

- To give the participants of the study session an introduction to ANSO as an organization and the work it does on higher education on a Nordic and Baltic level.

Methods:

- Power Point presentation with a section of questions and answers.

- **Presentation of the Council of Europe by Iris Bawidamann – (Monday April 21st)**

Objectives of the session:

- To give participants an introduction to the Council of Europe and the European Youth Centre Budapest
- Create an understanding of the nature of co-operation between the COE and ANSO.

Methods:

- Power Point presentation with a section of questions and answers.

- **Human rights by Iris Bawidamann – (Monday April 21st, 2008)**

Objectives of the session:

- To promote empathy with others who are different
- To get familiar with single human rights
- To raise awareness on the meaning of human rights
- To make a clear link between human rights and the daily life of participants
- To link human rights with LGBTQ issues
- To clarify the concept of human rights

Methods:

- “Take a step forward” (compass page 217), after
- Debriefing and summarizing/explaining concept (universal, indivisible, inalienable) and generations (civil and political rights/social, economic and cultural rights/ collective rights) of human rights, using power point.

- **Introduction to heteronormativity with an intersectional approach by Linda Elstad & Pär Wiktorsson (Tuesday April 22nd, 2008).**

Objectives of the session:

- Starting from a wide perspective, norms are addressed in order to focus on privileges and intersectionality. Factors such as ethnicity and socio-economic background intersect with their sexuality or gender identity/expression. However, when talking about discrimination, equality and similar topics, one topic is usually addressed at the time. Participants are introduced to the concept of several variables influencing the life of a single person and are taught how to have a skeptical approach to norms.

Methods:

- Lecture on the heteronorm and intersectionality, with Power Point presentation and whiteboard.
- Self-evaluation exercise where the aim was to evaluate and rate personal knowledge on the following topics: lesbian and gay issues, bisexual issues, heteronormativity, higher education, student activism and intersectionality.
- Discussions in pairs.

- Group work where participants are encouraged to examine their own lives, society and higher education in order to detect heteronormativity, and also recognize how they themselves reproduce heteronormativity.
- Presentation of group work.
- Summary and examples of heteronormativity in advertisements etc. using youtube-videos.
- **Consequences of heteronormativity by Pär Wiktorsson (Tuesday April 22nd, 2008).**

Objectives of the session:

- Introducing participants to heteronormativity, and making them capable of recognizing the “right” way, which we are all thought by society. By making this normative path visible, alternative strategies can be envisioned and be made use of.
- Exercise 1 introduces methods to identify your own and society’s ideas and “rules” regarding heterosexuality. Usually it’s the people who break these rules, for instance queers or transgendered people, who are pointed out and discussed. This exercise turns things around and questions the heteronorm - that which many take for granted regarding sexuality and gender identity/expression.

Methods:

- Presentation of the normalizing model and mechanisms of heteronormativity by using Power Point.
- Exercise 1: ”Who’s the straight person?”- Some of the participants get to choose ”straight” persons from a set of pictures, and explain their choices.
- Exercise 2: ”Straight Coach” - The participants get to be guides to one of the persons from exercise 2, telling the person how to behave in different situations.
- Group discussion.

- **BRYT!-workshop by Linda Vapalahti (Wednesday April 23rd, 2008).**

Objectives of the session:

- The BRYT!-material focuses on the strategies you are surrounded by and poses questions like; are some peoples opinions more important than others, who sets the rules, what is viewed as right/wrong or normal/abnormal, is it so that some people are suppressed whilst others are given special treatment?

- It is often talked about how it's important to tolerate people who are different. But who decides who's different and how does tolerance really work? What is the difference between being tolerated and tolerating, and is it a compliment to be tolerated?
- This exercise examines the power held by those who are within the norm, which enable them to tolerate someone with a different appearance or different life-choices.

Methods:

- Exercise "I tolerate you!" where all participants get an attempt at tolerating and being tolerated in an exercise where they walk around the room making statements such as: "I tolerate that you wear glasses". The recipient is only allowed to say "thank you".
- The exercise is used as basis for a plenary discussion on tolerance and power.
- *European Student Union by Pascal Hartmann – external expert (Thursday April 24th, 2008).*

Objectives of the session:

- Creating an understanding of the work done by ESU with special focus on Gender Equality through the Lisbon Agenda or the Bologna Process.
- Understanding the different levels of ESU's work and the lack of attention given to LGBTQ issues, and how to create change on the different levels.

Methods:

- Power Point presentation and plenary discussion.
- *Quality issues by Ásta Ósk Hlöðversdóttir & Linda Elstad (Thursday April 24th, 2008).*

Objectives of the session:

- Building on the previous session, this one is focusing on the educational consequences of heteronormativity, and the way it influences textbooks, examples given in class and science itself.

Methods:

- Examples of tolerance research and heteronormativity within different academic fields, using Power Point.
- Discussions on problems with investigations into people's prejudices.

- ***Student policy making by Ásta Ósk Hlöðversdóttir (Thursday April 24th, 2008).***

Objectives of the session:

- The purpose is to create strategies to influence the student policy making at the local levels, using the creativity and experience of the participants. The session emphasizes the importance of changing the environments in Higher Education Institutions, and creates an understanding of the level of influence student and LGBTQ organizations can have when using the right strategies.

Methods:

- Group discussion with topics such as how to influence policy making, and how student unions work and how can they play an important role in changing universities.
- Presentation of group discussions.
- Important documents of ESU used in the discussion.

- ***Queer pedagogical strategies in different contexts by Pär Wiktorsson (Thursday April 24th, 2008).***

Objectives of the session:

- Participants in the study session represent diverse backgrounds and are therefore struggling with different issues. This session is created to address the dissimilarities and to provide strategies to combat all the different levels of resistance and hostility towards LGBTQ-people.

Methods:

- Introductions to different levels of resistance using whiteboard.
- Discussion in groups on realistic goals in different environments with different levels of hostility.

- ***Queer pedagogical tools and techniques by Pär Wiktorsson (Thursday April 24th, 2008).***

Objectives of the session:

- Provide the participants with tools to counteract bombardment of heteronormative messages with queer messages.
- Promote awareness about norms.

Methods:

- Presentation of tools and techniques used in Queer pedagogic and how to deconstruct literature and write for change.
- Introduction Kevin Kumashiro's four pedagogical strategies from "Troubling Education – Queer Activism and Anti-oppressive Pedagogy"
- Power Point and whiteboard used in the presentation.
- Discussion in groups
- *Emotional Support for Participants by Sara Nilsson – External Expert (April 20th-26th)*

Objectives:

- To be present as a support person for those who might have emotional difficulties during the study session, or due to the topic of the study session.

Methods:

- Being leader of a home group and helping the people in it integrating their knowledge and discussing thoughts and feelings related to the study session.
- Being available to those who would like to talk to someone outside the prep team.

3. IDEAS, CONCLUSIONS AND NEW PROJECTS

3.1. Co-operation with the Council of Europe

- Developed co-operation between ANSO and the Council of Europe on the preparation and implementation of the study session, and co-operation on a study session in January 2009 called "Loosening the grip of Heteronormativity: How Students Can Make a Change" and future activities.

3.2. Networks

- Networking and co-operation between LGBTQ-organizations and student unions present at the study session.

- Creation of the toolkit “Need a Partner?” – A toolkit on how to create partnerships between LGBTQ organizations and student organizations in order to fight heteronormativity in higher education. (See attachment).

3.3. Awareness on heteronormativity

- Raised awareness on the structures and results of heteronormativity in higher education, and how it affects all students, not just the LGBTQ community.
- Increased motivation to work on the issues of the study session and to multiply the knowledge acquired through the session.
- Concrete tools directed at heteronormativity:
 - A workshop on heteronormativity designed for students, faculty and staff at institutions for higher education (see attachment).
 - Developed strategies to reach students in both high schools and in institutions of higher education; “Teaching – Changing Minds of Students” (see attachment).
 - Preparations for the student club “EXIT”, with the aim of raising awareness among teacher students on the topic of heteronormativity in higher education, and in the general society. The idea is to motivate them to use the competence gained in their classrooms after they graduate.

4. MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY SESSION

4.1. Recommendation for European Youth Work

The heteronorm is invisible to the unaware, but very much present, in most discourse of and among young people. The norm not only becomes apparent when talking of sexuality and gender identity or gender expression. Rather it becomes evident in when talking about ways to structure one's life – which is always assumed to be in a heteronormative manner, or when dealing with expectations from the young person's family, which is assumed to be a heterosexual family. The heteronorm becomes apparent when talking about feminine and masculine traits, when dividing into girls and boys teams, and not allowing space for those who do not identify within these rigid

categories. In addition, heterosexuality and correlation between sex and gender identity/expression is assumed in all examples used, regardless of topic.

When it comes to education, heteronormativity as the basis for discrimination of LGBTQ-students is a major problem in all European countries. It influences the quality of education greatly, and creates a less than open and tolerant environment for students, faculty and staff.

On the basis of these highly problematic situations, awareness about the normative structures much be created. In the context of European youth work, all parties involved must be provided with the knowledge necessary to prevent LGBTQ youth to become outsiders. This can only be done by breaking down the boxes which assumes a normal and an abnormal.

- Those who work with young people must become aware of their power to reinforce stereotypes and ideas about what is normal and accepted.
- When talking about LGBTQ people one must avoid creating an “us and them”-discourse where LGBTQ people are talked about as something that does not apply to any of the people present, or their family or friends.

4.2. Main results for the organizers of the study session

- Several toolkits produced, which contain different approaches to fighting heteronormativity in various areas of higher education. These products will be available for ANSO, its members organizations, as well as the participants of the study session, their sending organizations.
- Increased visibility of ANSO on a European level.
- Cooperation with new organizations represented in the study session, but also with other organizations as a result of the work done at the study session.
- Establishing closer relationship with the Council of Europe
- Gained experience on running international events

4.3. Main learning points for participants

The group of participants of the study session came from diverse backgrounds, which on one hand was challenging for both organizers as well as the participants themselves. However, the group found common language and common ground for learning process. A few major thematic

blocks were covered, which allowed the participants to explore different concepts, which were explored from many various perspectives:

- Participants were introduced to heteronormativity and learned how to recognize and fight it by means of the tools provided and created during the week. A mutual understanding of the need for change occurred, and together the participants inspired each other to challenge and transform the heteronormative structures embedded in their own organizations and in their Higher Education Institutions.
- By allowing LGBTQ activists and student union activists to come together, alliances were built, connections were made, and co-operation within and across borders were facilitated. The participants were given ideas on how LGBTQ organizations and student unions could work together to create change at their local Higher Education Institutions. The participants also developed ideas on how to lobby on a regional and national level.
- Participants were given tools to influence the policy making on a local level. Awareness of structures was created, and increased motivation and determination for change came about throughout the week.
- Participants were introduced to a myriad of cultures, languages, sexualities, gender identities/expressions, histories and personalities among other participants during the week. Such exposure facilitated the learning process on the abovementioned points. It also challenged stereotypes and created understanding and familiarization with a multitude of impressions.

4.4. Description of projects developed during the session

- A workshop on heteronormativity designed for students, faculty and staff at institutions of Higher Education, which is to educate people on the importance of recognizing heteronormativity and how it structures our way of thinking. The workshop stresses the wide influence heteronormativity has on everyone in Higher Education Institution, not just the LGBTQ community.
- Developed strategies to reach students in both high schools and in institutions of higher education; “Teaching – Changing Minds of Students”. This training will reach students in high schools and higher education institutions by using different strategies for the two

groups. The training aims at fighting homophobia, at raising awareness about heteronormativity and it also is hoped to facilitate the coming-out process for LGBTQ people.

- Preparations for the student club “EXIT”, with the aim of raising awareness among teacher students on the topic of heteronormativity in higher education, and in the general society. These gatherings are believed to reach teacher students, a group, which suffers from lack of information about heteronormativity and the LGBTQ community, and thereby pass it on to their students after graduation, when working in both higher and lower levels of education. The idea is to motivate them to use the competence gained in their classrooms after they graduate.
- “Need a Partner?” – A toolkit on how to create partnerships between LGBTQ organizations and student organizations in order to fight heteronormativity in higher education. This toolkit contains concrete measures for student groups and organizations in their search for partners.

4.5. Suggestions and recommendations for the Council of Europe

- The roots of discrimination of LGBTQ-people lay in the belief that their sexuality, gender expression and/or gender identity deviates from the norm. In recent years there has been more focus on fighting this discrimination, especially based on homophobia, and the main goal has been to create tolerance in society at large towards a group of outsiders. This approach might improve the situation for LGBTQ-people to some extent but it will never eradicate the real problems – the norms. Thus the theme of the study session is something that should be taken into account in all contexts, because heteronormativity affects all people, regardless of gender and sexual orientation.
- The Council of Europe can continue this work by constantly bearing in mind the structures and effects of the hetero norm when creating new projects.

4.6. Follow-up activities

- Finalization and dissemination of projects created during the study session through participants’ organizations and ANSO.

- Preparation of project run by ANSO in cooperation with the Council of Europe - study session “Loosening the grip of Heteronormativity: How Students Can Make a Change” in 2009.

5. FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ANSO and the Council of Europe were together able to create a study session of great importance to the people involved. Participants with amazing motivation were guided in their work on toolkits and workshops, which would allow them to make change come about in their local environments. New alliances were created, and new knowledge introduced. The participants showed an incredible interest in the topic, which for many was a brand new subject matter, and expressed a need for further information and assistance in their post-session work. They also stressed the importance of students being introduced to the concept of heteronormativity, and the need for themselves and ANSO to keep working on this matter. Therefore it is imperative that ANSO is allowed to continue to inspire and motivate young people through study sessions, toolkits and similar educational material. Thus the follow-up study session of ANSO in cooperation with CoE in January 2009 can further develop the ideas and the work done in Budapest in April 2008.

In the months after the study session participants has reported back to the team that what the have had experienced during the session has sparked new, successful projects:

- Ukrainian participant reported back that: “After Budapest we have discussed question about heteronormativity in 9 main universities and institutes in Ukraine. We understand that it is not enough and think of this period as just the beginning of our strategic work in this field. It is worth to mention the biggest amount of teacher is not really positive, but there is a consensus about the necessity to fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. That is a real progress for our country!”
- A participant who studied in Spain reported “I am creating now a Student-LGBTQ-Group in the University of Jaen” and he also asked for assistance from the team in further developing of the group”.
- This message came from Georgia: “I initiated to make basic changes in the curricula and teaching materials, first, at the departments of humanitarian-social faculty of the University, I teach. As some of the members of the decision-making committee were aware of my plans and antihomophobic activity during years (organizing open lectures, seminars and public discussions about LGBTQ rights in the context of human rights at the University, several

organizations (including, our LGBTQ organization - Inclusive Foundation, etc.), they were not surprised by my official declaration and the main demands, to start working on changes in written materials, throughout all the departments. (...) After the very hard discussions and debates for weeks, I finally, reached some very good "agrees" on the fond of lack of "valuable" counterarguments from the side of heteronormativists. I don't know, but feel, some real big changes starting (!!), maybe, step by step, but starting and we can do it all, step by step and working and working about!"

Implementing knowledge about heteronormativity in higher education institutions throughout Europe, as well as society at large is an enormous task. It cannot be taken on by ANSO alone, or by only LGBTQ-organizations. The first step was to enable local LGBTQ-organizations and Student Unions to educate their members, and to disseminate the knowledge in their Universities and University Colleges. Bringing these two types of organizations together brought forth strategies for the participants of the study session to reach a wide audience. The second step was to create material, which could be applied by organizations not represented at the study session and finding strategies for availability of the material. The third step is to bring heteronormativity out to other levels of society.

6. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Final Programme, as executed
- Appendix 2: List of participants names, organisations and countries
- Appendix 3: List of references (books, web-sites, handouts, articles, pictures used)
 - **3 a) Introduction to Queer and Heteronormativity**
 - **3 b) Definitions**
 - **3 c) “A Helping Hand in Deconstructing Heteronormative Literature”** by Sofia B Karlsson and Pär Wiktorsson.
 - **3 d) “Higher Education – A Place of Objective Science?”** - Article written for ESU Equality Handbook, 2007
- Appendix 4: Additional information and/or documents provided by participants and/or team:
 - **4 a) “Need a Partner”** – provided by participants of the study session.
 - **4 b) “Teaching – Changing Minds of Students”** – provided by participants of the study session.

- **4 c) “Exit”** – provided by participants of the study session.
- **4 d) “Workshop on Heteronormativity in Higher Education”** – provided by participants of the study session.

Appendix 1: Final Program

April 2007	Monday 21st	Tuesday 22nd	Wednesday 23rd	Thursday 24th	Friday 25th
9:00-11:00	Introductions	Introducing heteronormativity with a intersectional approach	Exploring tolerance	Quality of HE	Action groups
	Ground Rules			Exhibition	
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break		Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
11:00-12:30	Intro to Program		Action groups	Student policy making	Presentations Action Groups
	Expectations				
12:30- 14.00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14:00-15:30	Human Rights	Action groups	Free Afternoon	Queer pedagogical strategies	Home Groups
				Queer pedagogical tools and techniques	
15:30-16.00	Coffee Break	Coffee Break		Coffee Break	Coffee Break
16:00-17:00	Presentation of the CoE	Consequences of heteronormativity		Action groups	Evaluations Closing
	Terminology				
17:00-18:00	Homegroups	Homegroups		Homegroups	Free Time
18.00 -19.00	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time		
	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner in town	Dinner	Dinner
Evening	Game Night	Party Night	Party in Budapest	Movie Night	Farewell Party

Appendix 2: List of participants' names, organizations and countries

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Appendix 3 a: Introduction to Queer and Heteronormativity

Important to know is that queer as a term is one of very flexible nature, and you will get as many different replies as you ask persons to define the term. It is in the nature of queer to be impossible to give a fixed explanation. But to give some sort of overview and introduction to the term, queer is at least three different and parallel notions:

It is an academic theory, studying the norms of society, instead of the so-called deviants.

It is an activism, a resistance of fixed categories and identities.

AND, contradictory enough, queer is an identity.

Short historical introduction

Queer is a word with history in the English language, meaning originally odd, weird etc, and has throughout the years been used as an insult. It has also been used as a synonym to gay.

Queer was reclaimed in the early 1990s, when Queer Nation started spreading flyers in New York (The Queer Nation Manifesto) encouraging all "queers" to take the word back, reclaim power over their lives, raise their voices, to never accept the discrimination, the benevolence or the victimization. They aimed at society at large, but also at the gay movement, with its limiting terms like gay or lesbian, without space for distrusted bisexuals or transgender people. Queer has since been introduced or translated into several foreign languages and is an established academic discipline in several countries.

What is different with a queer perspective?

Queer changes focus of attention, from studying the "deviant" to studying "normality", to the ruling norms and why those norms are controlling our lives. To give an example, it is uninteresting to study "the homosexual", what is interesting is to study heterosexuality as the god-given rule. To make heterosexuality, and above all heteronormativity, the problem that needs addressing.

"We're here, we're queer, get used to it!"

A consequence of studying heteronormativity instead of the "deviant" homosexual is that you can make some "in-your-face strategies". Basically this means that you do not apologize for not being heterosexual and do not try to adjust or assimilate into a heteronormative perspective. According to queer, there is no such thing as deviant; it is the norms that make some people deviants that creates deviance, not the people disobeying to constructions made by whoever was in power at the time.

Queer versus sexual orientation?

The queer perspective points to the uselessness of categories such as gender and sexual orientation, and claims that these are merely social constructions that we are taught. Queer does not believe in a binary gender system, meaning that there are not only two genders but a great variation. Consequently, queer does not believe in sexual orientations, if you for instance do not believe in the notion of only two genders, terms like homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual becomes meaningless. How can you be *bisexual* if there are no two genders? (*Bi* meaning two or both).

Heteronormativity?

Queer points to heteronormativity, that teaches us to be good heterosexuals, good women and good men, rewarding those who obey the system and punishing those who do not. Heteronormativity causes people to limit themselves to stereotypes of women or men, and expects women to be feminine and men to be masculine, that they are each other's opposites and completion, that they attract and need each other. If a person does not behave according to this pattern, there will be a price to pay, which may include social exclusion, stigma, invisibility or physical or mental abuse. Heteronormativity provides the base for discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. We argue that if we fight heteronormativity, we also fight the fundamentals of hate crime, of stereotypization, of gender roles, of limitations of who you can be and whom you are allowed to love.

What about terminology?

The queer position means striving for dissolving categories and fixed identities. It means that terms as gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual lose its meaning, as do categories like men and women. If you engage in identity politics like we do, this might be a bit inconvenient. ☺ It is important to remember though, that regardless of the queer position, we are still labeled by others, judged by others and identified by others, and we therefore experience discrimination and prejudice because of the categories like woman or man, homo-bi- or heterosexual or transgender. That is why we still have to use these categories when fighting for equal rights, but understanding a queer position might help us to better understand the variety of people and their identities, and be less judgmental ourselves. In the queer utopia, the discriminatory structures and limiting gender and sexuality borders are gone, and people are able to take whatever position desired in their relations to their own gender and gender expression as well as in relations to others.

Heteronormativity in Higher Education?

One of the main aims of ANSO, the organizer of the Study Session, is fighting heteronormativity in Higher Education. We believe that Higher Education is a key factor in changing society and reproducing norms, and as long as academia do not welcome all students, or ignore the reality of many citizens, prejudice will be

reproduced over and over again. We would like this Study Session to provide the participants with knowledge about discriminatory structures in seemingly neutral contexts and with arguments on why Higher Education needs to address heteronormativity, and make visible strategies to counteract inequalities.

You can also read a text called "*Teaching can never be a neutral activity*", which can be found here http://www.wiu.edu/users/mitfeh/ptf_barn.htm.

Appendix 3 b: Definitions

Sexual orientations:

Heterosexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by someone of the "opposite" sex

Homosexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by someone perceived of the same sex

Bisexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by women and men

*Sometimes **Asexuality** is included among the sexual orientations:*

Asexual people do not experience sexual attraction, but are emotionally attracted to other people, and would form relationships with them, without engaging in sexual relations.

Sex: biological sex, assigned at birth or later and stated in your passport. Usually sub-divided into "male" or "female".

Gender: Gender is commonly used interchangeably with sex, but when sex refers to biology, gender refers to for instance gender roles and how we behave, often referred to as social constructs. One could say that *gender* is to *sex*, what e.g. *femininity* is to *woman*. Gender roles are taught and learned from day one of our lives.

Gender identity: a person's self-identified and self-perceived gender. Might be e.g. female, male, intergender.

Gender expression: how you express your gender through for instance clothing, accessories, hair, voice or body language. Might be masculine, feminine, both or something else altogether.

LGBT(Q) – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (and Queer)

Lesbian – woman attracted to other women

Gay – man attracted to other men

Bisexual – person attracted to both women and men

Transgender is an umbrella term for different transgender identities and expressions

Queer is questioning norms regarding sex, gender and sexuality. An important aspect of queer is to question and study normality instead of the “deviant” created by normality. Some people identify as *queer*, it might mean that you are not conforming to norms of gender or that you are non-straight.

Transgender people are people whose gender identity and/or gender expression sometimes or always are non-conforming to that of the norm of the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender people can have any sexual orientation. *Transgender* is sometimes shortened to *trans*, and is used in different contexts, i.e. trans people, trans issues etc.

Cisgender people are people whose gender identity and/or gender expression are conforming to that of the norm of the sex they were assigned at birth. Cisgender people can have any sexual orientation. *Cisgender* is sometimes shortened to *cis*, and is used in different contexts, i.e. cis people, cis questions etc.

Drag king: Usually female bodied or identified people playing with masculine gender expressions, as an act or political strategy. Can be, but is usually not an identity but a behavior.

Drag queen: Usually male bodied or identified people playing with feminine gender expressions, as an act or political strategy. Can be, but is usually not an identity but a behavior.

Intergender: Person identifying between or beyond the traditional genders, or choosing not to identify the gender identity at all, a gender identity.

Intersex is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. Might be ambiguous genitalia or other physical sexual characteristics, there are a number of medical diagnoses and about 1% of babies born have an intersex condition. The extent to which intersex people are transgender is debated, since not all intersex people disagree with their gender assigned at birth.

Cross-dresser (transvestite): Person who more or less often, partially or completely, dresses and behaves according to the “opposite sex”.

Transsexual: Person who identifies as, or desires to live and be accepted as, a member of the gender opposite to that assigned at birth. Many transsexuals also want to change their bodies. These physical changes are collectively known as *sex reassignment therapy* and often include hormones and *sex reassignment surgery*, *SRS*. References to "pre-operative", "post-operative" and "non-operative" transsexual people indicate whether they have had, or are planning to have sex reassignment surgery. **MtF** means Male to Female and **FtM** means Female to Male. The last word indicates the pronoun you should use, an MtF wants to be addressed *her*, *she*, and *hers*.

Heteronormativity: Norms about that women and men are expected to be different from each other, that you have to be male or female and that the “natural” is that women fall in love with and are attracted to men and the other way around. Heteronormativity is everything that makes heterosexuality seem as the only natural and wanted alternative, and makes deviants of people and relations that do not fit the expected pattern.

Gender neutral pronouns: for instance *hir* or *ze/zie*. These pronouns can be used when speaking or referring to people who do not identify as male or female, or if you do not want to decide the gender of somebody.

Homophobia: a term used to describe irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuals or anyone suspected of being homosexual. It can also mean hatred, hostility, disapproval of, or prejudice towards homosexuals.

Terms like *heterosexism* have been proposed as alternatives that are more morphologically parallel, and which do not have the association with phobia. Heterosexism refers to the privileging of heterosexuality over homosexuality.

Internalized homophobia: refers to homophobia carried by individuals against homosexual manifestations in themselves and others. It causes severe discomfort with or disapproval of one's own sexual orientation.

Such a situation may cause extreme repression of same-sex desires. In other cases, a conscious internal struggle may occur for some time, often pitting deeply held religious or social beliefs against strong sexual and emotional desires. This discordance often causes clinical depression, and the unusually high suicide rate among gay teenagers (up to 30 percent of non-heterosexual youth attempt suicide) has been attributed to this phenomenon.

Some homosexuals feel that bisexuality and transgenderism are threatening to the social and political acceptance of gays and lesbians. This phenomenon has also been called internalized homophobia by some people. *Straight acting* is by some argued to be a result of internalized homophobia, usually homo- or bisexual men whose behavior and appearance resemble those of the straight male stereotype.

Biphobia: is a term used to describe the fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against bisexuals or LGBT people who are bisexual or perceived to be bisexual. It can also mean hatred, hostility, disapproval of, or prejudice towards LGBT people, sexual behavior, or cultures.

Homosexual people will sometimes see bisexuals as maintaining privilege in a heterosexual context while simultaneously benefiting from opportunities in LGBT communities. Some consider the belief that people are either heterosexual or homosexual. Both those views can be argued to be biphobic.

Transphobia: refers to fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people, or people who transgress (or are perceived to transgress) norms of gender, gender identity or gender expression. Many trans people also experience homophobia from people who incorrectly associate the medically different gender expressions as a form of homosexuality.

Some in the LGBT communities are uncomfortable with transgender individuals and issues. For example, transwomen (male-to-female transgender and transsexual people) are sometimes denied entry to women's spaces, and the explanations given for such actions betray a degree of transphobia.

Higher education: as all stages of education following upper secondary education levels and types at universities and other institutions of higher education, also known as tertiary education.

Student union: comparable to a trade union, but for students. Usually based on voluntary membership, working for improving the conditions of the student body, quality of education and sometimes but not always for human rights.

National Union of Students, NUS: national organization of local student unions. Usually based on voluntary membership by the local student unions, to create a stronger voice for student conditions on a national level. Important parts of work might be lobbying on a national level and support of the local student unions.

ESU: European Students' Union has 47 members from 36 countries in Europe. Membership is open to National Unions of Students:

- That are democratic, representative and independent
- Who are open to all students in the country regardless of their political conviction, religion, ethnic or cultural origin, sexual orientation, social standing
- That are run and controlled by students
- That run democratic elections

The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the educational, social, economic and cultural interests of students at a European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Bologna Follow-Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO.

ANSO: Association of Nordic LGBTQ Student Organizations is an umbrella organization for LGBTQ (student) groups or organizations in northern Europe. ANSO fights discrimination based on homophobia and transphobia in universities and aims to increase the quality of higher education by fighting heteronormativity.

ANSO supports local student organizations so they can both be safe places for LGBTQ students and be an important part of its local university community. ANSO believes in solidarity across borders and works for LGBTQ rights internationally when possible.

Bologna process: The purpose of the Bologna process is to create a European Higher Education Area by making academic degree standards and quality assurance standards more comparable and compatible throughout Europe. With the Bologna process implementation, higher education systems in European countries are to be organized in such a way that:

- it is easy to move from one country to the other (within the European Higher Education Area) – for the purpose of further study or employment
- the attractiveness of European higher education is increased so many people from non-European countries also come to study and/or work in Europe;
- the European Higher Education Area provides Europe with a broad, high quality and advanced knowledge base, and ensures the further development of Europe as a stable, peaceful and tolerant community benefiting from a cutting edge European Research Area;
- there will also be a greater convergence between the U.S. and Europe as European higher education adopts aspects of the American system.

Queer vs. tolerance pedagogy: *Tolerance pedagogy* works with creating understanding and tolerance for the deviant, while *queer pedagogy* challenges heterosexual norms and privileges. For instance, a teacher with a tolerance pedagogical approach might talk about homosexuality in class with only good intentions, but assuming that nobody in the room is actually themselves concerned personally or by family, which gives the “us” the possibility to discuss and judge the “them” out there. A queer pedagogical approach do not assume that presence or absence, it examines heteronormativity instead of the people who do not obey to the norms, and demands change of oppressing or discriminatory structures.

Intersectionality is a theory that examines the ways in which various socially and culturally constructed categories interact to manifest themselves as inequality in society. An intersectional approach takes into account how different power relations are intertwined and how different identities are created as a result of for instance ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, religious belief or age. Black feminist thinker Audre Lorde once said, “*There are no single-issue struggles because we do not live single-issue lives*”. We have to look at how different oppressions intersect in order to understand people’s different conditions and experiences, and how they are contextual.

Polyamory: Polyamory is the desire, practice, or acceptance of having more than one loving and/or intimate relationship at a time with the full knowledge and consent of everyone involved. It is an umbrella term that

covers many orientations and modes of relationship. It is grounded in such concepts as choice, trust, equality of free will, and the more novel idea of compersion, rather than in cultural or religious tradition. The word comes from Greek, (*poly* meaning many or several) and Latin (*amor* literally meaning love).

Monogamy is the custom or condition of having only one mate in a relationship, thus forming a couple. The word monogamy comes from the Greek word *monos*, which means one or alone, and the Greek word *gamos*, which means marriage or union.

Appendix 3 c:

A helping hand

in deconstructing heteronormative literature

Why, what, who?

Higher education is heteronormative. A norm –at first sight not obvious, is embedded within the educational system: the norm of heterosexuality. The norm praises heterosexuality as the normal, natural and wanted. This norm excludes a lot of people and make them seen as “outsiders”. What is classified as abnormal, unnatural or unwanted according to the norm, i.e. homosexuality, bisexuality, transgender people or certain expressions of heterosexuality, is often reduced, deprived of value or even falsified. The consequences are not only grave for all persons involved, it is also a sign of poor quality of science. Universities help to reproduce prejudice and negative opinions in the society and help to uphold discriminatory structures.

The Swedish Federation of LGBTQ Student Organizations (SFQ) is working against heteronormativity and heterosexism in higher education. In this way we believe we can fight discrimination and violations of human rights. One instrument we use is the Equal Treatment of Students at Universities Act (SFS 2001:1286), which requires all universities work actively against discrimination. “A helping hand“ is part of this work and is made with the support of Allmänna Arvsfonden, a Swedish foundation supporting diversity projects among others. We have received alarming information on contents of textbooks used at universities as carriers of homophobia or heteronormativity, information supported by the increasing amount of reports to HomO (The Ombudsman against Discrimination on grounds of Sexual Orientation) on the subject. We are aware that many universities have ambitions and a will to address the problem but so far there has been very few tools available for this kind of work.

We hope that our experiences and this tool will help those who want to examine “their own” courses from a heteronormativity perspective. It might be equality secretaries, quality evaluators, diversity coordinators as well as teachers, professors or students. We also have an ambition to develop this leaflet, so please, feel free to share recommendations, experiences or comments.

Pleasant reading and good luck!

Stockholm, 25th of March 2006

Sofia B. Karlsson

Project Manager

Pär Wiktorsson

Vice president SFQ

Where to start?

1. Who decided what textbooks to use? What was this person thinking when the list was made? Has the person tried, in any means of choosing different authors with different backgrounds and experiences, to create a fair and actual picture of the subject discussed? How does it look when it comes to gender representation of the authors?

Authors' backgrounds and experiences are relevant, in order to paint a fair and accurate picture of a subject or topic. Sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic or socio-economic background cannot be "controlled" by simply checking the literature list, and this is why gender representation is easier to check and reflect about. Women and men have different experiences through the socialization of separate gender roles that deeply effect how our lives are formed. These different experiences must be reflected in the literature contents, to show the diversity of reality. White, heterosexual, western men have for a long time had monopoly to present scientific truths within higher education, results that we find in today's education. This has to be questioned, based on the fact that reality is described in many different ways, depending on who you are and what your relation is to the ruling norms.

2. Question if the text assumes heterosexuality. Reflect on how much space hetero-, homo- and bisexuality have respectively in the textbooks and its meaning for the context.

If hetero-, homo-, and bisexuality are not handled and questioned under the same circumstances, there is a risk that the heteronorm is preserved. To not even mention sexual orientation is not a solution of the problem since this often means that heterosexuality is taken for granted. When fighting the heteronorm, it might seem like a good idea to have a separate section on homosexuality, to escape making it invisible. But this also requires underlining of the fact that the rest of the text only deals with heterosexuality or else the picture of homosexuality as something deviant is reinforced. To create a non-judging picture of the three sexual orientations, they all have to be given amount of attention and should be discussed and questioned in the same way.

3. Think about different ways of reading the text, which starting-point does the author have? Is the author careful to point out that something is not homosexual even though it is irrelevant and without “evidence”?

An example might be a relationship between two women, not defined, which is assumed to be friendly and non-erotic even though there is no “evidence” proving neither one thing nor the other. Why is this being remarked? When describing and writing our history it has been (and still is) important to deny rumors about homo- or bisexuality since these kinds of rumors probably was seen as drawing attention from the relevant issues of different historical individuals. A more vicious interpretation could be that you do not want key persons in history to get a “bad” reputation; it is in all cases much safer with the ordinary and implied heterosexual. At the same time history gets distorted and a carrier of the norm.

4. Check if homo- and bisexuality are related to something that is not relevant for the sexual orientation. Are generalizations being made? If that is the case, do these generalizations add anything for understanding the text?

There are problems with generalizations and prejudices about those who do not fit the heteronorm. If it is not obvious to discover, you can try to change the word homosexual to heterosexual, how does the statement come across then? If it turns out to be a strange way of describing heterosexuals and heterosexuality, then it is probably just as strange a way of describing others! You can also check in what contexts homo- and bisexuality are being mentioned. Is it in a context where heterosexuality could/should be mentioned?

5. Look out for discussions with a starting-point, which is violating someone’s rights.

To be treated with respect and in the same way as other individuals is a universal right, no matter what sexual orientation or gender identity you have. That right cannot be questioned! In textbooks used, a lot of different discussions might be brought up, for example different ethical questions. Sometimes questions like homosexuality or homosexuals’ parenting suitability are questions for discussion. Schools and universities have a responsibility not to reduce this universal right to be a matter of discussion! To show the absurdity of a statement, try to change the word homosexual to

heterosexual, Muslim or Jew. Heteronormativity can sometimes conceal that it is as insulting to question LGBT people's rights as anyone else's. It might be a good idea to raise the subject to prevent homophobia, but then the obvious starting-point should be why homophobia is so widely spread, and why it might be that people cannot respect other people's right to equality and same rights regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

6. Check if homosexuality is seen as something primarily between men? How is women's sexuality described?

Women's sexuality is generally often reduced and homosexuality between women is mostly not perceived as threatening as homosexuality between men, possibly because men are assumed to be more active and more sexual than women. Homo- and bisexuals are often over-sexualized in a way that heterosexuals are not. To some people, homosexuality is just something about "what people do in bed", while very few would relate to heterosexuality in that way. Heteronormativity works together with oppression of gender, which makes many descriptions of reality untrue and unrealistic. It is also closely related to other norms, e.g. regarding ethnicity or ability.

7. Question the relevancy of describing the origin of homo- and bisexuality.

If it is relevant to describe possible reasons of why people belong to different sexual orientations, check carefully that it is not only the origin of homosexuality needing to be explained. If you do not explain why heterosexuals become heterosexual as well, you have automatically classified everything else as deviant and abnormal. The issue is extra sensitive since there is present research trying to explain what has "gone wrong" with homo- and bisexuals, though results are highly speculative.

Act for a change

1. Find the right way to carry out a scrutiny of educational materials.

In order to scrutinize textbooks, the person performing the task has to have an idea of what to look for, and take into account issues mentioned above. This person might have special competences of

the relevant subject, as well as basic understanding of heteronormative structures. At the same time, it is important that regular quality systems also catch insulting and/or erroneous textbooks. Specific questions when evaluating courses might also help.

2. Do not use literature or educational material that describe homo- and bisexuality or transgender people in a disrespectful way, even though the rest of the book maintains high standard.

It is imperative the school takes a stand actively for everyone's equal value and equal rights, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and gender expression. To use a book even though it has discriminating contents is to ignore the violation, even if you explain to the students that those parts are problematic.

If it is impossible to remove the book, demand that the discriminating parts are brought to the students' attention and questioned. To leave it unspoken of means that the students assume it is correct information or a correct standpoint.

3. Be very careful if using insulting textbooks as basis for discussions.

There have been claims that textbooks with insulting contents about LGBT issues is being used as basis for discussions. It has, for example, been about textbooks describing how sick homosexuality is and how you, in different ways, can "cure" homosexuality. In these situations you have to be extremely careful. Using discriminatory textbooks can be one way to show insults and discrimination, but it must be handled as something violating and nothing else. The teacher or facilitator must have the required competence and must be aware of the risks using this kind of textbooks. The discussion can easily get out of hand and individual students get hurt and/or violated, even if it started out with good intentions.

4. Keep a register of the books scrutinized with remarks or positive aspects.

Examining textbooks can be a big task and might take a long time. To avoid that the work is being done twice and to prevent today's lesson learned from being forgotten it is important to keep

records of the findings. Spread the information to others who might have an interest in it – preferably also outside your own school or university.

5. Demand change at the publishing house.

If pressured from several directions, textbooks could change for the better. Of course publishing houses listen to their clients. Publishers could search for other authors or influence the ones they are employing. Authors can in many cases be willing to listen to criticism directly, but within the academy there are also a lot of authors who do not want to be questioned. Even if an author is willing to change the contents, the book or text has to be reprinted by the publishers in order to achieve any effect.

6. Use the power of the example

A lot of educational material is produced by universities themselves, for example instructions from teachers in charge, different booklets etc. If you want to address the problem of insulting material from external authors, you naturally have to examine your own material to maintain trustworthiness. A simple recommendation is always to use examples that include both same-sex couples and heterosexuals when you produce material for education, as well as both transgender and cisgender people.

Appendix 3 d:

Higher education, a place of objective science?

(Article written for ESU Equality Handbook, 2007)

Today there is little debate, if any, on the consequences of normativity within higher education. There is an understanding widely spread, that universities are and should be free from ideological influences, political opinions or trends. There is an understanding that universities are places where science is produced, and that this science is objective. It is time to update this understanding.

Higher education is normative. Norms, at first sight not obvious, are embedded within the educational system, norms about gender and gender expression, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, sometimes age or belief. The norms tell us what/who is normal or abnormal, what behavior is accepted and wanted and what is not. Someone is made deviant, because without the deviant there would be no normality. Those abiding the norms are rewarded, those who do not are punished for their disobedience, and punishments vary from erroneous assumptions about certain “groups”, ignorance, invisibility and exclusion to psychological and physical violence. These norms help uphold discriminatory structures.

Universities are products of our societies, where the professionals of tomorrow are under construction. Future teachers, lawyers, psychologists, nurses, politicians, physicians, are educated, in structures that are claimed to be neutral. But there are no neutral structures, unless otherwise stated, the structures reinforce societal norms. Universities mirror the society they are in, and reproduce the same norms. The assumption that science is objective is highly misleading since the science produced is colored by the society we live in, and it is full of norms, it is biased, it is subjective, it is gendered (male), it has a sexual orientation (straight), it has an ethnicity (white), and it is not disabled, it is probably middle or upper class.

One might ask oneself what sexual orientation has to do with higher education? Why is it important to talk about it, when it is “private”? And why do student unions need to know what heteronormativity is?

Normativity in student unions?

There are a number of ways in which excluding structures work. If we start with the **study environment**, are students allowed to be who they are at the student union or at the university? Are there any institutional measures being taken to prevent discrimination or harassment? Universities have to be places where students can be themselves without fear of discrimination. This means students should be able to be open about their sexual orientation, and that this does not only apply to heterosexual students. It also means that fellow students have a responsibility to help create that kind of atmosphere. Furthermore, it means that student unions should be aware of their signals, about who is welcome and who is not. Is it a student union for ALL students? Regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, ability or religious belief, socio-economic background? Are there structures that are unspoken, which exclude groups of people? Are the union premises accessible by wheelchair? For a person visually impaired? Who is portrayed in the union promotion materials? Students of all colors? The union might organize a ball, is everyone welcome, regardless of the gender of their partner? Can a woman in headscarf be elected president of the union? Does the union board or steering committee represent the student population regarding for instance gender? Are there any measures being taken to encourage underrepresented groups to enter higher education?

A question highly relevant is if there is any anti-discrimination legislation covering students in higher education. If there is, the student unions have a responsibility to know it and know how to support students who are victims of discrimination or harassment. If there is no such legislation, The National Union of Students should include lobbying for it in its work, to ensure a safe environment for all students.

Representation is one way of showing who is included, rewarded and welcome in the organization. Another way for student unions to work for equal opportunities for all students is to ask the very same questions as posed above when it comes to the university and the study environment provided there. A third very important part is to consider what is said and transmitted through different educational programs. The student union probably works with monitoring the quality of higher education. In that work, it is also important to realize in what ways normativity of this kind compromise the quality of the education and research. One specific kind is heteronormativity, which influences everybody but is hardly talked about, especially its consequences in higher education. Below you find an introduction and how it is connected to academia.

Heteronormativity

Firstly, **everyone** has a sexual orientation. But there is only one that is visible, recognized and rewarded, and you might know which one that is? Some argue that it is a private matter, but it is not, it is always present. We just do not see it. When we see a happy nuclear family in advertisements for chocolate, we usually do not see the sexual orientation that is also displayed, which we definitely would have, had the family portrayed consisted of two mothers and their children. Psychology students read theories about why you become homosexual, but no single question is asked about why you become heterosexual. These are two results of **heteronormativity**.

Heteronormativity limits who we are and who we are allowed to be. And it affects everyone, not only LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people, it sets up rules for how families should look, how to be a man or woman, how you love and whom.

Heteronormativity teaches us that men and women are opposites, complete each other and need each other. Heteronormativity also tells us that men have to be masculine and women feminine. If you break this pattern, there will be consequences to pay. Heteronormativity tells you what body language to use, what clothes to wear, what profession to choose, where hair is appropriate on your body, how high your heels are and the fragrance of your deodorant.

Heteronormativity is what provides space for homophobia, and the consequences are sometimes dire for LGBT people or people who are suspected to be LGBT, facing violence, social exclusion, dropping out of educations, having difficulties finding jobs or keeping them. It means fear of being “outed”, it means a higher suicidal rate and financial difficulties if you are thrown out of your home. It means invisibility in society. And it means invisibility in higher education.

Heteronormativity in higher education

There are at least two sides to heteronormativity in higher education, besides what was already mentioned in “Normativity and student unions?”

One part is what is stated in the literature used during education, another what the teaching staff say or do. Both of these highly influence the standard of the educational level.

Studies show that in a wide range of books in a number of scientific fields, the picture of LGBT people is either erroneous and prejudiced or simply invisible. Good examples of representation are very hard to find. For instance, in psychology literature¹, you would find a number of colorful theories about why someone becomes homosexual, only to also find that all theories have been dismissed, no evidence has ever been found. Why would you then state them? And why is there no question about how you become heterosexual?

Teacher students at the largest teacher institute in Sweden do not undergo any part of the education dealing with questions about sexuality, even though teachers will encounter numerous young people who will need support in their search for themselves. They also have to be able to deal with bullying and prejudices in the classroom. If the Teacher Institutes do not provide the students with enough skills to make them inclusive of all pupils, who will?

Teaching can never be a neutral activity. The ways we define our disciplines, the texts we teach, the ways in which we teach them, the ways we set up our classrooms, the methods by which we evaluate our students--all these choices (whether our own or not) embody specific ideological assumptions and have far-reaching effects both inside and outside the classroom. Any anti-homophobic pedagogy will impact all methodologies and epistemologies, both those explicitly concerned with homosexuality and those which seem to be ignorant of--or even hostile to--gay concerns. Whether we teach gay texts or not, whether in fact we have any say over the texts we teach or not, it is in the ways in which we read and teach all texts and the ways in which we organize our classrooms and construct our students that we must most relentlessly deploy anti-homophobic agendas.²

Schools of Medicine teach students how to treat patients, but they are also taught stereotypes³. There are “typical” patients used as examples, for instance “the HIV-infected African man”, gay men can be referred to people with “risky lifestyles” and “the oppressed young Muslim woman” is showing prejudice based on belief. The study also shows how LGBT people never are the everyday example, but only used to show difference, hence making heterosexuality normality.

¹ Dahlström, Malin, Nilsson, Sara och Wallin, Emma, *Psykologutbildningen ur ett HBT-perspektiv*, Uppsala studentkår, 2006. Critical review of Education of Psychology, supported by Uppsala Student Union.

² Barnard, I. (1993). Anti-homophobic pedagogy: Some suggestions for teachers. *Feminist Teacher*, 7, 3, 50-52.

³ *Vidgade perspektiv i utbildningen och vården*, Medicinska föreningen & Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, 2006. Critical review of the medical university Karolinska Institutet and its nursing education.

When it comes to for instance Political Science, it is likely to contribute to methodology problems. What surveys don't ask for will of course not be accounted for; so LGBT-blind studies will reinforce the idea that there are no LGBT persons, families or children.

History is meant to put the present in a larger context. We learn about conflicts, wars and development but rarely where LGBT people fit into it. Rumors about important historic personalities and their possible homosexuality are silenced and considered shameful. Why is that? And did you know that the pink triangle that you sometimes can see as a symbol for the LGBT movement, was a symbol used in concentration camps during World War II? When Jews were labeled with a yellow star, gay men were labeled with pink triangles. Lesbians wore black triangles, meaning "Asocial". History today does not show the history for all.

Language classes often use examples for translation. When did you last see an exercise with a same-sex couple to translate?

Biology teaches us about reproduction and sexuality, failing to acknowledge that not all fit the norms. If homo- or bisexuality is mentioned, it is usually a few lines in a separate paragraph, which reveals that the rest of the chapter or book is about heterosexuals.

All these examples may isolated seem harmless enough, but what they do is reinforce structures that homophobia feeds on. Heteronormativity is a quality problem, as are racism and sexism, and needs to be dealt with from an institutional level.

Not only does a heteronormative educational system produce science of poor quality, it also continues to add to the exclusion of groups already marginalized. It does not provide the students with enough tools to be inclusive in their future professional life.

We believe that higher education is a key to changing the society of tomorrow, for a more inclusive one. Students of today will be decision and policy makers of tomorrow. They will take care of our children; meet us when we need medical care and write history. That history has to tell the history of the diverse society we are in.

How to work for a change?

It is not always easy to know where to start. Here are some tips!

Educate! Educate yourself and other stakeholders on why criticism of norms is crucial. Refer to poor quality, marginalization of groups and equality for all!

Investigate! What does it look like at your university or student union? Ask the students, make a survey, go beyond the surface. But do not ask if there are any LGBT students. There are. And besides, that is unimportant, what is important is if the environment makes people feel included.

Form alliances! There might be others who are interested in working for a more equal university. Could you find an ally within the university staff? Maybe there is a student group working with LGBT, gender or quality in higher education? Maybe there are local or national NGOs that are willing to start projects?

Update! What do your policy papers say? Are you up-to-date with terminology? Do you include all different discrimination strands? Make sure you also include transgender people!

If possible – review! What is said in the books used at your university? What do they NOT say? Start a discussion about how they are used, address teaching staff about problematic chapters.

Support your students! Would you encounter a student who has experienced discrimination, support them. They are already in a sensitive position vis-à-vis the teacher. Also remember the power relation, that there is a fear of not having the deserved grade. What is the stand-point of your principal when it comes to equality for the students?

Good luck in your work!

Linda Elstad

President of SFQ, The Swedish Federation of LGBTQ Student Organizations
Board member of ANSO, Association of Nordic LGBTQ Student Organizations

Appendix 4 a

Need a partner? – Toolkit

How to Create Partnerships Between LGBTQ Organizations and Student Organizations in Order to Fight Heteronormativity in Higher Education

Created during ANSO study session in Budapest 2008 by: Marchen Gjertsen, Aleksandar Skundric, Patric Mächler, Ilke Jaspers, and Vladimir Veljkovic

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Get started on creating a partnership between LGBTQ-organizations and student organizations. This is pilot guide, and you can get inspiration, but hopefully you will develop it, and fit the content to your own reality.

Why Cooperating?

In order to raise LGBTQ-issues in higher education, we need to cooperate. Whether you come from a student organization or an organization focusing on LGBTQ-students, you can profit from working together, and you have to do it, if you really want results.

Discrimination and exclusion based on sexual orientation and gender is unfortunately a common problem among students. In the end, it's all about heteronormativity. However, there are many ways to fight it. This guide can give you inspiration on how to get started.

How to Begin a Partnership

If you want to represent students and fight for their rights to equality regardless of their gender or sexuality, you have to gain knowledge on the subject.

In LGBTQ-organizations, you might have a lot of knowledge when it comes to things concerning LGBTQ-problems, but less when it comes to student's politics. In student organizations, it is the other way around.

Therefore, it is crucial, that step number one is to raise internal awareness. In the case of LGBTQ-organizations, you should discuss the importance of student's politics and the possibilities of focusing on LGBTQ-issues in institutions of higher education. Students' organizations can begin with discussing heteronormativity.

- Suggest the topic in your organization
- Debate the theme and your role in it. If you need more information on the subject – invite a guest to present the theme
- Consider the needs in your environment
- Search for resource-persons within your organization

Networking

Make a brainstorm and research on potential partners. Students unions or organizations should search for organizations dealing with LGBTQ-students, whereas LGBTQ-organizations should look for student's organizations.

- Is there a local or national organization, which could find interest in cooperating with you?
- Does your university have professors or students working with this subject?

Facilitation of Activities and Policy Making

Contact your potential partners and invite them to participate in the project.

It is important that you do not present a final proposal for campaigns or activities, but that you invite partners to participate in the development of such things. It is exactly in this dialogue and meeting, that you can invent the good ideas and gain knowledge from each other.

- Set up a meeting with the theme of how to create a constructive partnership.
- Invite all potential partners
- Find a common ground to create ideas and ambitions
- Make a plan with your partners on how to continue the work

Catalogue of Ideas

How to act and what to do, depend on the situation in your country and environment, but here are some good ideas, which can inspire you.

You should of course focus on your own situation and find out, what the needs are concerning your education. The activities, big or small, can have various expressions and you have to consider how much time and how many resources you have.

- Look at the texts in the curricula at your education. Are they discriminating and heteronormative? You can start on reading: "A helping hand in deconstructing heteronormative literature", which will be available for download at www.gaystudenterna.se
- Make a survey at the university, using a questionnaire. You can also set up focus groups, which is easier and cheaper, but not as valid. The aim should be, to find out exactly where

the students feel discriminated, and how big the problem is. This you can use for documentation when confronting the leading body at your institution, media or politicians.

- Look around in your institution. Where do you see the discriminating heteronormativity in the surroundings?
 - Are the toilets divided by male and female?
 - When filling out forms, can you choose between more than two genders?
 - Are social activities planned in a heteronormative context, where male and female students are expected to couple up?
 - Do some lectures divide male and female students?
 - Do you have uniforms or dress codes, which are different according to the gender?
Are party-commercials always presenting men and woman together?
 - How is discriminating language used in flyers, posters, etc.?
 - Does the teacher use stereotypes when referring to gays, women etc.
 - Do you see bullying of LGBTQ-people?
 - Is there a person at the university, who is responsible for gender equality and Discrimination?
- Communicate to the students, to spread information of the issue. Create open meetings, contribute to the debate in your student's magazine, or make events and games. You can also make a Facebook group, a website or a brochure.

To make the discrimination more concrete, you can turn the debate up side down and question the heterosexuality.

- Are you normal? How did your mother feel about you being heterosexual? Is it ok, for a boy to hold hands with a girl? Heterosexuality is not normal, it is just common.
- Facilitate safe spaces and social communities for LGBTQ-people. You can arrange small events at the university, to provide a non-discriminating environment.
An example could be making a coffee get-together at the university and raise themes like coming out, heteronormativity, gender and human rights.
- Invite students to come to a free movie-night. Present queer-movies.
- Contact your teachers and get them to reflect on the theme.
- Create an *Equal treatment act* and make your university sign it. The treatment can be an agreement on how to handle equality-issues in the university and on a long-term

perspective, it can become national. You can specify the central human rights, and set up visionary goals. The implementation of the *Equal treatment act* can involve training programs, information etc. Look at www.homo.se to find inputs.

- Contact a condom company and try to get condoms for free (through sponsorship). Then make an event on safer sex and health. You can use gloves instead of balloons, and hand out a small brochure.
- Look for funding and economical support.

The Partnership

If you get the partnership started, remember to make it sustainable. This requires respect for the other organization, and you should always support each other's activities if possible.

Remember to use each other's networks. Always tell the people you meet, about the other organization, so maybe the student organization will reach more LGBTQ-students, and the LGBTQ-students will reach more students interested in students' politics from a queer-perspective.

Links and Resources

This is an international document, and therefore it is not possible to write down all links for organizations, but a quick research in your will probably help you a lot.

Here are some relevant organizations, mainly from Europe. Click to see the websites:

Queer organizations:

ANSO – Association of Nordic LGBTQ Student Organizations. www.anso.dk

IGLYO – International LGBTQ Youth and Student Organization. <http://www.iglyo.com>

Members of IGLYO:

Belarus - Belarusian League for sexual equality 'Lambda' (BLL)

[VSTRECHA](#)

Belgium - Jong & HiB

Wel Jong Niet Hetero

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Organization Logos

Organization Q

Bulgaria - The Bulgarian gay organization Gemini

Croatia - LORI - Lesbian Organization Rijeka

Denmark - ANSO- Association of Nordic LGBT Student Organizations

BLUS bosse/lesbiske studerende

The Danish National association of Gay and Lesbians, Youth Brand

France - Homozigote

Moules Frites

Germany - Jugendnetzwerk Lambda Berlin-Brandenburg

Greece - EOK - Hellenic Homosexual Community

Iceland - FSS (Organization of LGBT students in Iceland)

Ireland - BeLonG To Youth Project

Italy - Arcigay – Associazione Lesbica e Gay Italiana

Arcigay "Ora" Roma

Arcigay "Tralaltro" Padova

Kosovo - Centre for Cultural Emancipation

Kyrgyzstan -Labrys

Lithuania - Tolerantiško jaunimo asociacija - Tolerant Youth Association

Macedonia- Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation

Malta - Malta Gay Rights Movement (MGRM)

University of Malta Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Society

Moldova - GenderDoc-M

Netherlands - COC Netherlands

Norway- Skeiv Ungdom

Poland - KPH - Campaign Against Homophobia

Lambda Warsaw Association

Portugal- Rede Ex Aequo - LGBT and allies youth organization

Serbia - Safe Pulse of Youth - SPY

Slovenia -Association for Integration of Homosexuality – DIH

LEGEBITRA - Drustvo informacijski center

Spain - Seccion Juvenil de la Federation Espanola - COLEGAS de LGBT

Seccion Juvenil de la Federation Espanola - FELGT

Sin Verguenza

Sweden - Sveriges Förenade Gaystudenter SFG

The Swedish Youth Federation for LGBT Rights – RFSL Ungdom

Switzerland - Verein HalloWelt!

Turkey - KAOS GL

Ukraine - Gay Forum of Ukraine

United Kingdom- Freestyle London

GALYIC - Gay and Lesbian Youth in Calderale

LGBT Youth Scotland

National Union of Students UK LGBT

The Trans Youth Association

Queer Youth Network- The UK LGBT Youth Organization

Canada- Queer Peace International

USA- The Haworth Press Inc.

Student's organizations:

The European Students Union – ESU.

Every member is obliged to fighting discrimination, and therefore you should write ESU, if your national students union, will not focus on LGBTQ and inequality. Visit web: <http://www.esib.org/>

Members of ESU:

1. Austria - Österreichische HochschülerInnenschaft (ÖH)
2. Israel - National Union of Israeli Students (NUIS)
3. Ukraine - Ukrainian Association of Student Self-government (UASS)
4. Albania - Albanian Student Government (ASG)
5. Georgia - Students Organizations League of Georgia (SOLG)
6. Macedonia - National Union of Students of Macedonia (NUSM)

7. Latvia - Latvijas Studentu Apvieniba (LSA)
8. United Kingdom - National Union of Students (NUS-UK)
9. Switzerland - Verband der Schweizerischen StudentInnenschaften (VSS-UNES-USU)
10. Sweden - SFS
11. Spain - Coordinadora de Representantes de Estudiantes de Universidades Pcas (CREUP)
12. Slovenia - Studenska Organizacija Slovenije (SSU)
13. Slovakia - SRVS
14. Serbia - Studentska Unija Srbije (SUS)
15. Romania - Alianta Nationala a Organizatiilor Studentesti din Roma (ANOSR)
16. Portugal - FAIRe
17. Poland - ZSP
18. Poland - PSRP
19. Norway - Studentenes Landsforbund (StL)
20. Norway - Norsk Studentunion (NSU)
21. Netherlands - Landelijke Studenten Vakbond (LSVb)
22. Netherlands - Interstedelijk Studenten Overleg (ISO)
23. Malta - Kunsill Studenti Universitarji (KSU)
24. Luxembourg - Union Nationale des Etudiant(e)s du Luxembourg (UNEL)
25. Lithuania - Lietuvos Studentu Sajunga (LSS)
26. Lithuania - (LSAS)
27. Italy - Unione degli Universitari (UdU)
28. Ireland - Union of Students in Ireland (USI)
29. Iceland - Studentarad Haskola Islands (SHI)
30. Iceland - Bandalag Islenska Namsmanna (BISN)
31. Hungary - HÖÖK
32. Germany - FZS
33. France - Union Nationale des Etudiants de France (UNEF)
34. France - Fédération des Associations Générales D'Etudiants (FAGE)
35. Finland - Suomen Ylioppilaskuntien Liitto (SYL)
36. Finland - Suomen Ammattikorkeakouluopiskelijayhdistysten Liitto (SAMOK)
37. Estonia - EUL
38. Denmark - DSF

39. Czech Republic - SKRVS
40. Cyprus - Pagkypria Omospondia Foititikon Enoseon (POFEN)
41. Croatia - Savez Studenata Hrvatske (CSU)
42. Croatia - Hrvatski Studentski Zbor (CSC)
43. Bulgaria - UBS
44. Bulgaria - Nacionalno Predstavitelstvo na Studentskite Saveti v Republika Balgaria (NASC)
45. Bosnia & Herzegovina - Studentska Unija Republika Srpska (SURS)
46. Bosnia & Herzegovina - Savez Studenata Federacije BiH (Safbih)
47. Belgium - Vlaamse Vereniging van Studenten (VVS)
48. Belgium - Fédération Des Etudiants Francophones (FEF)
49. Belarus - Belarus Student Association (BSA)

A few ideas for more knowledge and relevant literature:

Against common sense – Kevin Kumashiro

Troubling Education – Kevin kumashiro

Open your workspace: Challenging homophobia and heteronormativity - TRACE (The Transnational Cooperation for Equality.)

Yogyakarta Principles – LGBT and Human Rights - <http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org>

All different - All equal - <http://alldifferent-allegal.info/>

Council of Europe - <http://www.coe.int/>

Appendix 4 b: Teaching – changing minds of students

Preface

We realized that it was easier to reach high school students, who are in classrooms and used to those kinds of interventions. Higher education students are difficult to gather in the same place and we can't make our action compulsory. In this situation how can we reach all the students, even the ones who don't want to hear about us or have no interest in heteronormativity. This is why we set up two different strategies, one for high school students and one for higher education.

WHO?

Target group:

- All students →
 - / - Straight → Change minds
 - \ - LGBT → Create safe environment
 - Self-acceptance

Participants:

- (LGBTQ-) NGO's → Knowledge and money.
- Student unions → To be able to fight heteronormativity it is needful to involve straight people in creating tools and a program.

Environment:

- Environment regardless of the level of hostility to LGBTQ issues
- First establish the level of hostility in a scale in order to:
 - Create strategies
 - Be able to measure effects

WHY?

Aims:

- To fight homophobia

- To make students aware of heteronormativity
- To help people coming out

WHAT?

Tools high schools:

- Brochures
- Webpage
- Going to classes
 - Films
 - Pictures
 - Games
 - Discussions

Tools Higher Education:

- Posters, brochures
- Webpage
- Giving additional in LGBTQ- courses
- Event / debate in an open / public space (where there are already people)
- Create awareness in Student Unions for heteronormativity
- Set up programs with the Student Union
- Participate in / with Student Organizations

SMART?

- To do a survey before and after the visit (Appendix I)
- Appoint every school with a grade for hostility for LGBTQ (Appendix II) and publish this so that it
 - stimulates unwilling schools
 - provides evaluation of effectiveness of own program

APPENDIX I – QUESTIONNAIRE

1) Have you ever met any homosexual person?

- Yes, I know one homosexual person
- Yes, I've already met somebody who is homosexual, but I don't really know this person
- No

2) What if you happen to meet a homosexual person (at a party for example), what would be your reaction?

- I don't mind, I just want to know if she or he is nice
- I prefer avoiding her/him because it makes me feel uneasy
- I don't talk to this person because it's disgusting me
- I don't know what I would do in this situation

3) How would you react if your best friend told you he was homosexual?

- It would break our friendship
- We would still be friends but it would change something
- This person would stay my best friend

4) What do you think about the organization of a debate about homosexuality in your school?

- I think it's a good idea
- I have no opinion on this question
- I am against it

5) Is homosexuality a subject discussed in your family?

- Yes, to talk about it is not a problem
- Yes, but it makes us uneasy
- No, we don't speak about it

7) If you want to see any question discussed in particular about homosexuality or homophobia, you can write it down here:

APPENDIX II - SCALE FOR HOSTILITY

5) Violent environment

- Justify our actions (we are not recruiting)
- Focus on violence
- Focus on human rights

4) Hostile environment

- What is homophobia?
- Focus on all kind of discrimination
- Consequences of discrimination in every day life

3) Disapproving environment

- Not a disease, nothing unnatural, (try to not focus on religion)
- Stereotypes, role models, gender differences

2) Tolerant environment

- Clichés on LGBTQ

1) Open minded environment

- Norms
- Heteronormativity

Appendix 4 c: Student Club "EXIT"

Target group_ teacher students (though methodology can be used for students with other educational background)

Project partners_ university professors, student unions, and other student clubs, LGBTQ group (if there is one), LGBTQ organization outside university.

Roles of the project partners:

- to help disseminate information about the club "EXIT" (spreading leaflets, mentioning info during a class or social activities, using personal contacts, etc.)
- professors might act as mediators between the activist who are starting the club and the governance of the university, in case if the environment is not very queer friendly. They are also expected to help sort out logistical side of the project, i.e. providing a space in university campus to gather, providing technical equipment, etc.);
- LGBTQ student group and/or LGBTQ organization is expected to provide the needed material for the topic, to share expertise, etc.

The aim of the club_ to raise target group's awareness on the topic of heteronormativity in HE (and in general). To motivate them to use the competence gained in their classrooms after they graduate. To act as multipliers.

How to get the target group to sign up for the club:

- print a visual material (leaflets, posters, etc.) to be distributed in campus (use the inclusive language);
- find allies who would help to spread the word.

Characteristics of the club: group of students interested in attending a course which is run for the 3 months, with meetings twice a month (approx. 6 meetings), preferably gathering the same people for the whole duration of the course. Most importantly make it clear that the club is for **EVERYONE**.

Activities in the club:

- 3 lectures on the topic of heteronormativity in HE. Inviting expert(s) to give lectures. Provide members of the club with printed reading material also references for further reading. Try to

link everything with examples from life.

- Homework - encourage people to look for the examples of heteronormativity in the world around them (in the media, in the study material, etc.)
- Organize a tour (excursion) around campus or in the city to spot the heteronormativity in everyday life.
- And finally provide the members of the club with the practical tools they can use as multipliers. For instance use BRYT! methodology.

Expected outcome:

- people who took the course will encourage their peers to join the club;
- they act as multipliers;
- the "glass box" is seriously cracked :)

Appendix 4 d: Workshop on heteronormativity in Higher Education

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Preword

This document is an example of a training designed for students, faculty and staff at institutions of Higher Educations. The order and the content is an example of how to structure the workshop, this can be modified but please keep in mind not to lose the main focus. Start with an introduction of the goals of the work shop and then agree upon some mutual ground rules for the group.

SECTION 1 – Raising awareness and gaining knowledge

Introduction

This is a workshop designed to:

- provide factual information and to correct misinformation on heteronormativity
- recognizing the effects of the heteronorm and that heteronormativity affects *everyone*
- encourage critical thinking
- identify and discuss strategies to reduce heteronormative behavior
- teach skills and provide information on how to act in relation to students who feel discriminated on
- change heteronormative behavior

Examples of Ground Rules

- Be active listeners and engaged participants
- Honor all questions
- Keep stories shared here within the room
- Act on what we learn here outside of the room

Heteronormative Questionnaire

Based on the idea of the Heterosexual Questionnaire by Martin Rochlin, Ph.D.

Most LGBT people are put, all too frequently, into situations where they have to defend their sexuality. This places a considerable burden on people who resent feeling they need to justify or explain their sexual lifestyle. To help non-LGBT people understand how it feels to be placed in

such a situation, the following questionnaire was devised, which is based on “heterophobic” premises, rather than homophobic premises, which exist chronically in our society.

When you read these questions, keep in mind that as exaggerated as they sound, these are exact reversals of what we are often asked. They are designed to make you think...

Please try to answer the following questions as honestly as possible. It's going to be hard. That's the whole point.

- 1. What do you think caused your heterosexuality?*
- 2. When and how did you first decide you were a heterosexual?*
- 3. Is it possible that your heterosexuality is just a phase you may grow out of?*
- 4. Isn't it possible that all you need is a good gay lover?*
- 5. If you've never slept with a person of the same sex, how do you know that you wouldn't prefer that?*
- 6. If heterosexuality is normal, why are a disproportionate number of mental patients heterosexual?*
- 7. Who did you first tell about your heterosexuality? How did they react?*
- 8. Your heterosexuality doesn't offend me so long as you don't try to force it on me. Why do you heterosexuals feel compelled to reveal your sexual orientation to others?*
- 9. The great majority of child molesters are heterosexuals. Do you really consider it safe to expose your children to heterosexual teachers?*
- 10. Why do you insist on being so obvious, and making a public spectacle of your heterosexuality? Can't you just be who you are and keep it quiet?*
- 11. How can you ever hope to become a whole person if you limit yourself to a heterosexual lifestyle, and remain unwilling to explore and develop your normal, healthy, God-given homosexual potential?*
- 12. How can you enjoy a fully satisfying sexual or deep emotional experience with a person of the opposite sex, when there are such differences between you?*
- 13. Why do heterosexuals place so much emphasis on sex?*
- 14. Why are heterosexuals so promiscuous?*
- 15. Could you really trust a heterosexual therapist to be objective and unbiased? Don't you fear he/she might be inclined to influence you in the direction of her/his own feelings?*

If you really took this questionnaire seriously, right now, you're probably feeling a bit depressed, defensive, and maybe even a little ashamed. Well, now imagine that this were real, not just a little exercise. Rather, it was all of society, your family, your friends asking you these questions and really wanting the answers. Not only is your own knowledge of your own sexuality, feelings, and body questioned, but now you must defend a whole group of people who happen to have one similarity with you, most of whom you've never even meet because to fail to do so in any way, in anyone's eyes is to say that you are *fill in the stereotype or negative image*, just like they are.

Now you have a better idea of how LGBT persons feel every day. The only differences are that you only felt this way for a few minutes and now you can go back to a world of acceptance. This is not a temporary experience for LGBT persons who can't turn it off and find a world of acceptance. They still have to answer these questions and many more each and every day.

I hope that you have learned something from this experience. It's always very hard to truly understand how another person feels until you are in their shoes. That is what this exercise was about. It was never intended to actually make you believe that your sexuality is wrong or that you have to defend it in anyway, but rather to give you a better idea of how LGBT persons feel when they are made to feel guilty and forced to defend our own life and sexuality to people they don't even know.

I hope that the next time you hear someone saying something like what you read above in this questionnaire, you will remember how you felt when it was you in that place and that you will have not only compassion (which you probably had to begin with since you are reading this), but also a little more understanding. This is a big world and there is plenty of room for all kinds of people in it! So, please, celebrate diversity and support the right of all people to live, love, and be happy without question and without having to defend the gender of the person that they share their life with!

Some Definitions

Sexual orientations:

Heterosexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by someone perceived of the "opposite" sex.

Homosexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by someone perceived of the same sex.

Bisexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by women and men

Sometimes Asexuality is included among the sexual orientations:

Asexual people do not experience sexual attraction, but are emotionally attracted to other people, and would form relationships with them, without engaging in sexual relations.

Sex: biological sex assigned at birth or later and stated in your passport. Usually sub-divided into "male" or "female".

Gender: Gender is commonly used interchangeably with sex, but when sex refers to biology, gender refers to for instance gender roles and how we behave, often referred to as social constructs. One could say that *gender* is to *sex*, what e.g. *femininity* is to *woman*. Gender roles are taught and learned from day one of our lives.

Gender identity: a person's self-identified and self-perceived gender. Might be e.g. female, male, intergender.

Gender expression: how you express your gender through for instance clothing, accessories, hair, voice or body language. Might be masculine, feminine, both or something else altogether.

LGBT(Q) – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (and Queer)

Lesbian – woman attracted to other women

Gay – man attracted to other men

Bisexual – person attracted to both women and men

Transgender is an umbrella term for different transgender identities and expressions

Queer is questioning norms regarding sex, gender and sexuality. An important aspect of queer is to question and study normality instead of the "deviant" created by normality. Some people identify as *queer*, it might mean that you are not conforming to norms of gender or that you are non-straight.

Transgender people are people whose gender identity and/or gender expression sometimes or always are non-conforming to that of the norm of the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender people can have any sexual orientation. *Transgender* is sometimes shortened to *trans*, and is used in different contexts, i.e. trans people, trans issues etc.

Cisgender people are people whose gender identity and/or gender expression are conforming to that of the norm of the sex they were assigned at birth. Cisgender people can have any sexual orientation. *Cisgender* is sometimes shortened to *cis*, and is used in different contexts i.e., cis people, cis questions etc.

Drag king: Usually female bodied or identified people playing with masculine gender expressions, as an act or political strategy. Can be, but is usually not an identity but a behavior.

Drag queen: Usually male bodied or identified people playing with feminine gender expressions, as an act or political strategy. Can be, but is usually not an identity but a behavior.

Intergender: Person identifying between or beyond the traditional genders, or choosing not to identify the gender identity at all, a gender identity.

Intersex is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. Might be ambiguous genitalia or other physical sexual characteristics, there are a number of medical diagnoses and about 1% of babies born have an intersex condition. The extent to which intersex people are transgender is debated, since not all intersex people disagree with their gender assigned at birth.

Cross-dresser (transvestite): Person who more or less often, partially or completely, dresses and behaves according to the "opposite sex".

Transsexual: Person who identifies as, or desires to live and be accepted as, a member of the gender opposite to that assigned at birth. Many transsexuals also want to change their bodies. These physical changes are collectively known as *sex reassignment therapy* and often include hormones and *sex reassignment surgery*, *SRS*. References to "pre-operative", "post-operative" and "non-operative" transsexual people indicate whether they have had, or are planning to have sex reassignment surgery. MtF means Male to Female and FtM means Female to Male. The last word indicates the pronoun you should use, an MtF wants to be addressed *her*, *she*, and *hers*.

Heteronormativity: Norms about that women and men are expected to be different from each other, that you have to be male or female and that the "natural" is that women fall in love with and are attracted to men and the other way around. Heteronormativity is everything that makes heterosexuality seem as the only natural and wanted alternative, and makes deviants of people and relations that do not fit the expected pattern. Gender neutral pronouns: for instance *hir* or *ze/zie*. These pronouns can be used when speaking or referring to people who do not identify as male or female, or if you do not want to decide the gender of somebody.

Homophobia: a term used to describe irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuals or anyone suspected of being homosexual. It can also mean hatred, hostility, disapproval of, or prejudice towards homosexuals. Terms like *heterosexism* have been proposed as

alternatives that are more morphologically parallel, and which do not have the association with phobia. Heterosexism refers to the privileging of heterosexuality over homosexuality.

Internalized homophobia: refers to homophobia carried by individuals against homosexual manifestations in themselves and others. It causes severe discomfort with or disapproval of one's own sexual orientation.

Such a situation may cause extreme repression of same-sex desires. In other cases, a conscious internal struggle may occur for some time, often pitting deeply held religious or social beliefs against strong sexual and emotional desires. This discordance often causes clinical depression, and the unusually high suicide rate among gay teenagers (up to 30 percent of non-heterosexual youth attempt suicide) has been attributed to this phenomenon.

Some homosexuals feel that bisexuality and transgenderism are threatening to the social and political acceptance of gays and lesbians. This phenomenon has also been called internalized homophobia by some people. *Straight acting* is by some argued to be a result of internalized homophobia, usually homo- or bisexual men whose behavior and appearance resemble those of the straight male stereotype.

Biphobia: is a term used to describe the fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against bisexuals or LGBT people who are bisexual or perceived to be bisexual. It can also mean hatred, hostility, disapproval of, or prejudice towards LGBT people, sexual behavior, or cultures.

Homosexual people will sometimes see bisexuals as maintaining privilege in a heterosexual context while simultaneously benefiting from opportunities in LGBT communities. Some consider the belief that people are either heterosexual or homosexual. Both those views can be argued to be biphobic.

Transphobia: refers to fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people, or people who transgress (or are perceived to transgress) norms of gender, gender identity or gender expression. Many trans people also experience homophobia from people who incorrectly associate the medically different gender expressions as a form of homosexuality.

Some in the LGBT communities are uncomfortable with transgender individuals and issues. For example, transwomen (male-to-female transgender and transsexual people) are sometimes denied entry to women's spaces, and the explanations given for such actions betray a degree of transphobia. Intersectionality is a theory that examines the ways in which various socially and culturally constructed categories interact to manifest themselves as inequality in society. An intersectional approach takes into account how different power relations are intertwined and how different

identities are created as a result of for instance ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, religious belief or age. Black feminist thinker Audre Lorde once said, “*There are no single-issue struggles because we do not live single-issue lives*”. We have to look at how different oppressions intersect in order to understand people’s different conditions and experiences, and how they are contextual.

Polyamory: Polyamory is the desire, practice, or acceptance of having more than one loving and/or intimate relationship at a time with the full knowledge and consent of everyone involved. It is an umbrella term that covers many orientations and modes of relationship. It is grounded in such concepts as choice, trust, equality of free will, and the more novel idea of compersion, rather than in cultural or religious tradition. The word comes from Greek, (*poly* meaning many or several) and Latin (*amor* literally meaning love).

Monogamy is the custom or condition of having only one mate in a relationship, thus forming a couple. The word monogamy comes from the Greek word *monos*, which means one or alone, and the Greek word *gamos*, which means marriage or union.

Diversity in the community

LGBTQ and straight people exist in every culture around the world and unfortunately so does discrimination. Many LGBTQ and also straight people feel that only one part of their identity can be primary, whether it is ethnic, cultural, sexual or religious. Often they feel pulled by each community to identify solely one or the other.

One community may also be discriminating on LGBTQ people. For many it may just be too much to be a part of several oppressed communities.

Some specific issues involving cultural and sexual diversity:

- It can be difficult to decide which identity to embrace.
- A person may consider both aspects of their identity equally important and yet may be misunderstood by both groups.
- Many people feel unable to define who they are in relation to their multiple identities.
- One aspect of identity may suppress the other which can lead to confusion and stress.
- Remember, this is a very individual struggle. Respect and understanding for ALL aspects of a person’s identity is essential.

- Many religions have a spectrum in which a person may find the comfort and a person may style their identity as they choose, an ally provides support.

Diversity is the one thing we all have in common...

A skeptical approach to norms

- Who decides what is normal?
- Make the norm visible, not the issue differing from the norm
- Ask who is benefiting from the norm
- Who is punished?
- Is this relationship something that can be motivated in order to have a functioning society?

Being considered normal means being privileged, being considered abnormal is the necessary other; to maintain normality. This is the power relationship that maintains the norm and provides grounds for discrimination.

Stereotyping the “Norm” – Heterosexism and Homophobia

While heterosexism and homophobia define different actions, there are inextricably linked. A heterosexist society allows for homophobia: which would not exist if homosexuality were not considered deviant or other than the norm.

A Quick Review:

Heterosexism: An overt or tacit bias against homosexuality rooted in the belief the heterosexuality is superior or the norm.

Homophobia: A fear or hatred of homosexuality, especially rooted in the belief that homosexuality is superior or the norm.

In this section we also include Biphobia and Transphobia in the term Homophobia (See Biphobia and Transphobia under Some Definitions).

Some Issues Surrounding Heterosexism and Homophobia:

- People become locked into rigid gender based roles that limit opportunity and self-expression.

- Homophobic stigmas are used to censure people of all sexual orientations, thereby inhibiting social progress.
- Sex education is very narrowly defined, thus keeping vital information from students.
- Diversity of all kinds is inhibited as everyone has aspects that are outside of what is considered normal.

Heterosexism and homophobia are damaging to people of all sexual orientations. There are both risks and rewards to taking a stand against them: you must be very conscious of the social power of conformity.

Some Thoughts and Ideas:

- Recognize that heterosexism is an ingrained part of your culture. You or someone you know may have developed homo/bi/transphobic tendencies without ever realizing what has happened. Do not censure, work to overcome them through education.
- Homophobia can lead to harassment and violent actions against LGBTQ people. Complaints or incidents should be handled with sensitivity to the victim's wishes.
- Lead by example. Use the strategies for combating heterosexism and homophobia presented in this training in your everyday life.

The heteronorm

Heteronormativity teaches us, among other things, that;

- men and women are each others opposite poles that need each other to be complete
- what body language to use
- how to dress and behave
- what field of studies or which profession to choose
- where hair is appropriate on our bodies
- how high your heels are and the fragrance of your perfume

This section could be used as a group discussion reflecting on the above statements in relation to our own lives and experiences.

Breaking out of the box – Myths and realities of heterosexuality

There are a number of mistaken ideas and myths regarding heterosexuality:

- Heterosexuals are only attracted to people of the opposite sex
- Men and women always want marriage and children
- Families should consist of a mother, a father and children
- Heterosexuals don't get HIV/AIDS
- All people are born heterosexual
- Biology wants us to be heterosexual
- Heterosexuality cannot be questioned

Heterosexuality and heteronormativity assumes two sexes/genders, which is not a correct assumption. Gender can be perceived and expressed in several ways, and is contextual. Gender and sex is different in different cultures and at different times. It's up to each person to define their sex/gender, or not to define. Sex and gender is fluid and can change over time.

It is important to remember that terms such as “heterosexual”, bisexual, lesbian, gay and transgender are labels created in a homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, and heteronormative society. It is ok to use labels if you are aware where they are coming from, and how you use them. It is also important not to force people into labels.

Some thoughts and ideas:

- Heterosexuals can be attracted and/or have strong feelings for people of the same sex as well as the opposite sex.
- The norm wants us to want a lifelong partner of the opposite sex, and to reproduce. This is not something all people want or need, and there should be room for a variety of family constellations and ways of living.
- HIV/AIDS and other diseases are spread by unsafe sexual practices, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.
- All people are born different, and just as we have different skin colors, we have different sexualities and gender identities and gender expressions.
- Biology did not create only attractions towards opposite sex. Nature shows many examples of animals that pair up with others of the same sex. And sexual orientation has nothing to do with

reproduction. Sexual orientations are about whom you feel attracted to, and with whom you fall in love.

- Everything can be questioned. Heterosexuality is not normal, it's just common.

Looking inward

In order to become aware of the heteronorm you should examine your own ideas, assumptions, and stereotypes.

Benefits of stepping out of the box:

- You learn more accurate information regarding being LGBTQ and straight.
- You see how your values and beliefs impact other people's lives
- You become less locked into gender stereotypes
- You empower yourself and others to take a stand against discrimination of all forms
- You can make a difference in people's lives
- You become a role model for others

Risks of opening your mind:

- Looking carefully at your own beliefs and stereotypes can be uncomfortable
- People may speculate about your sexual orientation opening you up to gossip or rumors
- Your character, values, and morality may be questioned
- People may question your motivation
- Some people may distance themselves from you to avoid conflict or labels.

Some thoughts and ideas:

- You shouldn't condemn yourself for past actions. You are making the first step by considering changing your way of thinking. Education and an open mind are the keys to questioning the heteronorm.
- Opening your mind to the effects of the heteronorm may permanently change your way of thinking, and will make you less likely to partake in any form of discrimination.

SECTION 2 – Take action!

Evaluating the situation

The following questions can serve as examples for a group work activity which should give you ideas on where to start with actions in your own environment.

- Have you experienced any harassment or discrimination within your learning or working environment?
- Can you identify heteronormativity within your learning or working environment?
- Is there an LGBTQ student group/organization in your university/city?
- What is the stand of your local student union on LGBTQ issues?
- Does your National Union of Students have a policy on LGBTQ issues?
- Does your university have someone responsible for equality?
- If there is a responsible person/group, what kind of equality work is done at the university?
Seminars on equality between men and women, action plans against ethnic harassments or other?
- Does your university teach gender studies? Does it include queer studies?

Human rights and legal issues

Even though sexual orientation is not mentioned as an anti-discrimination ground in article 9 of the *European Convention of Human Rights* (<http://www.hri.org/docs/ECHR50.html>) one can refer to article 8 of the same convention mentions the right to respect for private and family life (as below) and sexual orientation can therefore be included here instead.

ARTICLE 9 - 1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

ARTICLE 8 - 1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence. 2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the

interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty

The Article enables the Council to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/a10000.htm>

The Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

<http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/>

http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/principles_en.pdf

Human Rights Watch. <http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2007/03/26/global15546.htm>

Look up national examples of how the articles may have been tried in your country. Further information on international legal issues affecting LGBTQ persons is available at the International Lesbian and Gay Association website, at <http://www.ilga.org/> or International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organization, at <http://www.iglyo.com>

Practical tips:

Ways to avoid heteronormativity in day-to-day life:

- Do not assume everyone you meet is heterosexual.
- Do not assume heterosexual parentage of people you meet.
- Use inclusive and/or gender neutral language consistently in discussions about relationships or partner-choice situation: i.e. words like “partner” or “lover” instead of “boyfriend/girlfriend” or “husband/wife” if you don’t know the gender of person’s partner.
- Use the LGBTQ terms correctly and try to recognize the differences between the terms.
- Appropriately use terms including homosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Don’t use derogatory terms such as queer, fairy, dyke, fag etc.

- Avoid comparisons that marginalize the LGBTQ community: i.e. expressions like “lesbians and heterosexual women” instead of “lesbians and the general public”.
- Avoid using forms that designate only “married” or “single”.
- Recognize that conventions are changing. Many same sex couples had have marriage ceremonies and choose to use the terms husband and wife. Follow a person’s lead referring to their partner.
- Do not automatically refer LGBTQ issues to someone who is LGBTQ and out. But also do not try to avoid LGBTQ issues so that you wouldn’t isolate those people.
- Include LGBTQ issues in your lecturing. Require and recommend reading list including these issues.
- Encourage all students to think about and discuss the ways in which heteronormativity and homophobia has impacted their lives.
- Be familiar with local LGBTQ resources and curricular materials (books, films etc.)
- Interrupt homophobic comments by staff and students alike. State that derogatory comments, jokes, behaviors, or other actions are unfair, offensive and harmful.
- If you would like to get more information, ask in an honest and respectful way. Encourage the person to talk. If you are unsure, clarify the level of confidentiality expected of you.
- Do not joke about sexual orientation or talk about homosexuality as if it were a deviance or something to be ashamed of.
- Use phrases like:
 - Tell me more...
 - What concerns do you have?
 - Do you have other people to talk to?
 - Can I help with anything?
 - Do not use phrases like:
 - How do you know you’re gay/lesbian/bisexual?
 - Are you sure?
 - You’ll get over it.
 - It’s just because you haven’t been with someone of the opposite sex.
 - It’s just a phase.
 - Have you tried to change?
 - I accept you, but I don’t agree with your choice.
 - You’re not normal.

- How does this happen?
- What do you think caused this?
- I'm sorry to hear that.
- You need counseling.
- Create an atmosphere of acceptance and empowerment for LGBTQ people.

I'm There!

Now you've finished the training, so where do you from here?

In my every-day-life I can:

- Not assume everyone is heterosexual, and use inclusive and gender-neutral language to provide an environment for whatever level of self-identifying someone wants to share with me.
- Avoid and actively discourage anti-LGBTQ jokes, conversations, and situations.
- Create an atmosphere of acceptance and empowerment for LGBTQ people.
- Actively pursue education on LGBTQ issues: read and ask questions.
- Accept all people, regardless of sexual identity or gender identification/expression, as having the right to safety and happiness.
- Acknowledge and take responsibility for my own socialization, prejudice, and privilege.
- Educate others, both in classrooms and in one-on-one situations.
- Interrupt prejudice and take action against oppression even when people from the target group are not there.
- Have a vision of a healthy, multi-cultural society that is free of oppression.

At my campus I can:

- Provide a safe, knowledgeable, compassionate, and confidential place on campus for LGBTQ people.
- Believe that concerns or problems brought to me are valid and deserve attention and follow up.
- Be aware of the resources available for LGBTQ people on campus.
- Assist in any way I can if someone needs an ally to intervene or express concern.
- Encourage my colleague to implement a non-heteronormative curriculum.
- Acknowledge that our educational system has heterosexist bias and work for systematic change.
- Support grants and research for LGBTQ issues, and fight discrimination against people who do such work.
- Make careful and thought out referrals.

- Work towards a diverse and multi-cultural university where all are respected.

Exercises:

- Take a step forward
- True or false statements
- Normative thinking (BRYT!)

References:

The Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

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