Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA® Programs
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As a core value, the NCAA believes in and is committed to diversity, inclusion and gender equity among its student-athletes, coaches and administrators. We seek to establish and maintain an inclusive culture that fosters equitable participation for student-athletes and career opportunities for coaches and administrators from diverse backgrounds. Diversity and inclusion improve the learning environment for all student-athletes and enhance excellence within the Association.

The Office of Inclusion will provide or enable programming and education, which sustains foundations of a diverse and inclusive culture across dimensions of diversity including, but not limited to age, race, sex, class, national origin, creed, educational background, disability, gender expression, geographical location, income, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation and work experiences.

Adopted by the NCAA Executive Committee, April 2010

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NCAA web page for this and other LGBTQ resources: www.ncaa.org/lgbt (NCAA membership login required)
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Appendix 1: Sexual Orientation and Gender Definitions and Terminology
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Part 3: Appendixes

Appendix 5: Campus Pride Report Score Card

Appendix 5: Campus Pride Report Score Card
Introduction

Where the public discussion of lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) issues was once taboo, the mainstream and educational media now address these topics with increasing frequency. Likewise, the inclusion of LGBTQ students on college campuses is now an integral part of the institutional diversity and inclusion mission in schools across the United States. LGBTQ issues join institutional efforts to address race, gender, disability and other issues of diversity designed to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to achieve their academic goals in a climate of respect.

Reflecting changes toward greater visibility and acceptance in the larger culture, more LGBTQ student-athletes are open about their sexual orientations and gender identities. At the same time, their heterosexual peers are increasingly comfortable with LGBTQ teammates and coaches. These changes are, in part, the result of more student-athletes having attended high schools in which LGBTQ students, teachers, parents and coaches are visible members of the community. Consequently, more student-athletes know LGBTQ friends, teachers, coaches and family members.

In addition, increasing numbers of professional and college athletes are speaking publicly in support of LGBTQ inclusion in sport and against anti-LGBTQ bullying in schools. The visibility of these athletes, both nationally and in their local communities, provides role models for younger student-athletes and sets examples of respect and support for coaches and parents. At the same time, when professional or collegiate student-athletes and coaches make anti-LGBTQ comments or use derogatory language in competitions or in social media, they are more likely to encounter public disapproval and negative sanctions from fans and sports league officials.

Ten years ago few resources were available for college athletics programs, coaches or athletics administrators to assist them in developing policies that promote respect for and inclusion of athletes of different sexual orientations and gender identities. Instead, individual coaches and athletics administrators relied on their own experiences and personal beliefs to fashion policies governing the inclusion of LGBTQ student-athletes. Many coaches had no policies at all and remained silent in response to anti-LGBTQ beliefs and actions on and off the field.

Today, resources are available and can provide guidance to make college sports inclusive and respectful for all participants. Increasing numbers of intercollegiate athletics departments are publicly affirming their commitment to the inclusion of LGBTQ people in sports and adopting effective policies and practices to make this commitment a reality.

Despite these positive changes, challenges remain. Many colleges have not addressed LGBTQ inclusion in athletics. This inaction often results
in an athletics climate where LGBTQ administrators, student-athletes and coaches are highly visible members of the school community, discrimination can negatively affect athletes and academic achievement. In addition, when athletics departments are not proactive in addressing LGBTQ issues, many straight members of the athletics department who privately support the inclusion of LGBTQ people remain silent out of fear of association or reprim. In this silence, negative recruiting based on perceived or actual sexual orientation remains a far too common practice in women’s sports and anti-LGBT name-calling or taunting is the norm at far too many intercollegiate competitions, on practice fields and in locker rooms. A recent study of the athletics climate for student-athletes reports that LGBTQ student-athletes experience a more negative climate than their straight peers do. Moreover, LGBTQ student-athletes report experiencing twice the amount of hostile or exclusionary conduct that their straight peers report.1

In addition to this responsibility, coaches and student-athletes have the opportunity to participate in a safe, inclusive and respectful climate where they can come to a healthy and comfortable identity for themselves without fear or external pressures. In which they can come to a healthy and comfortable identity for themselves which represents the institutional values of the schools they represent. This commitment includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. The NCAA is committed to an intercollegiate athletics experience in which student-athlete health and well-being are the highest priority. This commitment includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. This includes the physical, social and psychological well-being of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions.
athletes with opportunities to broaden their understanding of their place in an increasingly diverse society.

Though participation in intercollegiate athletics is about more than winning, striving to win is central to athletics. Creating a team climate of respect that enables every team member to contribute or his or her best, regardless of the goals he or she seeks to advance, is central to values that embody respect and inclusion as integral to that definition. When team members or coaches must hide important parts of their identities, or are treated disrespectfully, or are not included as a valued member of the team or school community, they are unable to bring their best effort to the team or to the classroom.

In addition to the responsibilities that coaches and other athletics leaders have to teach and communicate a climate of respect, they have unique opportunities to affect the lives of student-athletes. Student-athletes respect their coaches, and most former student-athletes remember their coaches for more than what they learned about winning and losing. Coaches are mentors who can have an impact beyond winning championships. For many student-athletes, coaches may be the only role models they have to maintain a climate of respect, they have the opportunity to affect the lives of student-athletes. Student-athletes respect their coaches, and most former student-athletes remember their coaches for more than what they learned about winning and losing. Coaches are mentors who can have an impact beyond winning championships.

When coaches take the opportunity to lead by the example of their own behavior, what they say and what they do, they have the opportunity to help student-athletes redefine what it means to be a champion in ways that embody respect and inclusion as integral to that definition.

Finally, we must address LGBTQ issues in sports because some traditions long accepted in athletics do not promote or reflect a culture of inclusion, diversity or respect. Practices such as LGBTQ or sexist name-calling as a way to taunt opponents or shame poorly performing team members, team hazing rituals, home spectator humiliation and disrespect as part of the game rather than the divisive and destructive distractions that they are.

Addressing LGBTQ issues in athletics is not just for the benefit of participants who identify as LGBTQ. Creating a climate of respect and inclusion benefits everyone. Some straight athletes have family members or close friends who are LGBTQ, and when teammates or coaches make derogatory comments about LGBTQ people, it affects these straight athletes, too. Straight athletes also benefit from the ability to work together respectfully as a part of a team that includes diverse members. Straight athletes who embrace respect and inclusion as personal values gain confidence in their ability to incorporate these values in their team, work and personal relationships.

The goals of inclusion and respect are sometimes misunderstood as promotion or approval of particular groups of people or value choices. In particular, some coaches or student-athletes express the concern that addressing LGBTQ issues as part of a team or athletics department’s diversity and inclusion agenda might offer some prospective high school recruits and their parents.

"At Grinnell College, our goal is to create a culture of acceptance and inclusion for students of every type, so that all students can create the best possible education. Rules and policies alone aren’t enough—they must be paired with a community-wide culture that internalizes our shared norms. It’s not about pretending that we’re all alike—because we’re not. It’s about understanding that our differences are a set of common values that are more important than our differences. Education is about understanding the value of learning about those differences.”

Raymond S. Kington, President, Grinnell College

It has been very gratifying to see the campus support for initiatives around LGBTQ issues that have been led by our student-athletes and coaches. In particular, having our Student-Athlete Advisory Council and athletics department staff spearhead Allies pledging-signing initiative has gathered nearly 2,000 signatures, demonstrates the potential that athletics has to galvanize various campus constituencies. The leadership they provided around publicly expressing one’s intent to respect and welcome all persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, has had a significantly positive impact at our institution.”

Kevin McHugh, Director of Athletics, Bates College

Coaches and student-athletes come from every religious and social perspective. Some coaches or student-athletes believe that LGBTQ behavior is sinful according to the tenets of their faith. Working toward the goal of inclusion and respect, it is important that athletics do not require that people renounce their faith or act in ways that are contradictory to it. Every coach, every student-athlete’s religious perspective should be respected just as every LGBTQ member of the team should be respected. What is required is that every team member must agree to a common ground of respect, not necessarily agreement or even approval, in interacting with one another and in competition. The goal in an inclusive climate is that everyone on the team gives and receives respect to create an environment in which each team member can contribute his or her best effort to reach team goals.

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The Role of Straight Allies in Making Athletics Inclusive and Respectful for All Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities/Expressions

Allies, in the context of advancing diversity and inclusion, are people who are members of a majority group who speak up and take action to ensure that all members of a community or team are treated with respect. For example, male allies are committed to gender equity in sports; white allies speak out to address the needs of coaches and student-athletes of color. Straight allies take actions to make sure that coaches and student-athletes of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions are treated with respect.

While many straight coaches and athletes believe discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression is wrong, straight allies take the next step by enacting this belief in their interactions with others, daily practices and team policies. The difference is that straight allies translate their personal beliefs into public action.

The participation of allies is an essential part of all diversity and inclusion efforts. In the past two years the emergence of straight allies in athletics has dramatically changed the conversation about the inclusion of LGBTQ people in athletics. Professional, college and high school teams and individual athletes are speaking out as straight allies in increasing numbers against anti-LGBTQ bullying and discrimination in and out of sports. These affirmative actions by individual athlete allies, teams and athletics departments reflect and reinforce a changing sports culture in which inclusion, diversity and respect are core values. Allies in athletics recognize that, when every member of a team is included and treated with respect, it benefits the team as well as every individual on the team. Straight allies take advantage of their leadership opportunities to provide positive examples and set the tone for a team climate of inclusion and respect for all.

How LGBTQ Issues Are the Same and Different on Women’s and Men’s Teams

Though homophobia, biphobia and transphobia1 in men’s and women’s sports are expressed in many similar ways, the inclusion of LGBTQ athletes and coaches on sports team has, historically, been framed as an issue primarily of concern in women’s sports. Part of this mistaken assumption is due to differences in gender expectations for men and women and confusion about gender expression and sexual orientation. Though much has changed over the past 40 years, athletics is still perceived by many as a primarily masculine activity requiring characteristics associated with men—strength, competitiveness, courage and muscularity, to name a few. As a result, athletic women who exhibit these characteristics are sometimes viewed as masculine and their accomplishments are sometimes discredited as not as important, interesting or outstanding as those of male athletes and teams. Moreover, athletic women who have historically been perceived as lesbians because of assumptions made about their sexual orientation and their gender expression are often treated as less masculine. This perception, in combination with the stereotype that gay men are not athletic or masculine, reinforces the notion that gay men are not tough or competitive enough to excel in sports, particularly team sports. When taken to extremes, these stereotypical gender and sexual orientation stereotypes for women and men lead to the assumption that all women athletes are lesbians and no male athletes are gay.

The use of the lesbian label as a negative association for women athletes and coaches has a long history of discouraging and stigmatizing women’s participation in sports. This association makes some women and their coaches defensive about their athleticism as they attempt to dissociate themselves and their sports from the lesbian label by accentuating their feminine appearance and heterosexual interests. In this climate, lesbians and bisexual athletes are encouraged or forced to hide their identities out of fear of discrimination or harassment. Though much has changed over the past 40 years, athletics participation and achievement are culturally approved for men and women and confusion about gender expression and sexual orientation stereotypes for women and men lead to the assumption that all women athletes are lesbians and no male athletes are gay.

As noted earlier, changes in the larger culture with regard to the perceptions of LGBTQ people and the provisions of legal protections against discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression are reflected in some positive changes in the athletics climate for LGBTQ student-athletes and coaches. Despite these positive changes, LGBTQ student-athletes and coaches continue to experience the negative impact of stereotypes based on gender or sexual orientation.

1 See Appendix 1 for definitions of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.
Examples in Women’s Sports

• Discrimination against lesbian or bisexual coaches and student-athletes or women who are perceived to be lesbian—coaches not hired or fired because of perceptions about their sexual orientation, student-athletes dismissed from teams, overlooked in the recruiting process or shunned by teammates because of perceptions about their sexual orientation.

• Lesbian or bisexual student-athletes may be ignored or shunned by teammates in social media, with graffiti, destruction of property.

• Lesbian or bisexual leopard or sexual orientation and details about their personal lives out of fear that it might negatively affect their employment, ability to recruit student-athletes to their programs, or relationships with administrators and colleagues in the athletics department.

• Lesbian or bisexual coaches alter their interactions with student-athletes or change their recruiting practices out of fear of discrimination or repercussion.

• Coaches use “negative recruiting” to discourage high school recruits and their parents from considering rival programs by insinuating that the coaches or athletes in that program are lesbian.

• Women athletes’ excessive emphasis on accentuating a feminine appearance (hairstyles, clothing, use of makeup in competition) to deflect lesbian assumptions about athletic women.

• Coaches who are not performing at the high school or college level may be discriminated against byacock or bisexual candidates for athletic coaching positions.

• Coaches describe their teams to parents and recruits in ways that suggest that lesbian or bisexual student-athletes are not welcome in the program (accentuating the masculine and family status of heterosexual coaches, adopt “no lesbian” policies, adopt feminine dress codes for the team).

• Athletics taunt or oppose team members with anti-lesbian or anti-gay language during competition.

• Teammates experience uncomfortable being around lesbian or bisexual teammates because of stereotypical assumptions that they are sexual threats to other women.

• Student-athletes insist that lesbian and bisexual teammates remain invisible out of fear that having openly lesbian or bisexual teammates will cause the entire team to be perceived as lesbian or bisexual.

• Lesbian and bisexual coaches leave the profession and lesbian or bisexual student-athletes leave sports because of pressures to hide or because of ongoing discrimination or harassment.

• Harassment and discrimination of lesbian or bisexual student-athletes is often personal and long-term, and they have no allies to confide in, to deflect lesbian assumptions about athletic women.

• Belief that transgender women should not be allowed to play on women’s teams.

Examples in Men’s Sports

• Assumption that if you are a male athlete, you cannot be gay or bisexual.

• Coaches use of anti-gay or female slurs to shame team members who are not performing up to expectations or to motivate and inspire team members to greater effort.

• Discrimination against gay or bisexual coaches or student-athletes in hiring, recruiting, or retention.

• Spectators use of anti-LGBTQ or sexist slurs to distract visiting teams.

• Straight student-athletes’ discomfort with gay or bisexual team members, especially in the locker room or sharing hotel rooms.

• Broadway male student-athletes’ fear of association with gay or bisexual teammates: People will think I am gay if I speak out against homophobia and bisphobia or befriend gay or bisexual teammates.

• Student-athletes often experience athletics teams as “second families” in which the relationships they build over the course of an athletics career are valued for a lifetime. When student-athletes feel isolated from teammates or coaches because of their sexual orientation or gender identity intensified by their race or class, they face unnecessary and often insurmountable challenges to reaching their potential in competition or in the classroom.

In Summary

The introduction and Part 1 of this resource guide provide an overview and discussion of the importance of addressing LGBTQ issues in athletics. Perhaps the simplest and most compelling reason for intercollegiate athletics programs to take proactive steps to create and maintain an inclusive and respectful climate for student-athletes and coaches of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions is that this is the right thing to do. Every student-athlete and coach should have the opportunity to reach their athletic and academic goals in a climate of respect. No student-athlete or coach/administrator should fear discrimination or harassment in athletics because of sexual orientation or gender identity/ expression. The focus of Part 2 is to identify specific best practice and policy recommendations toward the goal of making athletics inclusive and respectful for student-athletes, coaches and administrators of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions.
"As society becomes more inclusive, the need for LGBTQ resources in college sports increases. Coaches and athletics leadership are uniquely positioned to value inclusion and serve as unbiased role models to student-athletes and colleagues, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Acceptance is one of the greatest gifts a coach can give to a young athlete coming to terms with his or her sexual identity."

Nevin Caple, Founder of Br{ache the Silence Campaign; Former Women’s Basketball Student-Athlete, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Metropolitan Campus

Part 2: Policy/Best Practice Recommendations

This section of the handbook includes several resources intended to provide guidance and recommendations to athletics administrators, coaches, student-athletes and athletics conference leaders. The resources in this section provide broad recommendations for creating and maintaining an LGBTQ-inclusive athletics climate, as well as recommendations to address specific topics that athletics administrators, coaches or student-athletes often identified as areas of concern.
Overall Best Practices for Creating Inclusive Athletics Departments

Creating Inclusive Athletics Departments: Best Practices for Athletics Administrators

Overall Best Practices for Creating Inclusive Athletics Departments

- Learn more about prejudice and discrimination based on such differences as race, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and religion.
- Assume that LGBTQ people are on your athletic teams and among your coaching staff, even if they have not identified themselves.
- Monitor your beliefs or assumptions about LGBTQ people and commit yourself to evaluating others on the basis of their character and abilities, not their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Learn about LGBTQ issues in sport and how they can affect individuals and teams.
- Know what resources are available in your school and community for LGBTQ students, parents and staff.
- Know local and national resources and advocacy organizations for addressing LGBTQ discrimination or harassment in athletics.
- Identify print, video and Internet resources for addressing LGBTQ issues in athletics.
- Identify experts outside your school who would be available to provide resources and guidance to the school, team and/or to you.
- Be a visible and active role model of respect and fairness for your school’s coaches and student-athletes.
- Use language that is inclusive of LGBTQ athletes and coaches.
- Do not make anti-LGBTQ slurs, jokes or other comments.
- Put a Safe Zone sticker on your office door.
- Treat all student-athletes, coaches and parents fairly and respectfully regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
- Make clear to coaches and staff your expectations of respectful and fair treatment for all student-athletes and other coaches or staff.
- Make it clear to student-athletes and coaches that anti-LGBTQ actions or language will not be tolerated.
- If LGBTQ student-athletes or coaches identify themselves to you, respect their right to confidentiality and privacy.
- Be prepared to provide resources to parents or guardians of LGBTQ student-athletes, but always be careful not to out a student to a parent, guardian or family.
- Maintain an up-to-date coaches’ handbook for all coaches that includes school expectations for ethical coaching behavior, coaches’ legal responsibilities and specific school policies for which coaches are accountable.
- This is particularly important for part-time and volunteer coaches.
- Provide information about nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies and laws to athletics department staff and parents or guardians of student-athletes.
- Schedule educational programs about LGBTQ issues in athletics for student athletes, coaches, staff and parents.
- Encourage coaches associations, athletics administration associations, athletics conferences and sport governing bodies to provide educational programs and materials to members about LGBTQ issues in athletics.
- Develop and implement departmental policy governing the following LGBTQ-related topics in athletics:
  - Nondiscrimination statements that include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
  - Maintain an up-to-date coaches’ handbook for all coaches that includes school expectations for ethical coaching behavior, coaches’ legal responsibilities and specific school policies for which coaches are accountable. This is particularly important for part-time and volunteer coaches.
  - Provide information about nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies and laws to athletics department staff and parents or guardians of student-athletes.
  - Schedule educational programs about LGBTQ issues in athletics for student athletes, coaches, staff and parents.
  - Encourage coaches associations, athletics administration associations, athletics conferences and sport governing bodies to provide educational programs and materials to members about LGBTQ issues in athletics.
  - Develop and implement departmental policy governing the following LGBTQ-related topics in athletics:
    - Nondiscrimination statements that include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
  - - The participation of transgender/gender nonconforming students on sports teams.
  - - Anti-hazing policies that specifically address anti-LGBTQ practices.
  - - Anti-LGBTQ name-calling that is used as a motivation tool or to taunt opponents.
  - - Maintaining a religion-neutral athletics environment, particularly with regard to the participation of LGBTQ athletes or coaches.
  - - Appropriate sports spectator behavior, including the prohibition of homophobic chants, cheers and songs directed at the opposing team, fans or any individual student-athlete, coach or referee.
  - - Responses to college coaches who use “negative recruiting” based on perceived or actual sexual orientation when talking with high school student-athletes, high school coaches or parents of student-athletes (making negative comments about the sexual orientation of coaches or athletes at another college as a way to discourage high school students from considering that school).
- Through no fault of their own, our LGBTQ student-athletes, coaches and administrators have been underserved for far too long. The NCAA’s commitment to inclusion and its willingness to provide leadership in this area set the bar for athletics departments all over the country that want to both support and celebrate the contributions of all of its members.
- "Our country’s cultural attitudes toward the LGBTQ population continue to undergo a significant shift toward respect and celebration, it’s imperative that our athletics departments keep pace. In fact, many of our student-athletes are way ahead of us. From the GO! Athletes network to Athlete Ally, student-athletes have started the ball rolling. Through this resource guide and other efforts, we now have the chance to join them in support, and together we can create positive and respectful environments that help all LGBTQ members of our campus communities reach their full potential.”

Sarah Feyerherm, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Washington College (Maryland)
Preparing to beProactive

At the beginning of your sport season, make clear your expectations of respect for diversity among all members of athletic teams, including LGBT student-athletes and staff.

Communicate to student-athletes, staff and coaches that anti-LGBTQ actions or language will not be tolerated.

- Encourage the leadership of team captains and assistant coaches to set a climate of respect.
- Know campus resources for addressing LGBTQ issues (LGBTQ resource center, LGBTQ student group, counseling center).
- Set and make known team policies for such issues as: Gender-neutral dress codes.
- Intra-Team dating.
- The appropriate and respectful expression of individual religious beliefs by team members.
- Name-calling, bullying.
- Negative recruiting based on sexual orientation.
- Prepare inclusive and respectful responses to questions from parents regarding diversity or gender identity/expression on your team.

Respond

- Intervene to stop the use of anti-LGBTQ slurs or other disrespectful behavior among students on your team.
- Respond to address violations of team policies related to the inclusion of LGBTQ students on teams.
- Report negative recruiting targeting your school or program to your athletics director and conference officials.
- Report harassing behavior from spectators to your athletics director and conference officials.

Educate

- Arrange for an educational program for your team about name-calling and bullying.
- Encourage student-athletes on your team to attend athletics department programming on LGBTQ inclusion in athletics.
- Help promote enthusiasm and respectful sports fan behavior at athletic events.
- Recommend that coaches associations or athletic associations to which you belong sponsor programs on LGBTQ issues in athletics.

Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

CreateInclusiveTeams: Best Practices for Student-Athletes

Learn more about prejudice and discrimination based on such differences as race, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and religion.

- Do not make assumptions about teammates’ or coaches’ sexual orientation or gender identity based on appearance or stereotypes.
- Do not make assumptions about teammates or coaches based on their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
- Wear a pin, T-shirt or wristband supporting respect for LGBTQ people.
- Use language that is inclusive of LGBTQ coaches, student-athletes and staff (Don’t assume that everyone on your team is heterosexual).
- If you are a team leader, use your leadership role to set an example of fairness and respect for other members of the team, including LGBTQ teammates.
- Use your visibility and leadership role as a student-athlete in your school’s student-athletes’ group or the campus community to promote respect for diversity. If you or someone you know is targeted by anti-LGBTQ discrimination, harassment or violence, talk to someone who can help (a counselor, a coach, a teacher).
- Support LGBTQ members of your school who choose to identify themselves to others.
- Encourage your athletics department or coach to schedule workshops on LGBTQ issues in sport.
- Encourage your team to take a public stand for respect in athletics: Make a video, sign a pledge.
- Start a Safe Zone Campaign in your athletics department.
- Start an LGBTQ student-athlete group at your school.

Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

CreateInclusiveTeams: Best Practices for Coaches

Learn more about prejudice and discrimination based on such differences as race, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and religion.

- Rent the leadership of team captains and assistant coaches to set a climate of respect.
- Monitor your beliefs or assumptions about LGBTQ people, and commit yourself to evaluating others on the basis of their character, not on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

Show the Respect Behavior You Want To See

- Don’t use anti-LGBTQ put-downs or demeaning language of any kind.
- Use inclusive language that acknowledges LGBTQ people and does not assume that all student-athletes are straight.
- Get to know the leadership of your student-athlete group and campus support staff.
- Monitor your beliefs or assumptions about LGBTQ people, and commit yourself to evaluating others on the basis of their character, not on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

Respond

- Help promote enthusiasm and respectful sports fan behavior at athletic events.
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Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

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Champions of Respect

- Be familiar with school policies and local, state and federal laws.
- Use appropriate language when discussing sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
- Use inclusive language that does not assume that all members of the athletics department are heterosexual or gender-conforming.
- Be familiar with school policies and local, state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
- Know how to apply to athletics and what policies and practices within athletics are needed to be in compliance.
- Know what resources are available on campus and nationally that address LGBTQ issues in athletics.
- Attend sessions on LGBTQ issues offered at professional conferences or request such sessions if they are not on the conference agenda.
- Identify spokespersons or workshop leaders who can work with athletics staff to address concerns they may have about addressing LGBTQ and who can answer questions and provide guidance about best practices for creating team climates of respect and inclusion for all student-athletes.

Preparation

- Learn the meaning of the following terms: sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, transgender, straight ally (see the definitions list in Appendix 1).
- Use appropriate language when discussing sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in athletics: lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-, questioning, straight ally or LGBTQA.
- Be familiar with school policies and local, state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
- Include information about department policies, legal requirements and best practice expectations in orientation materials for new coaches and other athletics department staff.
- Develop an athletics department policy for the inclusion of transgender student-athletes. The inclusion of transgender student-athletes is essential to successful initiatives focused on the inclusion and respectful treatment of LGBTQ student-athletes and staff members.

Resources for Athletics Administrators

Talking to Coaches and Athletics Staff About LGBTQ Issues

Policy and Best Practices

- Develop an athletics department policy to ensure that all student-athletes and staff members are treated with respect and fairness regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
- Highlight the important leadership role that coaches and other athletics staff play as role models and mentors to student-athletes. This relationship with student-athletes provides coaches with an opportunity to influence attitudes and behaviors in making sports teams inclusive and respectful for all members.
- Remind coaches and other athletics staff that, as employees of an educational institution, they have obligations to educate student-athletes about more than excellence in athletics performance. They are also accountable for instilling values of respect and inclusion in the student-athletes with whom they work.
- Make clear that adherence to school and department policies about diversity and inclusion is a foundational expectation for all athletics department personnel.
Anticipation: What proactive strategies can athletics administrators and coaches adopt and implement to ensure all LGBTQ athletes, coaches, and staff feel included in athletics programs?

The field of athletics has long been a leader in supporting and encouraging diversity on the playing fields, from Jackie Robinson breaking baseball’s color barrier to the phenomenal impact of Title IX. By participating in the nationally recognized You Can Play Project, which supports the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender athletes, we have a responsibility to create and maintain climates for LGBTQ people.

As administrators and leaders on campus and in higher education, we have a responsibility to create and maintain environments that are inclusive and welcoming to all. When you have the opportunity to pursue excellence. At George Washington University, we are proud of all of our student-athletes and the LGBTQ community’s role in all facets of our intercollegiate education, we have a responsibility to create and maintain climates for LGBTQ people.

Policy: What current institutional and departmental policies and practices are in place to support the inclusion of LGBTQ student-athletes and staff?

Guidelines for Making Policy: What proactive strategies can athletics administrators and coaches adopt and implement to ensure all LGBTQ athletes, coaches, and staff feel included in athletics programs?

We are committed to celebrating and supporting LGBTQ student-athletes and to providing equal opportunities for them to play. At George Washington University, if you can play, you can play.\(^1\)

Suggested Institutional Policies and Practices To Protect LGBTQ Student-Athletes, Staff and Coaches From Discrimination and Harassment: A Guide for Athletics Administrators

- Create a standing diversity and inclusion committee of athletics department personnel and student-athletes that addresses issues of diversity and social justice in athletics, including LGBTQ issues.
- Create a “captains’ council” of team captains from all sports to assist athletics department personnel in the development of an athletics department more inclusive of LGBTQ coaches, staff, and athletics programs.
- Identify local and national resources for parents of LGBTQ student-athletes and staff to help them become straight allies in athletics.
- Develop policies and procedures for addressing parental questions about the sexual orientation of student-athletes, parents, coaches, teams or athletics department?
- Develop anti-harassment policies that address harassment based on perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity or expression specifically regarding student-athletes.
- Develop and implement anti-harassment policies that address harassment based on perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity or expression specifically regarding student-athletes.

Staying in Bounds: An NCAA Model Policy To Protect Antigay and Antitransgender Student-Athletes

- Develop policies and practices to protect LGBTQ Student-Athletes, Staff and Coaches From Discrimination and Harassment: A Guide for Athletics Administrators

- Develop policies and best practices covering the inclusion of transgender student-athletes and other recommendations for inclusion of Transgender Student-Athletes (for more information.)
- Encourage athletics associations and other sport governing bodies to develop similar policies, and encourage your coaches to take leadership roles on diversity issues within their respective professional associations.

Resources: What kind of resources are available in your school, community, or sport governing organizations for individual student-athletes, parents, coaches, teams or athletics department?

Suggested Educational Strategies:
- Conduct cyclical staff development programs (every year or two) for coaches and other athletics department personnel about best practices to address LGBTQ issues in athletics.
- Conduct staff development programs for all athletics staff about departmental and institutional nondiscrimination policies.
- Annually, provide all new athletics department staff, student,
Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

Athletics conferences play a key role in any efforts to ensure inclusive and respectful athletics experiences for student-athletes and coaches of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. In addition to providing resources and programming for their members, athletics conference leaders should adopt policies that apply to all conference member schools. This checklist can be a helpful tool in identifying actions that athletics conferences can take.

Structure:
Does your athletics conference:
• Have an inclusion committee that addresses sexual orientation and gender identity/expression as a part of its mission?
• Include reports at conference meetings on the activities and accomplishments of the conference inclusion committee?

Assessment:
Does your athletics conference:
• Encourage member schools to assess the athletics climate for LGBTQ students and coaches?
• Provide information and resources to member schools about how to assess the athletics climate for LGBTQ students and coaches?

Policy:
Does your athletics conference:
• Have a nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression?
• Have an anti-harassment, anti-bullying policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression?
• Require member schools to have nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression?
• Have a recruiting policy that specifically addresses negative recruiting based on perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity/expression?
• Have a policy for the inclusion of transgender students on sports teams?
• Have a policy on appropriate spectator behavior that specifically addresses anti-LGBTQ language or actions?
• Encourage member schools to include LGBTQ-inclusive policies in coaches’ and student-athlete handbooks and orientation programs?

Education:
Does your athletics conference:
• Sponsor educational programs or events on LGBTQ issues for conference leaders and university presidents or chancellors?
• Sponsor educational programs or events on LGBTQ issues for athletics directors?
• Sponsor educational programs or events on LGBTQ issues for coaches or other athletics staff?
• Sponsor educational programs or events on LGBTQ issues for student-athletes?

The Role of Conferences in Creating LGBT-Inclusive Athletics Teams

“As a Division III commissioner, I have been really pleased with the active role the Division III Commissioners Association has played moving forward the need for policy regarding participation by transgender student-athletes. Our conversations as an association began at the 2010 Convention, spurred by one of our members, and it became clear to us action was needed on the national level. I applaud the efforts made by the national office and the final product that ensures fair access and opportunity for a diverse group of student-athletes.

“The opportunity for participation is one of the most important elements of Division III athletics, so ensuring inclusion is imperative for us. While issues of competitive equity have been discussed, the overarching focus for the DIII commissioners has always been about the well-being of our student-athletes. People have such varying degrees of comfort about discussing LGBTQ issues, so to ensure safety and a positive experience, resources like this guide are critical.”

Julie Muller, Commissioner, North Atlantic Conference
Many colleges and universities have campus resources to address LGBTQ issues among students, faculty and staff. In addition to LGBTQ resource centers and student groups, these resources may also be available as part of multicultural or diversity centers, women’s centers, counseling centers, ombuds offices or other standing committees affiliated with the school administration or faculty and staff.

In addition to providing programming, support and information on LGBTQ issues of interest to the entire campus community, these resources can also assist athletics administrators, coaches and student-athletes to address the particular needs of student-athletes and coaches.

Developing a partnership with campus LGBTQ resource groups enables athletics administrators, coaches and student-athletes to take advantage of already available local expertise and information.

**Ways To Develop Partnerships With Campus LGBTQ Resources**

- Find out what LGBTQ resources are available on your campus.
- Post a list of campus LGBTQ resources on the athletics department website.
- Send a list of campus LGBTQ resources to all coaches and staff.
- Invite speakers from campus LGBTQ resources to talk to athletics department staff and student-athletes.
- Publicize campus LGBTQ events with members of the athletics department.
- Ask to meet with campus LGBTQ resource leaders to talk about how they can help to address LGBTQ issues in athletics.
- Have the athletics department participate in the campus Safe Zone program.
- Talk to campus LGBTQ resource leaders about ways to make athletics more inclusive and respectful for LGBTQ student-athletes and coaches.
- Invite campus LGBTQ resources to teach a lesson to the CHAMPS Life Skills class.
- Invite campus LGBTQ resources to meet with the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee to talk about partnering for an educational or visibility initiative.
- Partner with the campus LGBTQ resource center to organize an LGBTQ student-athlete group.
- Offer to provide speakers, panels or workshops on LGBTQ issues in athletics for campus LGBTQ events such as Pride Week or LGBTQ history month.
- Partner with campus LGBTQ resource groups to make an "It Gets Better" video, "You Can Play" video or some other LGBTQ visibility campaign.

Additionally, there are many organizations committed to inclusive educational and competitive environments for the LGBTQ community. Please refer to Appendix 2 of this resource.
The use of demeaning language as a casual put-down, a joke or an intentional insult contributes to a disrespectful and unsafe climate in athletics. Derogatory terms, such as those based on sexual, gender, national origin, race, disability or religious stereotypes, are never appropriate. Accepted in some athletics settings as “part of the game,” derogatory terms regarding sexual orientation or gender identity are sometimes used to taunt opponents, shame teammates, motivate a greater athletics effort, tease a teammate or express negative feelings toward other people or even objects (“That shirt is so gay”). Some coaches or student-athletes claim that when they use this kind of language they do not intend it as an insult to LGBTQ people or allies. However, the effect of using anti-LGBTQ language can create a disrespectful climate whether intended or not. Student-athletes who have not disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity, the climate perpetuated by the acceptance of anti-LGBTQ language by teammates and coaches as an indication that being open about their identities would not be tolerated or welcomed. For example, former Swimming and Diving Student-Athlete, Co-founder of Coaches Against Hate and former professional swimmer, Bobby Finke, says, “As a young gay man and an athlete, my athletics career, that helped me cope with identifying as a gay man and an athlete. My athletics career, while competing as a student-athlete, I was afraid of discrimination. Fear of discrimination from coaches is a primary motivation for student-athletes to conform to avoid being ostracized by teammates or discriminated against by coaches. The shifts in cultural acceptance of LGBTQ people are also signaled by a decreasing tolerance for anti-LGBTQ comments or use of derogatory language. Athletes who believe that other athletes are comfortable with and supportive of their LGBTQ teammates and coaches are more likely to feel safe and comfortable engaging the climate in athletics for LGBTQ coaches and student-athletes. The most important factor determining how an openly LGBTQ athlete is treated is the leadership provided by coaches and team members. The role of coaches and athletes in promoting inclusive and welcoming environments is essential. The most important factor determining how an openly LGBTQ athlete is treated is the leadership provided by coaches and team members. The role of coaches and athletes in promoting inclusive and welcoming environments is essential.
take a stand for respect, inclusion and openness, the team is more likely to see the athlete as someone they can trust. This is important to LGBTQ student-athletes because being open about their sexual orientation or gender identity may mean that they will lose the respect of their teammates if they are perceived as being different. The coach’s leadership in helping student-athletes to understand their own identities is an important part of making a team safe and respectful for everyone.

Recommendations for Coaches - Setting a Positive Climate for LGBTQ Student-Athletes To Come Out

• Don’t assume that LGBTQ student-athletes need counseling. They don’t need counseling if they aren’t experiencing any significant distress or social problems. If they feel distressed or if they are having relationship problems, they may need counseling. The coach should talk with the student-athlete about their concerns in a supportive and non-judgmental way.

• Respect the student-athlete’s right to privacy: Do not share information about the student-athlete without their permission. If you have concerns about their safety or well-being, you should report these concerns to the appropriate authority.

• If you have concerns about the student-athlete’s safety or well-being, you should report these concerns to the appropriate authority. This may include reporting it to a school counselor or counseling center or other appropriate authority and tell the athlete what you are doing. Be sure to connect the student with resources and support services in case the student-athlete wants to talk to someone and help the student-athlete make contact with that agency if she or he wants to.

• Identify web-based support or educational sites for the student-athlete.

Recommendations for Working With Teammates of an LGBTQ Student-Athlete Who Comes Out

• If individual student-athletes are uncomfortable with an openly LGBTQ teammate, talk with them about their concerns.

• Enlist the team captains’ assistance in monitoring team reactions and helping to set a positive tone of acceptance and respect for all.

• Offer counseling resources for student-athletes who are interested in learning more about LGBTQ issues in sports (books, websites, organizations).

• Reinforce the belief that being respectful does not necessarily mean approving of homosexuality, bisexuality or transgender identity.

• Reinforce your commitment to making sure everyone is respected on the team regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/ expression.

• Offer counseling resources for student-athletes who would like to address their discomfort or fear about having an LGBTQ teammate.

• Schedule a team training on LGBTQ issues in sport.

Recommendations for Coaches Responding to a Student-Athlete Who Comes Out To Them

• Thank the student-athlete for placing trust in you by sharing this information (and put yourself on the back for being a trustworthy, approachable and respected person in the student’s eyes).

• Don’t assume that LGBTQ student-athletes need counseling. They might just want you to know about them because they are tired of keeping secrets from someone they respect.

• Assure the student-athlete that sexual orientation or gender identity makes no difference to you in how the athlete is treated on the team.

• Ask the student-athlete if there is anything she or he wants you to do to support the athlete.

• Ask the student-athlete if she or he wants to tell the team, and if so, how soon you can help.

• Respect the student-athlete’s right to privacy: Do not share information about the student-athlete’s sexual orientation or gender identity with anyone unless the student gives you permission to do so (in addition to mandated reporter laws – if the student-athlete is in danger from others or him or herself, report this to a school counselor or counseling center or other appropriate authority and tell the athlete what you are doing). Be sure to connect the athlete with resources and support services in case the student-athlete wants to talk to someone and help the student-athlete make contact with that agency if she or he wants to.

• Identify web-based support or educational sites for the student-athlete.
Many LGBTQ coaches who keep their sexual orientation or gender identity a secret from their teams, athletics administrators, peers, and colleagues or other coaches are still targeted by discrimination based on assumptions that many LGBTQ coaches who attempt to hide their identities unfairly in hiring, retention, promotion and recruiting. Unfortunately, some athletics departments, it is understandable that they choose to avoid discrimination.

I was fortunate to be able to make my sexuality known to different people in my life both personally and professionally. Working in athletics, the fear of being judged by something that has nothing to do with my abilities or character and talent was overwhelming for much of my career. I chose to come out at an early age because I wanted my athletes to continue to view me with integrity and have a role model for living a life openly regardless of their sexuality. “Afterwards, I realized I had diminished my own potential to be an effective leader by being closeted for so long. Since coming out, I have had so many positive interactions in the sports community that I am saddened that any athlete, coach or administrator would feel the need to hide this aspect of their lives.”

Kirk Walker, Assistant Softball Coach, University of California, Los Angeles

Because discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity/ expression is real and because legal protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression is not available in most states, deciding whether to reveal one’s sexual orientation or gender identity is an individual decision that LGBTQ coaches need to make for themselves depending on their situation. LGBTQ coaches can use the following checklist to assist them as they make a decision about whether to come out at work. There is no formula for identifying the “correct” answers. Many factors can affect this decision, and their relative importance depends on each individual.

LGBTQ Coaches’ Coming Out Checklist

I coach in a state with a law that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
I coach in a school with a nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
I would use LGBTQ nondiscrimination laws or policies to challenge discrimination in athletics.
My athletic department sponsors programs about LGBTQ issues in athletics.
I believe most of my colleagues in athletics will react positively to my coming out.
I have a personal support system of family and friends who love and care about me.
I know my coming out will have no impact on my ability to coach or develop student-athletes.
I want to be a role model for other LGBTQ coaches and student-athletes.
I have a record of success in coaching.
I have colleagues at my school not in athletics who will support my coming out.
I believe most of my colleagues, student-athletes and athletics administrators assume I am LGBTQ already.
I have discussed coming out as an LGBTQ coach with my partner and family, and they support my decision.
I believe most of my colleagues in athletics will react positively to my coming out.
I believe I will be a better coach if I am open about being LGBTQ.
I believe I will never consider another coaching position in which I cannot be open about my sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

The benefits of coaching as an openly LGBTQ coach need to be considered and balanced with concerns about discrimination. LGBTQ coaches who come out to student-athletes, colleagues and administrators are able to commit more energy to being a great coach rather than worrying about keeping a secret. No one can be his or her best professional self while living in fear. Being able to bring all of who you are to your coaching also encourages more authentic coaching as an openly LGBTQ coach can be a role model for living a life openly regardless of their sexuality.

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The locker room can be a vulnerable place. As teammates are showering and changing clothes whatever insecurities student-athletes might have about their own body’s size or shape can arise because people do notice other bodies in the locker room and are aware of their own bodies. This awareness is not necessarily sexual, but the team locker room can hold many secrets about some people’s sexual orientations. When many people of the same sex spend time together in various stages of undress, in athletics a history of sexual violence to the locker room that might make them uncomfortable. Others may have religious beliefs that make changing clothes in the locker room uncomfortable.

For some student-athletes, particularly men, cultural conventions dictate that expressions of friendship for same-sex teammates must be carefully monitored to avoid assumptions of homosexuality or bisexuality. Being in the locker room with teammates sometimes requires that they avoid looking at others’ bodies or making jokes in the locker room from the occurrence of inappropriate actions by lesbian, gay or bisexual student-athletes or coaches (or anyone else) in the locker room. This discomfort is important in determining how to address this issue. If heterosexual student-athletes (or coaches) are uncomfortable with their own sexual identities, lesbian, gay or bisexual teammates or coaches, then the situation should be addressed as an education or counseling issue for the heterosexual student-athletes involved.

Knowing a teammate is gay, lesbian or bisexual can trigger homophobic reactions in some student-athletes. Sometimes student-athletes become uncomfortable in the locker room only after a teammate has come out. If they were comfortable in the locker room before they knew a teammate was gay, lesbian or bisexual, what makes them uncomfortable now that they know? The source of their discomfort in this case can be easily attributed to their own assumptions rather than the actions of their gay, lesbian or bisexual teammates since nothing has changed except their knowledge that one of their teammates is LGBTQ. The truth is that most student-athletes have spent time in locker rooms with lesbian, gay and bisexual people. They just did not know it because their LGBTQ teammates did not choose to identify themselves.

In reality, lesbian, gay and bisexual student-athletes and coaches in the locker room are thinking about the same things that their heterosexual teammates or that they are looking at their teammates in a sexualized manner.

Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

• When developing policy governing locker room behavior, the key issue is to be sure that policy is based on broad principles of fairness and commitment to safety for all and not on fear or stereotypes about lesbian, gay or bisexual people.
• Develop and enforce sexual harassment policy that applies to all regardless of sexual orientation or gender.
• Educate student-athletes and coaches and other athletics staff about sexual harassment policy so that they know their rights and responsibilities.
• Educate student-athletes about LGBTQ issues – address fears or stereotypes about the presence of LGBTQ people in the locker room.
• Make a privacy area for changing clothes and showering for any student-athletes to use.
• Make parents who express concerns about LGBTQ people in the locker room aware of expectations of respectful treatment for all including nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Recommendations for Addressing Concerns About Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender Student-Athletes or Coaches in the Locker Room

• Educate student-athletes and coaches on LGBTQ issues – address fears or stereotypes about the presence of LGBTQ people in the locker room.
• Make a privacy area for changing clothes and showering for any student-athletes to use.
• Make parents who express concerns about LGBTQ people in the locker room aware of expectations of respectful treatment for all including nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
Managing Dating Relationships Among Teammates

Managing dating relationships on sports teams is one of the most pressing issues facing college coaches. Though this topic is currently of most interest to coaches of women's teams, as men continue to come out to coaches and teammates, it will be of increasing interest to coaches of men's teams, as well.

Perhaps many coaches’ response to the possibility of dating teammates can be summed up in the following statement from a coach, “I don’t care if the date was on the same day or not that the season started and don’t care about the relationship until after the season is over. I don’t care about the start and end of any dating relationships (whether same-sex or not) that have the potential to cause drama and trauma on a team. No coach wants a team to be embroiled in a conflict that sidetracks the season that the team is on track to win. A coach may well thought to do if they date each other as long as they get together before the end of the season.” The concern expressed here is that it is the beginning and end of the season, and what is at stake is the team’s success.

Identifying policies for dating teammates requires thoughtful consideration of how to structure a policy that is workable for all individuals on the team and is based on broad principles. The following suggestions are intended to provide coaches with guidance in identifying fair and effective policy:

- Develop a policy that applies to all relationship management issues.
- Frame intra-team dating as part of broader relationship management and is designed to contribute to the team’s success.
- Identify potential dating scenarios: dating teammates, dating with same-sex teammates, dating across gender.
- Determine whether to date a teammate: Is it good for the team? Is it good for the individual? Does it create conflict at the locker room door? Resolve relationship issues on your own time, not the team’s time.
- Define what is and what is not acceptable behavior; conduct yourself professionally when with the team, the team comes first. Conduct yourselves as responsible behavior; conduct yourself professionally when with the team.
- Identify what is expected of them as members of a team who must work together for the good of the team.
- Examine the competition and identify what is expected of them as members of a team who must work together for the good of the team.

The following statements are intended to provide coaching tips on how to respond to it when it comes to the coach’s attention and encourage honesty, responsibility and maturity from the members of the team who are dating and their teammates. This policy provides clear behavioral expectations for dating teammates, and these expectations are important for how to respond to it when it comes to the coach’s attention and guidance about how to manage their relationship. All of these consequences distract from the focus of the team and achieving competitive goals. For these reasons, prohibiting dating among teammates is not an effective or practical policy.

As with prohibiting dating among teammates, ignoring it has many negative consequences. Coaches often ignore the possibility of dating among teammates when they ignore the possibility of intra-team dating. Dating teammates have no guidelines about how to deal with it, which can lead to conflict at the locker room door. This approach does require that coaches overcome their own discomfort with talking about same-sex dating on the team and enables coaches to set a positive tone for the team’s response to lesbian, gay or bisexual teammates. This policy informs all team members about what is expected of them as members of a team who must work together for the good of the team.

Participation on a sports team is a workplace for student-athletes. As with dating in the workplace, they have responsibilities to the team and to the sport. They are expected to be a team member who is focused on contributing to achieving team goals. This focus on the team and what is good for the team should guide a policy allowing intra-team dating.

Possible Consequences for Failing to Meet These Expectations
- Loss of a scholarship
-øOmission of honors
-øOmission of awards
-øOmission of recognition
-øSuspension from the team
-øTransfer to another team
-øFailure to observe review expectations and consequences of not abiding by them.
-øDating teammates meet with a relationship counselor.
-øOne or both dating teammates are dismissed from the team for failure to abide by expectations.

Sample Rules for Dating Teammates (LGBTQ and Straight):

- If you need help resolving a relationship issue with a teammate or are uncomfortable addressing an issue with a teammate, share hotel rooms with other teammates, and sit with other teammates in team meetings.
- Respect Team Space: Avoid drama on team time. Leave relationship conflict at the locker room door. Resume relationship issues on your own time, not the team’s time.
- Maintain Team Focus
- Team-Oriented Climate and Helping Dating Team Members
- Omitting of honors
- Omission of awards
- Omission of recognition
- Suspension from the team
- Transfer to another team
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- Dating teammates meet with a relationship counselor.
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Team Captains Play an Important Role in Maintaining a Positive Team-Oriented Climate and Helping Dating Team Members

- Remind dating teammates about coach’s expectations and why they are important to the team’s success.
- Communicate with coaches when dating teammates need to be addressed.
Coach Behavioral Expectations

• Expect all team members to exhibit respect during the season. Be proactive. Don’t wait for a crisis.
• Treat all dating relationships the same way.
• Expect the same level of commitment to the team from gay and straight players in dating relationships.
• Expect all team members to set and honor their commitments to respect teammates and the team space.
• Identify campus resources who can provide assistance or counseling to team members having relationship issues – dating or otherwise.

What About Sharing Hotel Rooms?

• Rotate room assignments so all teammates share a room with everyone on the team during the season. This helps teammates get to know one another and discourages cliques of any kind.

What About the Locker Room?

• Expect everyone to treat everyone else with respect. The locker room is part of team time, and all expectations for dating teammates apply.
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• Provide private changing space in the locker room for anyone who wants it. Sexual harassment policies apply to everyone regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

Addressing LGBTQ Issues in Recruiting

Recruiting high school student-athletes is an important part of most coaches’ responsibilities. Both high school and college coaches play important roles in this process. College coaches are actively selling their programs to potential high school recruits and their families through a variety of personal and technological communications including home and campus visits, team media guides, team websites, email, text messages and phone calls to name a few.

A high school coach can play a key role in helping to bring a student-athlete to the attention of college coaches. High school coaches also communicate expectations to high school student-athletes and their families about the recruiting process and provide information about individual colleges and intercollegiate coaches.

The NCAA has rules and guidelines to regulate the recruiting process for the purpose of protecting the recruit and ensuring fairness. However, enforcement of these regulations is an ongoing challenge as the competition for top high school recruits intensifies in women’s and men’s sports. Unfortunately, some college coaches employ legal, but unethical tactics to land top recruits.

While the NCAA has rules and guidelines to regulate the recruiting process for the purpose of protecting the recruit and ensuring fairness, the competition for top high school recruits intensifies in women’s and men’s sports. Unfortunately, some college coaches employ legal, but unethical tactics to land top recruits.

The purpose of this resource is to identify some aspects of the recruiting process that can lead to unethical coaching practices based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. The goal of these unethical practices in the recruiting process is to play on or respond to parents’ and their son’s or daughter’s fear of or prejudice about LGBTQ people.

The following list includes aspects of recruiting and ways that these unethical practices can intrude on the process. This list can be used by coaches, high school recruits and their parents as a guide to ethical recruiting practices with regard to LGBTQ issues.

Team Media Guides, Contact Lists and Websites

• The coach's bio should focus on his or her coaching accomplishments and professional qualifications and experience. When personal information such as marital status or family photos of husband, wives or children are included in the media guide or on websites, this places LGBTQ coaches at a disadvantage since it is likely that

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Sherri Murrell, Head Women’s Basketball Coach, Portland State University

"To all of them, being an openly gay woman’s basketball coach proved to be a subtle means of communicating that the coach is heterosexual. Until coaches of all sexual orientations can openly describe their relationships and families without fearing discrimination based on their sexual orientation, no coaches should be able to describe their marital or family status in official athletics department materials.

List all information about women coaches on athletics department contact lists equitably. Identifying married women coaches as ‘Mrs. Helen Jones’ and unmarried heterosexual or lesbian coaches as ‘Miss or Ms. Marsha Stuart’ is an unnecessary differentiation that indicates nothing about coaching abilities.

Team and individual photos should focus on action shots and photos of team members and coaches in uniform or appropriate street clothes they prefer. For women’s teams, avoid posed or contrived photos that are designed to highlight team members’ femininity or sex appeal.

"I know firsthand how homophobic college sports can be. There is an underlying fear of being openly gay in college sports. I have had nothing but positive support from my team, my administration and other athletes and coaches. They all have accepted me for who I am and treat me with the utmost respect. They value my honesty. My fellow coaches and the NCAA coaches are ‘definitely on board’. This is why I coach and the NCAA coaches continue to make a difference in the profession I love so much.”
Champions of Respect is a blatantly discriminatory practice that places coaches at odds with the message that there are no lesbians or gay men in your program. This is your program in ways that are intended to convey the direct or indirect impression that there are no gay or lesbian athletes or coaches at your institution. When looking at a recruit’s high school records, do not use her or his membership in a school Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) club to discount her or his desirability as a member of your team. Focus on a recruit’s athletic ability and academic accomplishments and how that is relevant to your team’s style of play and future needs. Do not recruit by her or his gender expression. Clothing preferences, or masculine or feminine appearance should not determine an athlete’s attractiveness as a recruit.

Responding to Questions About Lesbians, Bisexuals, Gay Men and Transgender People on the Team:

• Respond in ways that convey a belief that fairness and respect are important values in your program, not their physical attractiveness, sexual orientation or gender expression. Length of hair, clothing preferences, or feminine or masculine appearance should not determine an athlete’s attractiveness as a recruit.

• Make sure all coaches, athletes and other athletics staff involved in the recruiting process understand expectations for an ethical and inclusive recruiting process.

• As a general rule, do not host, and do not bar, lesbian or gay team members from hosting recruits.

• Plan activities that do not assume heterosexuality or require an escort of the opposite sex.

• Plan activities that you would be proud to see reported in the local media.

• We do not tolerate “alternative lifestyles” or lesbians or gay men as athletes or coaches.

• We have a “Christian” or “moral” environment.

• We have “pro-family” environment on our team.

• We have a “Christian” or “moral” environment.

• We do not tolerate “alternative lifestyles” or lesbians or gay men as coaches on our team.

• Do not be apologetic about or lie about the possibility or actuality of LGBTQ coaches and athletes on the team.

• Respond in ways that convey that fairness and respect are important values on your team.

• Be prepared for these questions so that you can respond calmly and clearly.

• Ask what prompts the concern/quest? Deal with the root. Put the onus on the parent or recruit to explain what is behind the question.

• Do not tell them that LGBTQ athletes are not allowed on the team. It is unfair, discriminates, and probably not true.

• If your school has a nondiscrimination policy or your state has a nondiscrimination policy that protects LGBTQ employees, you may want to let them know.

• Tell them that the athletics department supports and is responsible for a fair and inclusive environment for everyone on your team.

• Point out that successful, ethical and respected coaches include people of different sexual orientations (as do unethical ones).

• Do not feel you need to be apologetic about the possibility or actuality of LGBTQ coaches and athletes on the team. This is inappropriate and probably not true.

• Don’t be apologetic about or lie about the possibility or actuality of LGBTQ coaches and athletes on the team.

• For abiding by these policies or laws.

• Tell them your athletics department supports and is responsible for a fair and inclusive environment for everyone on your team.

• This changes from year to year. Each team has a different profile.

• Focus on the importance of respect and fairness for everyone on the team. Tell them that your goal is to build a successful team that is unified in purpose in terms of athletic and academic goals and respectful of individual differences.

• Emphasize that no matter where athletes go to school, they will be exposed to people who are different from them, just as they will when they join the work world after school. Working as a team with people who are different prepares athletes for a future in a diverse world.

Responding to Questions About a Coach’s Sexual Orientation: This is an inappropriate question and, any attempts to address this question for what it is or to elicit the effects of homophobia in sports. Put the onus on the asker to tell you why the person wants to know. Say you believe that coaches and athletics programs should be evaluated, not on the race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. of the coaches they hire.

• Parents or athletes who ask this question do so based on stereotypes or prejudicial beliefs about homosexuality. Don’t buy into this. Ask yourself if you believe that parents or athletes who need to know this are coming to school to be happy on your team, how would they contribute to or detract from a team climate based on respect for everyone.

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• Emphasize that no matter where athletes go to school, they will be exposed to people who are different from them, just as they will when they join the work world after school. Working as a team with people who are different prepares athletes for a future in a diverse world.
Make it clear that you believe that your coaching credentials and accomplishments and your ethical standards are most important and that you want to be judged on these criteria rather than your sexual orientation.

For Men Coaches of Women’s Teams (Heterosexual, BiseXual or Gay): Parents might express a preference for male coaches either because they subscribe to the stereotype that men are better coaches or because they believe that having a male coach eliminates the possibility of their daughter playing for a lesbian coach.

• Tell them you believe that all coaches regardless of sexual orientation or gender have the same obligation to treat athletes ethically and professionally.

• Make it clear that you believe that your coaching credentials and accomplishments and your ethical standards are most important and that you want to be judged on these criteria.

Readers might ask what is wrong with describing a coach’s family or marital status. Describing climate is a part of who you are. We all have families we want to share, and it shows that coaches have a life outside of their work. It is not necessary for heterosexual coaches to hide their families, but they can be sensitive to the privilege of openness they have that many lesbian and gay coaches do not.

The problem is that homophobia and the real threat of discrimination prevent them from speaking about their families and partners. Until all coaches can openly talk about their lives and partners without this threat, heterosexual coaches should be thoughtful about the privilege they have to be open about their life partners and families and avoid using their heterosexual status as a recruiting tool.

Fortunately, times are changing. More lesbian and gay coaches are open about themselves and their families with team members and their parents. More parents and team members believe that the coach’s sexual orientation is not a consideration when choosing an athletics program. Coaches need this transparency to get real answers to their questions.

Parents might also be sensitive to the privilege of openness they have that many lesbian and gay coaches do not.

Coaches

1. Focus recruiting information on positive information about your own school.
2. Refrain from giving negative information of any kind about other schools, their athletics programs, personnel or student-athletes.
3. Refrain from criticizing that another team has an unethical practice.
4. Tell parents that your school has a nondiscrimination policy that protects all students.
5. Be proactive: Tell parents and recruits that your team is respectful to different religious, racial, ethnic groups, economic classes and sexual orientations and that the core value on your team is respect for one another. Tell them this is an integral part of the athletics experience at your school.
6. Tell parents that your school has a nondiscrimination policy that protect all students.
7. If parents or recruits tell you another coach has given them negative information about your program, report this to your athletics director. Call the coach directly. Ask if the parent would be willing to talk to your AD about it.
8. If parents or recruits tell you another coach has given them negative information about your program, report this to your athletics director. Call the coach directly. Ask if the parent would be willing to talk to your AD about it.
9. Push for your athletics conference to develop guidelines on negative recruiting.
10. Talk to administrators from other schools when an incident of negative recruiting occurs and let them know that it is an unethical practice.
11. Cross that school off your list of possibilities and tell the coach and the athletics director you are doing so and why.

Parents

1. Talk to your son or daughter about negative recruiting and tell him or her it is an unethical practice the student should be aware of in case it happens when he is not present.
2. If a coach or a coach’s representative uses negative recruiting practices while interacting with you, report this to the athletics director.
3. Cross that school off your list of possibilities and tell the coach and the athletics director you are doing so and why.
4. Report negative recruiting to the university or college administration.

Positive Recruiting Guidelines for Coaches, Administrators, Parents


2. Parents

   • Have coaches read and sign a “coaching ethics” statement.
   • Educate coaches about expectations during recruiting.
   • Talk to administrators from other schools when an incident of negative recruiting occurs and let them know that it is an unethical practice.
   • Push for your athletics conference to develop guidelines on negative recruiting.
   • Ask for sessions at your national coaching association conference on negative recruiting.

3. Administrators

   • Make it clear and public policy on negative recruiting.
   • Include a statement about negative recruiting in a “coaching ethics” code.
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   • Educate coaches about expectations during recruiting.
   • Talk to administrators from other schools when an incident of negative recruiting occurs and let them know that it is an unethical practice.
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Champions of Respect

Religion and the Inclusion of LGBTQ People in Athletics

in their official capacity as “representatives of the state.” Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the climate for all team members is neutral with regard to religion. According to U.S. government policy, coaches are required to promote and foster a neutral climate. Coaches may not speak on behalf of their faith or promote religious activities in a public school or secular private school. The challenge in these schools is to reconcile the public faith of their team members with the professional responsibility to find a common ground of respect for differences among coaches and teammates in a religiously neutral climate. Coaches and other athletics staff in particular have a professional obligation to ensure that athletes are treated with respect and fairness regardless of their personal beliefs about sexual orientation and gender identity.

Potential Problems in an Athletics Setting

- Coaches-led team prayers.
- Team prayers led by student-athletes, while within governmental units, are religious in nature and not a part of a public school’s educational curriculum.
- Team attendance at Bible study, required or urged by coaches or team captains.
- Team attendance at prayer breakfasts, religious services or other religious events required or urged by coaches or team captains.
- Team attendance at religious club meetings required or urged by coaches or team captains.
- Coaches promising recruits and their parents that the team has a religious-based ethos or values.
- Invite one team member before each game to say whatever that individual teammate expresses an interest in such information. Even when religiously oriented team activities are not required, but suggested or offered as voluntary options by coaches or team captains, players may often feel pressures to participate. If religious activities are led by a coach, team captain or other team leader, these practices constitute a particular problem for fairness and equality. Many athletes (or assistant coaches) will not speak up to object to team prayers or other team religious activities even if they do not want to participate in them. This reluctance reflects a concern among all students about the opportunity to compete, a fear of creating dissent within the team or concerns about alienating themselves from coaches, team captains or teammates. Even nondenominational prayers assume all participants believe in a higher power and that all participants’ rights to be free of religious activities in the athletics setting.

Team captains also have leadership responsibilities among their peers to make sure all teammates are treated with respect and fairness, and private religious conversations in schools is a common ground where athletes and coaches of all spiritual and religious beliefs are governed by a commitment to respect, safety and fairness to members of the school community. 

This discussion focuses on religious expression in public and secular private school athletics, as religious freedom is an area of potential conflict in athletics that can affect individual athletes and coaches as well as the entire team. Religious perspectives on LGBTQ people are varied. Some religions believe that homosexuality and transgenderism are sins, while others believe lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are simply part of a broad spectrum of sexuality and gender identity and expression welcomed into the faith community. Many religious groups have adopted anti-discrimination policies even if they believe that homosexuality is a sin. Others believe homosexuality and transgenderism are sins and engage in activities of evangelism or prayer to recruit others who are gay or do not share their religious beliefs.

Practices or Policies That Promote a Respectful and Inclusive Athletics Climate

- Team activities that respect and include religious diversity.
- A team moment of silence before practice or games.
- Invites one team member before each game to say whatever that individual teammate expresses an interest in such information.
- Team captains or student-athletes trying to convert coaches or student-athletes who are gay or do not share their religious beliefs.
- Coaches promising recruits and their parents that the team has a religious-based ethos or values.

For coaches, team captains and other team members who believe homosexuality or transgenderism is sin, the challenge in a public or secular private school is to reconcile their personal beliefs with their professional responsibility to find a common ground of respect for differences among coaches and teammates in a religiously neutral climate. Coaches and other athletics staff in particular have a professional obligation to ensure that athletes are treated with respect and fairness regardless of their personal beliefs about sexual orientation and gender identity.

Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

- Practices or policies that promote a respectful and inclusive athletics climate.
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Social Media Guidelines and the Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes

Guiding Principles

- Each athletics department trusts and expects its student-athletes, coaches, and administrators to exercise personal responsibility whenever they use social media, which includes not violating the trust of those with whom they are engaging.
- All members of an athletics program using social media should be conscious of their position as public role models and representatives of their school, department and team.
- Always avoid demeaning language when using social media. Words such as “tagot,” “dyke,” “trans,” or other language used as taunts or expressions of hostility or disapproval reflect poorly on those who use them and their athletics departments and are offensive to LGBTQ people and straight allies.
- Only those specifically designated to do so may use social media to speak on behalf of an athletics department or university in an official capacity, through individual student-athletes, coaches and administrators may use social media to address personal matters.
- Members of an athletics community are responsible for making sure that their online activities do not interfere with their ability to fulfill their academic, athletic, or professional commitments or to represent of their school.
- Athletics departments are responsible for ensuring that all student-athletes, coaches and administrators have received and agreed to abide by department social media guidelines in writing.

Race, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression in Athletics

Addressing discrimination and prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning student-athletes, staff and coaches requires a broader understanding of how other identities besides sexual orientation or gender identity affect LGBTQ experience. Individuals are more than their sexual orientation or gender identity. Race, economic class, and religion are among the many other aspects of social identity that add to the complexity of discrimination and prejudice faced by LGBTQ student-athletes. The intersections of these identities complicate the experiences of LGBTQ people in athletics and make the experiences of individual LGBTQ student-athletes and coaches different from one another.

Because of the intersections of these different identities, it is important not to assume that all LGBTQ student-athletes, staff and coaches exercise and experience the same level of privilege or discrimination in the same ways. A lesbian student-athlete whose mother can afford to pay for her college education will not experience the same level of privilege in athletics as a gay athlete whose family religious beliefs condemn homosexuality. Both are threats to LGBTQ relatives and family members. LGBTQ student-athletes of color often can develop support system and friendship networks that are different than those of their white peers. However, sometimes it is contingent on their willingness to hide their sexual orientation, as they fear being judged and ostracized. Similar experiences may be had by LGBTQ student-athletes of color who are open about their sexuality, as long as they are not open about their sexual orientation. However, the psychological costs of keeping one’s sexual orientation secret are high and can affect their athletic performance.

Addressing discrimination and prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning student-athletes, staff and coaches requires a broader understanding of how other identities besides sexual orientation or gender identity affect LGBTQ experience. Individuals are more than their sexual orientation or gender identity. Race, economic class, and religion are among the many other aspects of social identity that add to the complexity of discrimination and prejudice faced by LGBTQ student-athletes. The intersections of these identities complicate the experiences of LGBTQ people in athletics and make the experiences of individual LGBTQ student-athletes and coaches different from one another.

Because of the intersections of these different identities, it is important not to assume that all LGBTQ student-athletes, staff and coaches exercise and experience the same level of privilege or discrimination in the same ways. A lesbian student-athlete whose mother can afford to pay for her college education will not experience the same level of privilege in athletics as a gay athlete whose family religious beliefs condemn homosexuality. Both are threats to LGBTQ relatives and family members. LGBTQ student-athletes of color often can develop support system and friendship networks that are different than those of their white peers. However, sometimes it is contingent on their willingness to hide their sexual orientation, as they fear being judged and ostracized. Similar experiences may be had by LGBTQ student-athletes of color who are open about their sexuality, as long as they are not open about their sexual orientation. However, the psychological costs of keeping one’s sexual orientation secret are high and can affect their athletic performance.
coaches. However, many reasons related to racism and concerns about how their color and family make many LGBTQ individuals of color less likely to come out publicly. For example, religion offers an important and lifelong part of the lives of students of color as a personal and spiritual buffer to racism. If their religious community and family teach that homosexuality is a sin, then the possibility of acceptance by this source of comfort and support can be devastating. Coping with fears of rejection and condemnation can make it difficult for LGBTQ student-athletes of color to find support and inner peace. Consequently, finding churches, mosques or synagogues in which they feel accepted for who they are can be challenging. Though religion also plays an important part in the lives of white LGBTQ student-athletes, staff and coaches, the added complexities of racism are not a part of their experience.

LGBTQ student-athletes of color are also at risk of feeling alienated from white LGBTQ teammates or LGBTQ school organizations. Some LGBTQ student-athletes of color prefer to refer to themselves as “same-gender loving” (Blacks) or “two-spirit” (Native American) as a way to differentiate their experiences from white LGBTQ people. It is important not to assume that LGBTQ people of color have the same experience of their sexual orientation as white LGBTQ individuals, it is also important to understand that the experiences of LGBTQ individuals of color are also different from one another because of these cultural differences. Lesbians and bisexual women of color face the combined effects of racism, sexism and heterosexism. Lesbians and bisexual women of color also must negotiate between society's expectations of (white) femininity and their specific racial and/or ethnic community's expectations of femininity. For example, black women are not held to the same standards of staying home with children as white women. Historically, it was not just not feasible to do so; thus, black women are provided with the opportunity, and sometimes the necessity, to work outside the home. Bisexual women athletes of color, especially black women, can lead to perceptions that they are “naturally” more athletic or artistic, masculine or sexual than their white teammates. These stereotypes are particularly demeaning for lesbian or bisexual black women athletes who are also subjected to stereotypes based on their sexual orientation.

Likewise, gay and bisexual men of color may aspire to different standards of masculinity than white LGBTQ men do or have different expectations of gender and sexuality placed on them. Closeted gay and bisexual male athletes of color often feel pressure to conform to more rigid stereotypes of masculinity to deflect suspicions about their gender and sexuality among white teammates and teammates of color. These stereotypes of women athletes of color, especially black women, are also different from one another because of these cultural differences. Lesbian and bisexual women of color face the combined effects of racism, sexism and heterosexism. Lesbian and bisexual women of color also must negotiate between society's expectations of (white) femininity and their specific racial and/or ethnic community's expectations of femininity. For example, black women are not held to the same standards of staying home with children as white women. Historically, it was just not feasible to do so; thus, black women are provided with the opportunity, and sometimes the necessity, to work outside the home. Bisexual women athletes of color, especially black women, can lead to perceptions that they are “naturally” more athletic or artistic, masculine or sexual than their white teammates. These stereotypes are particularly demeaning for lesbian or bisexual black women athletes who are also subjected to stereotypes based on their sexual orientation.

Much of the gender and sexuality expectations placed on LGBTQ student-athletes, staff and coaches of color are based on racial stereotypes. At the same time they are caught in the dominant culture’s stereotypes of women athletes of color, especially black women, are also different from one another because of these cultural differences. Lesbian and bisexual women of color face the combined effects of racism, sexism and heterosexism. Lesbian and bisexual women of color also must negotiate between society's expectations of (white) femininity and their specific racial and/or ethnic community's expectations of femininity. For example, black women are not held to the same standards of staying home with children as white women. Historically, it was just not feasible to do so; thus, black women are provided with the opportunity, and sometimes the necessity, to work outside the home. Bisexual women athletes of color, especially black women, can lead to perceptions that they are “naturally” more athletic or artistic, masculine or sexual than their white teammates. These stereotypes are particularly demeaning for lesbian or bisexual black women athletes who are also subjected to stereotypes based on their sexual orientation.

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Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

• Coaches of all races should participate in education programs about how race, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression affect the experiences of student-athletes.

• When sponsoring LGBTQ education programs for athletics department staff and student-athletes, make sure that the experiences of LGBTQ student-athletes, staff and coaches of color are specifically addressed.

• Invite a panel of LGBTQ athletes of color to talk about their experiences and describe how coaches and teammates can better address their needs.

• When people of color are isolated, depressed or having problems in classes, consider the possibility that questioning one's sexuality or dealing with an anti-LGBTQ climate might be among the issues with which individuals of color are wrestling.

• Make sure campus LGBTQ support and social groups address the needs of LGBTQ people of color and are aware of how racism and white privilege affect their programming.

• Ensure that campus support and social groups for students of color address the needs of LGBTQ people of color and are aware of potential heterosexism in their programming.

• Athletics department staff should identify resources within the department and within campus counseling services so that student-athletes of color can get help that is supportive of their individual needs, whatever they may be, and that they do not need to fear repercussions in the athletics department.
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The following policies clarify participation of transgender student-athletes undergoing hormonal treatment for gender transition:

• A trans male (FTM) student-athlete who has received a medical exception for treatment with testosterone for diagnosed gender dysphoria and is taking hormone treatments related to gender transition may participate in sex-separated sports. No exception for treatment with testosterone related to gender transition may participate in sex-sterne sports. Any transgender student-athlete who is not taking hormone treatments related to gender transition may participate in sex-separated sports.

• A trans female (MTF) student-athlete being treated with testosterone suppression medication for gender dysphoria and transsexuality, for the purposes of NCAA competition, may continue to compete in athletics as their birth-gender. However, they may not compete on a women's team.

• Any transgender student-athlete who is not taking hormone treatment related to gender transition may participate in sex-separated sports activities in accordance with his or her assigned birth gender.

• A trans male (FTM) student-athlete who is not taking testosterone related to gender transition may participate on a men's or women's team.

A trans female (MTF) transgender student-athlete who is not taking hormones as part of a gender transition should submit the request to participate on a sports team in writing to the director of athletics upon matriculation or when the decision to undergo hormonal treatment is made.

The request should include a letter from the student's physician documenting the student's intention to transition or the student's status transition if the process has already been initiated. This letter should identify the prescribed hormonal treatment for the student's gender transition and documentation showing progress toward the goals of treatment, if relevant.

The School's Responsibilities

The director of athletics should meet with the student to review eligibility requirements and procedure for approval of transgender participation.

• If hormone treatment is involved in the student-athlete's transition, the student-athlete should notify the NCAA of the student's request to participate with a medical exception request.

• To assist in monitoring and improving the student well-being and development of institutional policy and practice, a Transgender Participation Committee should be established. Members of the committee should represent a cross section of the student-athlete, faculty, staff, student well-being, general university, and include representation from the following departments: office of general counsel, health and counseling, faculty, academic affairs, athletics.

• All discussions among involved parties and required written supporting documentation should be kept confidential, unless the student-athlete makes a specific request otherwise. All information about and an individual's transgender identity and medical information, including physician's information provided pursuant to the student athlete's request, shall be kept confidential.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR TRANSGENDER STUDENT-ATHLETE INCLUSION

The following additional guidelines will assist colleges, athletics departments, coaches, teams, and student-athletes in creating an environment in which all student-athletes are safe and fairly treated.

Facilities Access

• Changing Areas, Toilets, Showers: Transgender student-athletes should be permitted to use the locker rooms, showers, and toilet facilities in accordance with the student's gender identity. Every locker room should have some private, enclosed changing areas, showers and toilets for use by any athlete who desires them. When requested by a transgender student-athlete, schools should provide private, enclosed changing areas and toilet facilities for the student's use, but transgender students should not be required to use them.

• Competition at Another School: If a transgender student-athlete requires a particular accommodation to ensure access to appropriate changing, showering or bathroom facilities, school leaders, athletics directors and coaches, in consultation with the transgender student-athlete, may make alternative arrangements at other schools before competitions to ensure that the student has access to facilities that are safe and comfortable. No public notice or notification should maintain the student's confidentiality. Under no circumstances should a student-athlete's identity as a transgender student be disclosed without the student's express permission.

• Hotel Rooms: Transgender student-athletes generally should be assigned to share hotel rooms based on their gender identity, with a recognition that any student who needs extra privacy should be accommodated whenever possible.

Language

• Preferred Names: In all cases, teammates, coaches and others in the school should refer to transgender student-athletes by a gender-neutral term or a student's preferred name.

• Pronouns: In all cases, pronoun references to transgender student-athletes should reflect the student's gender and pronoun preferences.

Dress Codes and Team Uniforms

• Dress Codes: Transgender student-athletes should be permitted to dress consistently with their gender identities. That is, a female-to-male transgender athlete should be permitted to dress as a male. A male-to-female should be permitted to dress as a female. For reasons unrelated to trans-inclusion, schools should evaluate the necessity of gendered dress codes and recognize that they tend to marginalize a range of students who may not feel comfortable with them. Dress codes for athletics teams when traveling or during a game day at school should be gender neutral.
Instead of requiring a women’s team to wear dresses or skirts, for example, ask that team members wear dresses or slacks that are clean, neat, well cared for and appropriately “dressed” for representing their school and team.

Uniforms: All team members should have access to uniforms that are appropriate for their sport and that feel comfortable. No student should be required to wear a gender uniform that conflicts with the student’s gender identity.

Education:

Institutions: All members of the university community should be educated about the need for policies governing the treatment of transgender student-athletes, develop such policies, and ensure that all schools in the conference understand and adopt the policies.

Opposing Teams/Universities: Athletics conference leaders should be educated about the need for policies governing the treatment of transgender student-athletes, develop such policies, and ensure that all schools in the conference understand and adopt the policies.

Athletics Conference Personnel: Athletics conference leaders should be educated about the need for policies governing the treatment of transgender student-athletes, develop such policies, and ensure that all schools in the conference understand and adopt the policies.

Opposing Teams/Universities: Without violating a transgender student’s right to privacy, school leaders, athletics directors, and coaches should communicate with their counterparts at other schools in their conference about what is appropriate, as opposed to what is inappropriate, in regard to transgender student-athletes.

Training: All school or athletics representatives (conference leaders, sports information departments and personnel, school leaders, athletics administrators, team members and coaches) who are authorized to speak with the media should receive information about appropriate terminology, use of names and pronouns, and expectations for creating a respectful team and school climate for all students, including those who may be transgender.

Medals: Training: All school or athletics representatives (conference leaders, sports information departments and personnel, school leaders, athletics administrators, team members and coaches) who are authorized to speak with the media should receive information about appropriate terminology, use of names and pronouns, and expectations for creating a respectful team and school climate for all students, including those who may be transgender.

Confidentiality: Protecting the privacy of transgender student-athletes must be a top priority for all athletics departments and affiliated school personnel, particularly when in the presence of the media. All medical information shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable state, local and federal privacy laws.

Enforcement and Nonretaliation:

• Any member of an athletics department who has been found to have violated this policy by threatening to withhold athletics opportunity or harassing any student on the basis of identity or expression, or by breaching medical confidentiality, will be subject to disciplinary action to correct the situation. Any member of the athletics department who becomes aware of conduct that violates this policy should report the conduct to the appropriate officer such as the director of athletics.

• Retaliation: Retaliation is specifically forbidden against anyone who complains about discrimination based on gender identity or expression, even if the person was in error. Athletics departments should take steps to prevent any retaliation against any person who makes such a complaint.

Legal Resources

Laws Addressing Discrimination or Harassment Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression

Several federal, state and local laws can be used successfully in athletics to decrease the disparity in funding, staffing and programming between women’s and men’s programs. Title IX has been interpreted to apply also when students are discriminated against on the basis of gender stereotypes. For example, when male students are harassed because they are perceived as “feminine,” or female students are harassed because they are perceived as “masculine.” Often these students are assumed to be gay or lesbian because of nonconforming gender expression, for example, when coaches tell female athletes to dress or choose hairstyles that are more “feminine.” Title IX has been used successfully in several cases to challenge this kind of discrimination.

State Nondiscrimination Laws

In addition to these two federal laws, several states have passed laws prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression (As of January 2012). Most of these laws address discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing. These state laws can be used to challenge discrimination against coaches or other staff members in athletics.


States prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation only: Delaware, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York and Wisconsin.

State Student Rights Laws

In addition to the state nondiscrimination laws, some states have enacted “student rights laws” that specifically protect students in schools from discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
Champions of Respect

staff from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Adopted inclusive nondiscrimination policies that protect students and gender identity/expression and can also be used to challenge unfair discriminatory treatment.

State constitution equal protection clause can be used to challenge based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, the

For states that do not have laws specifically prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation only: Wisconsin.

States with student rights laws prohibiting discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation only: Oregon.

Other State or Local Laws and Policies That Might Apply

For states that do not have laws specifically prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation only, Congress might consider enacting legislation that would

Several court cases, Title IX has been successfully used in this way. In Noelle v. Tonganoxie Unified School District, 377 F. Supp. 3d 1162 (D. Kansas 2025), Title IX formed the basis for a ruling supporting a male student’s claim discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, the state constitution equal protection clause can be used to challenge discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

Many municipal noniscrimination laws include sexual orientation or gender identity/expression and can also be used to challenge unfair harassment.

In several court cases, Title IX has been successfully used in this way. In Thermo v. Tonganoxie Unified School District, 377 F. Supp. 3d 1081 (D. Minn. 2000) the court ruled that the school district failed to protect a male student from harassment on the basis of his gender and perceived sexual orientation. The court ruled that, based on the assertion that gender stereotyping is another “method of proving actionable harassment under Title IX.” The court ruled that “the plaintiff was harassed because he failed to satisfy his peers’ stereotyped expectations for his gender because the primary objective of plaintiff’s harassers appears to have been to disparage his perceived lack of masculinity.” Similarly, in Montgomery v. Independent School District No. 709, 109 F. Supp. 2d 1081 (S. Minn. 2000) the court ruled that the school district failed to protect a male student from harassment on the basis of his gender and perceived sexual orientation. The court ruled that, although Title IX does not prohibit harassment or discrimination based on sexual orientation, it does prohibit harassment based on gender nonconformity. The court held that the facts supported the contention that the plaintiff was harassed “because he did not meet (the harassers’) stereotyped expectations of masculinity.”

In another case, Schrenner v. Maumee Board of Education, 296 F. Supp. 2d 869 (N.D. Ohio 2003), the court ruled in favor of a student who used Title IX to claim that his school showed deliberate indifference to verbal and sexual harassment because of his sexual orientation. The court cited a series of cases holding that targeting someone because of that person’s perceived sexual orientation was based on gender stereotypes and therefore a form of sex discrimination.

In Ray v. Antioch Unified School District, 107 F. Supp. 2d 1165 (D.D.C. 2000), the court ruled in favor of a student who was teased, called names and subjected to crude sexual gestures over a four-year period. The court ruled that he had been subjected to sex discrimination was based on the assertion that gender stereotyping is another “method of proving actionable harassment under Title IX.” The court ruled that “the plaintiff was harassed because he failed to satisfy his peers’ stereotyped expectations for his gender because the primary objective of plaintiff’s harassers appears to have been to disparage his perceived lack of masculinity.” Similarly, in Montgomery v. Independent School District No. 709, 109 F. Supp. 2d 1081 (S. Minn. 2000) the court ruled that the school district failed to protect a male student from harassment on the basis of his perceived gender and sexual orientation. He was teased, called names and subjected to crude sexual gestures over a four-year period. The court ruled that he had been subjected to sex discrimination was based on the assertion that gender stereotyping is another “method of proving actionable harassment under Title IX.” The court ruled that “the plaintiff was harassed because he failed to satisfy his peers’ stereotyped expectations for his gender because the primary objective of plaintiff’s harassers appears to have been to disparage his perceived lack of masculinity.” Similarly, in Montgomery v. Independent School District No. 709, 109 F. Supp. 2d 1081 (S. Minn. 2000) the court ruled that the school district failed to protect a male student from harassment on the basis of his gender and perceived sexual orientation. The court ruled that, although Title IX does not prohibit harassment or discrimination based on sexual orientation, it does prohibit harassment based on gender nonconformity. The court held that the facts supported the contention that the plaintiff was harassed “because he did not meet (the harassers’) stereotyped expectations of masculinity.”

In these cases Title IX was successfully used to address harassment, assault or discrimination targeting students whom their harassers perceived to be gay based on gender stereotyping. Most of the verbal harassment in these cases focused on the harassers’ belief that the targeted students did not exhibit the masculine behavior expected of them. The courts ruled that discrimination or harassment based on gender nonconformity is a form of sex discrimination and, therefore, Title IX applies. In Ray v. Antioch Unified School District, 107 F. Supp. 2d 1165 (D.D.C. 2000), the court ruled in favor of a student who was teased, called names and subjected to crude sexual gestures over a four-year period. The court ruled that he had been subjected to sex discrimination was based on the assertion that gender stereotyping is another “method of proving actionable harassment under Title IX.” The court ruled that “the plaintiff was harassed because he failed to satisfy his peers’ stereotyped expectations for his gender because the primary objective of plaintiff’s harassers appears to have been to disparage his perceived lack of masculinity.” Similarly, in Montgomery v. Independent School District No. 709, 109 F. Supp. 2d 1081 (S. Minn. 2000) the court ruled that the school district failed to protect a male student from harassment on the basis of his gender and perceived sexual orientation. The court ruled that, although Title IX does not prohibit harassment or discrimination based on sexual orientation, it does prohibit harassment based on gender nonconformity. The court held that the facts supported the contention that the plaintiff was harassed “because he did not meet (the harassers’) stereotyped expectations of masculinity.”
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patterns of discrimination or harassment prohibited by Title IX. Coaches of Title IX and their responsibilities to respond to individual incidents or administrators and athletics directors need to be aware of the requirements All members of school communities should be aware of Title IX. School Title IX also can provide protection to female students harassed or based on gender stereotyping associated with sexual orientation. In the cases cited here, for example, male students and their families successfully used Title IX to challenge discrimination and harassment based on gender stereotyping associated with sexual orientation. Title IX also can provide protection to female students harassed or discriminated against in similar ways. All members of school communities should be aware of Title IX. School administrations and athletics directors need to be aware of the requirements of Title IX and their responsibilities to respond to individual incidents or patterns of discrimination or harassment prohibited by Title IX. Coaches and teachers should be aware of their legal and ethical responsibilities to prohibit discrimination and harassment on their teams and in their classes, as well. Parents and students should be aware of Title IX's requirements and the procedures for using Title IX when discrimination or harassment based on sex or gender stereotyping occurs. The intentions of all civil rights legislation, of which Title IX is one example, is to eliminate inequity and to provide a “level playing field” where all people, regardless of individual or group differences, have access to the resources and opportunities they need to achieve personal goals in a climate that is equitable, safe and respectful. A student's sex, gender expression or sexual orientation should not be grounds for harassment or discrimination in any school programming. Title IX is an effective legal tool helping schools assure that all students are treated fairly and respectfully. School athletics should provide equitable and safe competition for all participants, male and female, gay and straight. Title IX can be an effective legal resource for challenging discrimination that threatens this ideal. Legal Resources
In addition to legal resources available in any community, several national and regional legal advocacy organizations can provide advice, informal assistance or legal representation for students or staff members who believe they have been discriminated against in athletics because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) sponsors a Sports Project that focuses on discrimination in athletics and sport settings. The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) Sports Project Helen Carroll, Director
www.nclr.org
Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) www.glad.org
American Civil Liberties Union www.aclu.org
Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund www.lambdalegal.org
What to Do If You Think You Have Been Discriminated Against on the Basis of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity/Expression
• If you are a student-athlete and you are out to your parents, tell them what is happening. Parents can be important advocates who support you in challenging discrimination.

• Keep a diary of everything that someone has said or done that you think is discriminatory. Include dates and times. If others were present when the incident occurred, ask them to support you if you challenge the discrimination or harassment.

• Find out what kind of legal protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression (see previous sections) apply in your state. If your state has no legal protections, consider the federal laws that might apply (see previous sections).

• Identify applicable school policies that prohibit discrimination or harassment.

• If available, consult with legal resources or the ombudsperson on your campus for advice.

• Consult with legal resources in your community or with one of the national advocacy groups listed in this section.

• Look for ways to creatively solve the situation informally: Meet with coaches or administrators. If this fails, consider more formal steps to resolve the situation like talking to the dean of students, campus ombuds office or university president. Consider bringing an advocate to the meeting (a parent, faculty member, friend or teammate).

• If these actions fail to resolve the situation, consider filing a lawsuit in consultation with legal representation.

• Remember you have a right to be treated with respect and fairness. When you stand up and demand to be treated fairly, you will help to make athletics a safe, respectful and fair place for others, too.

• Identify colleagues or teammates whom you can trust on and who will provide emotional support to you.

• Find out what kind of legal protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression (see previous sections) apply in your state. If your state has no legal protections, consider the federal laws that might apply (see previous sections).
It is more apparent how anti-LGBTQ discrimination and prejudice affect male athletes and coaches than it is for women. Some examples of anti-LGBTQ discrimination and harassment include the following:

• Pressure from coaches and teammates to hide their identities from the school community, media, potential recruits or fans. 
• A teammate or coach not talking about sharing the locker room, showers or hotel rooms with them. 
• Physical threats, violence or vandalism. 
• Verbal or online harassment. 
• Anti-LGBTQ slurs and anti-LGBTQ taunts from coaches, teammates or spectators. 
• Dismissal from teams or coaching positions. 
• Reduced playing time. 
• Discrimination in consideration for awards or recognition for athletics or coaching accomplishments. 
• Pressure to change hairstyles or dress to avoid appearing “gay” (or to appear more feminine for female student-athletes). 

In addition to the costs of anti-LGBTQ prejudice to individual heterosexual student-athletes, staff and coaches, men’s and women’s sports in general suffer. Many people, including some sports fans, perceive athletics to be a haven for everyone for heterosexual coaches and student-athletes to understand how they are negatively affected by homophobia. When straight student-athletes and coaches speak out as allies against homophobia in sport, it makes sports safer and more respectful for everyone, including heterosexual coaches and student-athletes.

Ways Homophobia Hurts Heterosexual Coaches and Student-Athletes

• Feeling the need to proclaim their heterosexuality, be heterosexually active to “prove” their heterosexuality and distance themselves from the possibility that someone might think they are LGBTQ. 
• Limits the possibilities for expressing affection to same-sex teammates and friends, especially for men, out of the fear of being seen as gay. 
• Feelings of shame or secrecy about LGBTQ family members. 
• Fear that association with LGBTQ friends or teammates will cause others to think they are gay, too. 
• Pressure to “go along” with the anti-LGBTQ actions of others to avoid becoming targeted by anti-LGBTQ jokes or slurs. 
• Self-imposed restriction of career choices, sports, dress, hairstyles, hobbies to exclude anything thought to be “gay.” 
• Punishments or negative consequences for violation of discrimination or harassment policies (loss of job, blacklisting, public censure, benefit). 
• Loss of respect of teammates, coaches and the public for anti-LGBTQ attitudes and behaviors. 
• Loss of relationships with LGBTQ family members, teammates, friends or colleagues. 

In addition to the costs of anti-LGBTQ prejudice to individual heterosexual student-athletes, staff and coaches, men’s and women’s sports in general suffer. Many people, including some sports fans, perceive athletics to be an unwelcoming place for LGBTQ people on campus. These negative assumptions about athletics, student-athletes and coaches are not accurate for most. What kind of assumptions do people make about individual teams, student-athletes, staff or coaches in your school?

Student-athletes and coaches are often highly visible in the school and community. Their athletics accomplishments are reported in the local media and community members attend their games. As a result, they have many opportunities to set examples for others, not just with their athletic abilities, but also with their treatment of others. Student-athletes can be leaders and allies who help to make their schools safe and respectful for everyone.

What Can Straight Student-Athletes and Coaches Do To Make Sports Teams Inclusive and Respectful for Participants of All Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities/Expressions?

• Stop using words like “Faggot” or “Dyke” or phrases like “That’s so gay” even in a joking manner. 
• Let teammates and friends know you don’t like to hear them use anti-LGBTQ slurs.
• If you have teammates who are LGBTQ, let them know that you are OK with that. 
• If you have teammates who are LGBTQ and other team members talk about them behind their back, don’t participate and let those doing the talking know you don’t like it. 
• If someone calls you gay because you object to anti-LGBTQ actions, don’t let this comment silence or intimidate you. 
• Join the school Gay-Straight Alliance and participate in events and activities to make your school a safer place for everyone. 
• Start an Athlete Ally campaign in your school. 
• Put Safe Zone stickers on your notebooks, car windows and locker. 
• Invite teammates to make a You Can Play video, take the Team Respect Challenge, or sign a pledge to be Athlete Allies for Respect. 
• Start an LGBTQ and Ally student-athlete group at your school.
Creating LGBTQ-Inclusive Team Honor Codes

Conversations about LGBTQ respect and inclusion in sport oftentimes exist outside the knowledge and comfort level of many college coaches, athletes and administrators for a multitude of reasons. This can especially be the case when a coach or athlete does not believe he or she knows anyone within the LGBTQ community. As such, the context necessary to get the athletics community as a whole to embrace and see LGBTQ diversity in sport, in part, relies on creating LGBTQ- or ally-inclusive honor codes.

In other words, to best curb the use of homophobic language within an athletics institution, what it means to be a representative of that institution must be synonymous with LGBTQ inclusivity. Most members of the athletics community would agree that competing for your college or university is only part of what it is to be a student-athlete. There are implicit standards of conduct expected of those who are the most visible ambassadors of our community. The concept of restorative justice holds that an offender incurs an obligation to restore the victim of the offense and, by extension, the community to the state of well-being that existed before the offense. In athletics, the arbiter’s of all restorations must be the coaches, officials and administrators in positions of authority to hold student-athletes accountable for their words and actions. By holding offenders accountable to victims, and fostering reconciliation between the offender, victim and community, coaches, officials and administrators are able to correct the instances in which students use degrading or demeaning language that would otherwise not be deemed major in nature. Restorative Justice Policy

When coaches, administrators, officials and other authority figures within the athletics community witness derogatory or demeaning language or actions, they shall:

- Ensure that the offender considers and understands the harm that his or her words or actions inflicted upon the recipient and the community.
- Ensure that the offender understands that derogatory and demeaning words and actions have consequences.
- Ensure that the offender specifically understands what impact his or her words and actions had on the victim and the community.
- Hold the offender accountable for restoration of the victim’s and community’s status before the offense, to the greatest possible extent.

Guiding Principles

Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs

Some sample honor codes from schools across the country. While none specifically mentions creating an LGBTQ-inclusive culture, all of them implicitly lay the foundation for it.

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Sample Honor Codes

- "As a member of the ______ community, I am responsible for upholding and promoting honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and justice in all venues of school life. To maintain personal integrity, I will not cheat, lie, steal, plagiarize, or diminish or degrade my peers. I will do my best to raise awareness of the importance of honor for the purpose of making ______ a better place to learn and work. I understand this honor code and will uphold my HONOR ABOVE ALL."
- "I will not lie, cheat, steal or degrade others, nor tolerate those who do."
- "No member of the ______ community shall take unfair advantage of any other member of the ______ community."
- "(School type of athlete) do not lie, cheat, steal or violate the rights of others. Therefore I pledge to uphold all standards of honorable conduct. I will report myself and others for any infraction of this pledge."
- "I affirm that I will uphold the highest principles of honesty and integrity in all my endeavors at ______ and foster an atmosphere of mutual respect within and beyond the playing field."

Responding to Anti-LGBTQ Language

It is recognized that not all instances of misconduct are serious enough to be dealt with at a level higher than coach. In such minor cases, resolution should be immediate, require no formal procedures, and involve relatively minor sanctions (that is, verbal correction). Such sanctions should be applied fairly and consistently using the guiding principles of restorative justice.

The concept of restorative justice holds that an offender incurs an obligation to restore the victim of the offense and, by extension, the community to the state of well-being that existed before the offense. In athletics institutions, the arbiter’s of all restorations must be the coaches, officials and administrators in positions of authority to hold student-athletes accountable to victims, and fostering reconciliation between the offender, victim and community, coaches, officials and administrators are able to correct the instances in which students use degrading or demeaning language that would otherwise not be deemed major in nature.
An increasing number of options are available for athletics conferences, athletics departments, student-athlete advisory councils and teams to make public their commitment to a climate of inclusion and respect for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. In addition to developing policy and providing education to ensure fair treatment and inclusion of LGBTQ student-athletes, staff and coaches, these visibility initiatives are an opportunity to make these commitments known to the campus and local community, as well as a national audience. Participating in visibility initiatives makes a commitment to inclusion and respect public and sends this message to young student-athletes, their parents and others who support intercollegiate athletics.

Visibility Initiatives

- **Athlete Ally Pledge:** Sponsor a drive to invite athletics administrators, coaches and student-athletes to identify themselves as athlete allies committed to LGBTQ inclusion and respect. [www.athleteally.org](http://www.athleteally.org)

- **You Can Play Video:** Make a team, athletics department or athletics conference video to be posted on the You Can Play website and YouTube sending the message, “If you can play, you can play.” [www.youcanplayproject.org](http://www.youcanplayproject.org)

- **Campus Pride:** Nominate your school for the Campus Pride List of Most LGBTQ-Friendly Collegiate Athletics Programs. [www.campuspride.org/outtoplay](http://www.campuspride.org/outtoplay)

- **Community Service Projects:** Organize student-athlete and coaches to go to K-12 schools in your community to talk with students and teachers about their commitments to stop bullying and name-calling in sports and in schools. [sports.glsen.org](http://sports.glsen.org)

- **Br{ache The Silence Pledge or Share Your Story:** Sign the online pledge to be an active part of making athletics inclusive and respectful for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. You can also submit your story in writing or video to [www.freedomsounds.org](http://www.freedomsounds.org).

- **Campus-Based Safe Zone Campaign:** Ask coaches to participate in your campus’ Safe Zone Campaign and place Safe Zone stickers on their office doors. Contact your campus Safe Zone Campaign for more information.

- **StandUp Day:** Participate in the annual StandUp Against Bullying Day sponsored by the Stand Up Foundation. [www.standupfoundation.com](http://www.standupfoundation.com)

- **Break The Silence Pledge or Share Your Story:** Sign the online pledge to be an active part of making athletics inclusive and respectful for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. You can also submit your story in writing or video to [www.freedomsounds.org](http://www.freedomsounds.org).

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"The America East Conference is really excited about its partnership with the You Can Play Project. A driving force in moving this forward was our America East SAAC, who engaged in a truly open, honest and productive conversation around LGBTQ issues during its October meeting following a presentation by Patrick Burke, co-founder of the You Can Play Project.

“Our student-athletes live these issues on a daily basis within campus environments that are increasingly diverse. They recognize the importance of inclusion in all aspects, but especially in the context of their sports teams. The team environment is a special and rare space in which each group creates a culture that contributes to their performance on the field, on the court and in the pool as well.

“The message of the You Can Play Project resonated with our student-athletes as a way to promote an inclusive and respectful team culture for their LGBTQ teammates and entire athletics programs. They know that in order for a team to achieve ultimate success, each team member should be without fear or worry, something LGBTQ student-athletes often carry around, which can distract from their sense of truly belonging to the team and have negative consequences on their performance.

“For obvious reasons, our administrators supported the recommendation of our SAAC to partner with this organization. They recognize the value of promoting an inclusive culture as a means towards an improved student-athlete experience and improved athletics performance. As the first conference partner of You Can Play, we’ll be exploring multiple ways in which we can harness the energy of all of our institutions, administrators, coaches, teams and student-athletes to build initiatives and programming that have a lasting impact across the conference.”

Amy Huchthausen, Commissioner, America East Conference
Five Steps To Being a Better Ally to the Transgender Community

1. Avoid Demeaning Language When Referring to Transgender People
Words that demean and trivialize the experiences of those who identify as transgender can often go unaddressed within athletics departments. By looking out for words like “tranny” or calling someone “too butch to play” as a gay person can begin to create a safe and welcoming environment for our transgender peers.

2. Ask About Preferred Pronouns
Respect the names and pronouns that people prefer. If you are unsure, simply ask, “What are your preferred pronouns?” It is OK to make a mistake so long as you take the time to educate yourself about what mistake so long as you take the time to educate yourself about what is OK to say and are respectful moving forward.

3. Coming Out Is Confidential
A gender identity is personal. If a member of the athletics community chooses to come out to you as transgender, this means that the person trusts you. Make sure to honor that trust by checking with the person before telling anyone else, as the person may not want others to know. Confidentiality is key to creating an inclusive culture.

4. Don’t Ask About “Real Name”
Asking what someone’s “real” name is implies that the person’s chosen name is in some way invalid or real.” In the same way, asking someone what his or her “real” gender is disregards his or her gender identity.

5. Know the Difference Between Gender Identity and Gender Expression
No matter how people identify their own gender, they may identify with any sexual orientation. Everyone has a sexual orientation and a gender identity, and they are separate and distinct from each other. Be mindful of uninformed assumptions in yourself and others.

Resources for LGBTQA Student-Athlete Groups

Start an LGBTQA Student-Athlete Group: GO! Athletes

The time has come when LGBTQA student-athletes and their straight allies are rising up and coming out. As a result, LGBTQA student-athlete groups will become increasingly important and beneficial to athletics departments and universities across the country. Here is why:

• More and more LGBTQA student-athletes are either coming out to teammates and coaches or entering their intercollegiate athletics experience already having been out in high school.

• These LGBTQA student-athletes expect to be treated with respect and are more comfortable with their sexuality and gender identities than previous generations of LGBTQ athletes.

• National polls show that more than half of LGBTQ student-athletes are more accepting and comfortable with LGBTQ friends and supporters of LGBTQ rights to be independent athletes.

• More young people are identifying as transgender, and athletics departments need to clarify policies protecting their right to participate in athletics.

• The national media and grass-roots advocacy organizations have brought homophobia in sport to the forefront.

• Increased support and resources for athletes are available from advocacy and education groups like the National Center for Lesbian Rights Sports Project, Athletes Ally, You Can Play, GO! Athletes and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network Sports Project.

A student-athlete group can take many different forms. The focus of this resource is to assist college student-athletes and athletics staff to determine how to organize an LGBTQA student-athlete group that best meets the needs and interests of student-athletes in their school. What follows is a list of topics to consider, questions to think about and group activity suggestions for planners and leaders of LGBTQA student-athlete groups.

What is the Purpose of the Group? Support, Advocate, Educate, Correct. Any or all of these purposes could be appropriate depending on the group:

- To provide support for LGBTQA student-athletes.
- To make the athletics department a safe and respectful place for LGBTQA people.
- To offer social activities for LGBTQA student-athletes and allies.
- To connect like-minded individuals and foster a network of LGBTQA student-athletes and allies.

Who Should Be Invited To Join the Group? Do you want to invite only athletes who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, same-gender loving, two-spirit or questioning?

- Do you want to invite heterosexual student-athletes to join? Do you want to invite only student-athletes or include athletics department staff and coaches?

- Do you want to be an Affiliate of GO! Athletes, national chapter?

- Do you want to be an ally or a friend? (LGBTQA Student-Athlete Group, Gay-Straight Alliance Athletics-CO)

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Where Will the Group Meet? Think about the following criteria: accessibility, safety/visibility, and comfortable/inviting/informal setting.

- Do you want to have an informal meeting setting?

- Do you want to have a formal meeting setting?

- Do you want to have a meeting on or off campus?

- Do you want the meeting to be open or closed to the public?
to have. 

Shared expectations for meetings is helpful. Here are some suggestions:

- Establishing some meeting dates is helpful. Let the group decide this during their first meeting. The group should set up a deadline for when the meeting will be held. Here are some suggestions:
  - Meet at least monthly or the group will lose momentum and interest.
  - Determine when it is likely that most athletes will be available. When will the group meet?
  - Is it best to meet during dinner with pizza served?
  - Lunchtime?
  - Off-campus:
    - Would this create transportation problems for some?
    - Make sure the location for athletes is safe for everyone, especially those potentially experiencing harassment.
    - Make sure the group is welcoming to and acknowledges other identities (race, class, sex, religion). These identities affect our experience of being LGBTQ.
    - Staff Advisors or Not:
      - Sometimes having a staff advisor/member can be helpful in providing administrative assistance with communication or other staff, etc.
      - Do you want a staff advisor or should the group be student-led?
      - If you have an advisor, what role should the advisor play? A leader, facilitator, consultant, enabler, background supporter?
      - If you have an advisor, would he/she be LGBT identified, a straight ally, one of each? It is important to have a man and a woman as advisors.

How To Publicize the Group:

- Word of mouth: This always leaves out some folks who might be interested, but it is more personal.
- Flies around any discussion during break in locker rooms, inside of toilet stall doors, cafeteria, etc.
- Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Instagram.
- Poster on the athletics department website.
- Post in school LGBTQ Center.

Meeting Ground Discussion Rules:

- Establishing some shared agreements for meetings is helpful. Here are some suggestions:
  - No one is required to identify his or her sexual orientation or gender identity, but everyone is invited to do so.
  - Speak from your own experience, avoid generalizing or speaking on behalf of others without consent (all heterosexuals or all gay people).
  - Respect different perspectives, ideas and experiences.
  - Make sure the group is welcoming to and acknowledges other differences besides sexual orientation and gender identity (race, class, sex, religion). These identities affect our experience of being LGBTQ.

Staff Make sure to incorporate social time with meeting time

Funding:

- Whether funding is only needed for providing refreshments at meetings or for sponsoring activities, think about how to get some financial support.
- Pass the hat at meetings for refreshments.
- Have a group fundraiser: Bake sale, doughnut and coffee sales.
- Seek individual donations from athletics department staff members who are allies.
- Contact the school’s student government, athletics department, the school’s LGBT Center, LGBTQ athlete alums, or from friends and family willing to donate.

Establish Communication Across School or Campus:

- Be inclusive of LGBTQ student-athletes and staff in NCAA programs, public statement about their support of your group (with athletics staff, etc.).
- Meet with the Student-Athlete Advisors’ Committee to discuss how it can support safety and respect for LGBTQ student-athletes on the school’s teams.
- Meet with the head coach (student-athlete orientation program or for editors for the new student-athlete handbook) to see how they see department expectations for fair and respectful treatment of LGBTQ student-athletes.

Build Communication and Support Within the Athletics Department

- Meet with the athletics director to tell her/him about your group and see how she/he can support you (funding, staff development programs, public statement about her/his support of your group with athletics staff, etc.)
- Have a group fundraiser: Bake sale, doughnut and coffee sale.
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Suggestions for Meeting Activities

- Find out what your members want to do.
- Watch an LGBTQ-related film.
- Discuss perceptions of the climate for LGBTQ people in the athletics department with teammates, coaches, administration.
- Attend athletics training staff, academic advising staff, Life Skills classes, locker rooms, weight and strength training staff, etc. Discuss ways to accommodate LGBTQ student-athletes.
- Invite a speaker to the meeting: LGBTQ athlete alum, leaders/members of different LGBTQ support groups on campus, etc.
- Read and talk about movies and books on LGBTQ issues in sport: Biographies, autobiographies about professional or Olympic athletes who are LGBTQ.
- Learn about one another’s sports: Focus on a different sport each meeting.
- Get to know one another’s teams and staff.
- Go bowling or play a sport together that no one knows much about (shuffleboard, bowling or ping pong).

Suggestions for Activities Outside the Meetings:

- Develop a Facebook page for communication between meetings.
- Group outings to LGBTQ-related LGBTQ sports-related events: Plays, movies, marches, talks, athletics contests.
- Get a team together to compete in a local gay sports league or the Gay Games or the OutGames.
- Get a team together to compete in school intramurals, team sports (women’s teams can come out).
- Contact the campus counseling center to see how people there are prepared to work with student-athletes who are questioning their sexual identity, experiencing harassment or isolation, or who are coming out.
- Contact the school’s gay straight alliance or any other LGBTQ student or staff group on campus to see how you can work together.

Gender and Racial Balance:

- Be inclusive of the diverse group.
- Make sure the group is welcoming to and acknowledges other differences besides sexual orientation and gender identity (race, class, sex, religion). These identities affect our experience of being LGBTQ.

Staff Make sure to incorporate social time with meeting time
Suggestions for Education or Advocacy Activities: Do a climate survey of student-athletes and coaches at your school about their attitudes toward LGBTQ athletes.

- Go to local middle and high schools to talk to athletes about the importance of being leaders for anti-bullying efforts in their community.
- Plan a safe space campaign to get coaches and other staff to talk in safe spaces on the office doors and commit to the principles of safe space.
- Post on your website a list of coaches in your athletics department who participate in the safe space campaign.

Make a brochure or handout with information for coaches and athletes about LGBTQ sports resources on your campus, locally and online and distribute it to everyone in the athletics department.

Ask the athletics director to organize staff development sessions for coaches and other athletics staff on LGBTQ issues in athletics focused on nondiscrimination laws protecting LGBTQ people and practical strategies they can use to make sure LGBTQ athletes and coaches are treated with respect.

- Plan an event in athletics for National Coming Out Day – October 11. Invite athletes to come out as LGBT or as allies by wearing a symbol – rainbow ribbon, wristband, button. You can do it! Most groups start out small, and membership will grow up and down over the years. Remember, the most important part is ‘passing the baton’ to the next generation of LGBTQ athletes and allies.

Some Ways To Make Your Group Sustainable: Develop traditions and annual events that people look forward to each year.

- Write a formal constitution to be recognized by your school as an official student group.
- Train younger leaders and recruit new members each year.
- Reach out to GO! directors when you need support.

• Be a visible symbol for embarking on this journey to create a LGBTQ athletics group! It’s GO! Time! Remember that even reaching up and down over the years. Remember, the most important part is ‘passing the baton’ to the next generation of LGBTQ athletes and allies.


Sample Constitution for LGBTQA Student-Athlete Groups

Over the past few years there have been a growing number of LGBTQ and ally student-athlete groups being created on campuses across the country. The very existence of these groups sends a strong statement to the closeted and openly LGBTQ athletes, coaches, administrators and fans that your campus is a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

To help facilitate the creation of these groups, below is a sample constitution that any member of an athletics community can use to start a university sanctioned LGBTQ student-athlete group.

Article I: Name and Purpose
1. The name of this organization is _________. Hereafter abbreviated to ________.
2. The mission of ________ is:
   a. To create a safe environment for athletes, coaches, administrators and fans of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.
   b. To support LGBTQ people in the athletics community.
   c. To educate athletes and coaches about LGBTQ issues.
   d. To build and maintain strong ties between the athletics and LGBTQ communities.


Article II: Membership
3. All undergraduate students of the ________ with an interest in LGBTQ issues in the athletics community are eligible to be members of ________.
4. All prospective members become members after attending at least one ________ event (or other event sponsored by an organizational member of the campus LGBTQ advocacy group) and one ________ general body meeting.
5. At the end of each semester, all members who did not attend at least one general body meeting and at least one ________ event that semester shall no longer be members of ________.

Article III: The General Body
6. There shall be a general body of all members of ________ which shall be the supreme decision-making organ of ________. It has sole authority to approve the ________’s annual budget submission to SAAC.

7. All meetings of the general body shall be open to the public.

8. Meetings of the general body shall be called by the chair or by a petition of at least one-fifth of the total number of members. Notice of the meeting must be provided to all members by no means less than mailing at least 72 hours scheduled start of the meeting.

9. Quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Board and half as many again plus one of other members.

10. The general body shall meet at least three times each semester. The last meeting of the fall semester shall be the elections meeting.

Article IV: The Executive Board
11. Between meetings of the general body, the affairs of ________ shall be conducted by the Executive Board, hereafter referred to as “the Executive,” composed of such officers as are appointed in this article.

12. The duties of the Executive shall include:
   a. The co-ordination and supervision of the work of ________ as a whole.
   b. Ensuring all members act in accordance with the Constitution.
   c. Facilitating channels of communication between all elements of ________.
   d. Setting the agenda of each general body meeting.
   e. Authorizing all expenditures, SAC contingency requests and other fiscal applications.

13. The officers of the Executive are:
   a. The chair;
   b. The vice chair;
   c. The treasurer;
   d. The advocacy director;
   e. The social director; and,
   f. The communications director.
Champions of Respect

14. These shall be the duties of the executive chair:
   a. Call and preside over all general body meetings.
   b. Coordinate and facilitate Executive Board meetings.
   c. Assist in all the duties of other officers.
   d. Exercise general supervision over all of the ______’s activities, ensuring that they are in line with the ______’s vision.

15. These shall be the duties of the vice chair:
   a. Serve as acting chair in the chair’s absence or incapacity.
   b. Outreach to the wider LGBTQA community.
   c. Assist the chair in the exercise of duties as required.
   d. Act as the chief administrative officer of ______.

16. These shall be the duties of the treasurer:
   a. Prepare ______’s annual budget and all financial submissions to SAC and other entities.
   b. Represent ______ on the Student Activities Council and other entities.
   c. Assist the chair in the execution of duties as required.

17. These shall be the duties of the social director:
   a. Organization of social events for ______ members and the wider community.
   b. Planning nonadvocacy events that celebrate diversity in the athletics community.
   c. Working closely with ______ to facilitate social events as appropriate.

18. These shall be the duties of the advocacy director:
   a. Advocacy and research on behalf of LGBTQA athletes.
   b. Conducting advocacy campaigns for openly LGBTQA athletes.
   c. Research of NCAA diversity rules and monitoring the adherence of ______ to these rules.
   d. Organizing ______ during both semesters of their term may be elected executive officers.

19. These shall be the duties of the communications director:
   a. Take the minutes of all meetings of the general body and the Executive Board.
   b. Handle publicity for ______ events and activities.
   c. Maintain all ______ contact lists and databases.
   d. Prepare and publish the agendas of all Executive and general body meetings.
   e. Prepare and publish a regular informative periodical for all members.

20. A majority of the Executive shall constitute quorum for all Executive Board meetings.

21. All decisions of the Executive shall, unless specified elsewhere in this Constitution, be taken by a majority vote. The chair may vote again to break any tie.

22. The term of the Executive Officers shall end at the fall elections meeting, and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

23. The general body shall elect all executive officers at the fall elections meeting.

24. Members who will be full-time undergraduates and take classes at ______ during both semesters of their term may be elected executive officers.

25. The date of the fall elections meeting shall be set by the Executive Board in the first five weeks of the fall semester and shall be advertised to all members at least three times in the three weeks before the meeting.

26. Any election not conducted at the fall elections meeting shall nonetheless fall under the provisions of this article.

27. The Executive shall designate a member of ______ the campus LGBTQ advocacy group, or the Nominations and Elections Committee as the returning officer of the election at least two weeks before the fall election meeting or any meeting at which an election will be held.

28. The elections procedure shall be as follows:
   a. When the general body considers the election of members to office, the returning officer shall count, certify and announce all elections and shall have no vote except in filling vacancies.
   b. Nominations shall either be lodged in writing with both the returning officer and secretary before the election, or shall be lodged with the returning officer at the meeting.
   c. The officers shall be elected in the order in which they first appear in this Constitution.
   d. The general body may require written or oral depositions; of whatever nature it chooses, from candidates for each office.
   e. After the general body is satisfied with the depositions of the candidates, it shall proceed to elect one of the candidates to the office.
   f. The method of voting shall be as follows:
      i. All members will indicate one (1) preferred candidate for the office.
      ii. The candidate receiving an absolute majority of votes shall be deemed to be elected.
      iii. If no candidate shall receive an absolute majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be discarded and the general body shall vote again, repeating this method until a candidate receives an absolute majority.
      iv. If a candidate is not elected to the office that the candidate sought, the candidate may run in subsequent elections held at that elections meeting.
   g. During the elections meeting, any members present may demand and shall receive a recount of all votes cast for any election.

29. Officers may resign their position in writing at any time to the Executive. Should an officer make a binding decision to travel abroad during either semester of the officer’s term, the officer’s position shall be determined at the meeting especially called for the purpose. The Executive shall fill all casual vacancies of officers, save that of the executive chair. In the case of the resignation or impeachment of the chair, the Executive shall call a meeting of the general body within two weeks to elect a new chair, the vice chair acting as executive chair until that time.

30. The general body may impose any officer for incompetence, neglect of duties, neglect of responsibilities, negligence, or behavior in a manner prejudicial to the interests of ______, by a two-thirds vote of members present at a meeting especially called for the purpose. Such a meeting shall be called upon the presentation of a petition of at least ten (10) members to the chair or the highest unimpeached officer, and shall be called within ten days. The member subject to impeachment shall be called upon to appear at the meeting and shall be called within two weeks. The member subject to impeachment shall be called upon to appear at the meeting and shall be called within two weeks. The member subject to impeachment shall be called upon to appear at the meeting and shall be called within two weeks. The member subject to impeachment shall be called upon to appear at the meeting and shall be called within two weeks.

Article VI: Amendment
This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a general body meeting. All amendments to the Constitution shall be presented by the Executive or on a petition of at least ten (10) members. No amendment to the Constitution may be considered without being presented to a general body meeting at least two weeks before the meeting at which it will be voted on.
This section of the resource guide includes additional information about addressing LGBTQ issues in athletics:
1) A list of definitions and terminology.
2) A list of additional education and advocacy organizations.
3) A list of books and videos.
4) Sample policies.
5) Campus Pride Report Score Card.
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Ally — A person who is not a member of a targeted social group who takes action or speaks up to challenge discrimination or prejudice against a targeted social group. For example, straight allies speak and act against LGBTQ+ discrimination and prejudice or white allies speak and act against discrimination against people of color.

Biological/Anatomical Sex — The physical characteristics typically used to assign a person’s gender at birth, such as chromosomes, hormones, internal and external genitalia and reproductive organs. Given the potential variation in all of these, biological sex must be seen as a spectrum or range of possibilities rather than a binary set of two options.

Biphobia — Describes a range of negative feelings toward bisexual and bisexual people as a social group or as individuals. People of any sexual orientation can experience such feelings of aversion. Biphobia is based on negative bisexual stereotypes.

Bisexual — A sexual orientation toward women and men in which gender is not a determining factor in romantic or sexual feelings toward another person.

Cisgender — An adjective often used to refer to someone whose gender identity is the same as the gender assigned to them at birth.

FTM (Female-to-Male) — A person who was assigned to the female gender at birth but has a male gender identity.

Gay — An adjective describing sexual orientation toward others of the same sex. Gay is also used to refer exclusively to gay men.

Gender — The complex relationship between physical traits and one’s internal sense of self as male, female, both or neither, as well as one’s outward presentations and behaviors related to that perception. Biological sex and gender are different; gender is not inherently connected to one’s physical anatomy.

Gender Expression — Refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hair, voice and other forms of presentation. Gender expression also works the other way as people assign gender to others based on their appearance, mannerisms and other gendered characteristics. Many transgender people seek to make their external appearance — their gender expression — congruent with their internal gender identity through clothing, pronouns, names, and, in some cases, hormones and surgical procedures. All people have gender expression, not just transgender people.

Gender Fluidity — Gender fluidity conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender expression, with interests and behaviors that may even change from day to day. Gender fluid individuals do not feel confined by restrictive boundaries of stereotypical expectations of girls or boys.

Gender Identity — One’s inner concept of self as male, female, both or neither. One’s gender identity can be the same or different than the gender assigned at birth. Most people become conscious of their gender identity between the ages of 18 months and 3 years. Most people have a gender identity that matches their assigned gender at birth. For some, however, their gender identity is different from their assigned gender. Some of these individuals choose to live socially as the other gender and may also hormonally and/or surgically change their bodies to more fully express their gender identity. All people have gender identity, not just transgender people.

Gender Nonconforming/Gender Variant — Refer to individuals whose behaviors and/or interests fall outside what is considered typical for their assigned gender at birth. Someone who identifies as “gender nonconforming” is not necessarily transgender. To the contrary, many people who are not transgender do not conform to gender stereotypes in their appearance, clothing, physical characteristics, interests or activities.

Genderqueer — This term represents a blurring of the lines around gender identity and sexual orientation. Genderqueer individuals typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity of gender identity and sexual orientation. This term is typically assigned an adult identifier and not used in reference to preadolescent children.
Heteronormativity — A cultural norm that assumes that heterosexuality is the only normal and acceptable sexual orientation.

Heterosexism — A social system of individual beliefs and actions, institutional rules and cultural norms that privileges heterosexual relationships and people and disadvantages same-sex relationships and lesbian, gay, and bisexual people.

Heterosexual — Used as a noun or adjective to describe sexual orientation toward people of another sex, typically males toward females and vice versa. Heterosexual people are also referred to as “straight.”

Homophobia — Describes a range of negative feelings toward lesbian and gay people as individuals or as a group. Homophobia is manifested in hostile or derisive language or actions directed toward lesbian and gay people or those assumed to be gay or lesbian.

Homosexual — A 19th century medicalized description of same-sex behavior or attraction or people who are sexually attracted to others of the same sex.

Intersex — An estimated one in 2,000 babies is born with an “intersex” condition or disorders of sex development (DSD). People with intersex conditions (DSD) are born with physically mixed or atypical bodies and reproductive organs, and genitalia. These characteristics may not be visible and individuals may not be aware of the condition. Having an intersex condition does not necessarily affect a person’s gender identity.

Lesbian — An adjective or noun used to describe sexual orientation toward people of another sex, typically females toward males and vice versa. Lesbian women who are sexually attracted to women.

MTF (Male-to-Female) — A person who was assigned to the male sex at birth but has a female gender identity. Therefore, transgender people may additionally identify as straight, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

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Queer — An umbrella term that is sometimes used to refer to gender and sexual minorities. Because of its history as a negative description of lesbian and gay people and its association with radicalism, the use of queer is somewhat controversial.

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Questioning — An adjective used to describe people, especially young people, who are in the process of defining their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Same-Gender Loving — A term used by some African-American LGBT people to describe their sexual orientation in a way that differentiates their experiences and identity from those of white European American LGBT people.

Sexual Orientation — Refers to being romantically or sexually attracted to people of a specific gender, or in the case of bisexuals, any gender. Our sexual orientation and our gender identity are separate, distinct parts of our overall identity. Although children may not yet be aware of their sexual orientation, they usually have a strong sense of their gender identity.

Straight (Heterosexual) Ally — A heterosexual person who is committed in word and deed to counteracting homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and discrimination against or harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Transgender — An “umbrella term” to describe anyone whose identity or behavior falls outside stereotypes of gender norms. More narrowly defined, it refers to individuals whose gender identity does not match their assigned birth gender. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation (attraction to people of a specific gender). Therefore, transgender people may additionally identify as straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Transition — The process by which a transgender individual lives consistently with his or her gender identity, and which may (but does not necessarily) include changing the person’s body through hormones and/or surgical procedures. Transition can occur in three ways: social transition through changes in clothing, hairstyle, name and/or pronouns; hormonal transition through the use of medicines such as hormone “blockers” or cross hormones to promote gender-based body changes; and/or surgical transition in which an individual’s body is modified through the addition or removal of gender-related physical traits. Based on current medical knowledge and practice, genital reconstructive surgery is not required in order to transition. Most transgender people in the United States do not have genital reconstructive surgery.

Transsexual — An individual whose gender identity does not match the sex assigned at birth. This individual usually desires to physically alter his or her body surgically and/or hormonally. This physical transition is a complicated, multifaceted process that may take years and may include, but is not limited to, cross-gender hormone therapy and a variety of surgical procedures. The precise treatments required vary from person to person.

Transphobia — Describes a range of negative feelings toward transgender or gender nonconforming people as individuals or as a group. Transphobia is manifested in hostile or derogatory language or actions directed toward transgender or gender nonconforming people.

Two-Spirit — A term chosen to distinctly express Native American/First Nations' gender identity and gender variance. “Two-spirited” or “two-spirit” usually indicates a person whose body simultaneously manifests both a masculine and a feminine spirit.
Champions of Respect

an athletics and physical education climate that is based on the core school-based athletics and physical education programs. The Sports and advocacy initiative focused on addressing LGBT issues in K-12 Changing the Game: The GLSEN Sports Project is an education Changing the Game —

The GLSEN Sports Project is a partnership with Compete Magazine. Campus Pride published the first LGBT-Friendly Top 10 in college

Out To Play is designed to address anti-LGBT slurs, bias and conduct

www.campuspride.org/outtoplay

Shane Windmeyer

Campus Pride Out To Play Project —

The Ben Cohen StandUp Foundation, Inc. is the world’s first foundation

www.standupfoundation.com

Ben Cohen Standup Foundation

projects around the country.

Ally provides social advocacy campaigns, on-campus trainings and

whether closeted or out, to interact with one another, sharing concerns,

and elite. ECA provides a quarterly online forum for coaches

www.equalitycoachingalliance.org

Roger Brigham

Equality Coaching Alliance is a virtual network to bring together LGBT sports coaches and their supporters. The alliance strives to represent all sports at all levels; youth, scholastic, adult recreational, professional and elite. ECA provides a quarterly online forum for coaches whether closeted or out, to interact with one another, sharing concerns, raising questions, and seeking and providing peer counseling and

ECA  provides a members-only online forum and elite. ECA provides a members-only online forum for coaches regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity/whether closeted or out, to interact with one another, sharing concerns, raising questions, and seeking and providing peer counseling and work on education and advocacy initiatives to improve awareness of

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Equality Coaching Alliance —

Roger Brigham

www.equalitycoachingalliance.org

www.glaad.org/issues/sports

GLAAD believes that what people see in the media has a huge impact, especially for young people, and that making people aware of the huge number of gay athletes, coaches, and fans is essential to encouraging a greater understanding of the LGBT community.

GLAAD works on education and advocacy initiatives to improve awareness of

www.glaad.org

Hudson Taylor

GLAAD: Athletes — Anna Agenes

Generation Out! Athletes is an outreach, education and support organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender high school and college student-athletes and allies. It serves as a network to connect LGBT student-athletes with other LGBT student-athletes. GO! Athletes is also dedicated to educating athletes, coaches, administrators and fans to foster a sports community that is accepting for all athletes, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

IMEnough — Kye Allums

Kye Allums, transgender athlete, speaks to college and high school audiences about his experiences and about transgender issues in athletics and in sports more generally.

LGBT Issues in Sport Blog: Theory to Practice — Ellen Staurowsky

www.ksu.edu/~staurowsk

Ellen Staurowsky

Medium-sized LGBT student-athletes with other LGBT student-athletes. GO! Athletes is also dedicated to educating athletes, coaches, administrators and fans to foster a sports community that is accepting for all athletes, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

GO! Athletes —

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www.goathletes.org

Anna Aagenes

www.elite.org

ELITE: Equal Literature, Theatre and Education. ELITE is the first national program that provides professional development and resources for trans and non-binary students in higher education.

www.elite.org

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National Center for Lesbian Rights Sports Project — Helen Carroll

www.ncrlightsports.org

NCRL’s Sports Project aims to level the playing field for LGBT players and coaches. More than 30 years ago, Title IX changed athletics forever by requiring that women and girls have equal access to sporting and athletics opportunities. Today NCLR’s advocacy, public education and high-profile cases have the potential to equalize the treatment of LGBT athletes in this century. We seek nothing less than what is right for every athlete

You Can Play Project —

www.youcanplayproject.org

The You Can Play Project is a national youth sports initiative ensuring equal access for all athletes, regardless of sexual orientation. You Can Play works to guarantee that athletes are given a fair opportunity to compete, judged by other athletes and fans alike, only by what they contribute to the sport or their team’s success. You Can Play seeks to challenge the culture of locker rooms and spectator areas by focusing only on a sports environment that is accepting for all athletes, regardless of sexual orientation.

Outsports —

Cyd Zeigler and Jim Buzinski

www.outsports.com

Cyd	Zeigler	and	Jim	Buzinski

Outsports is the place to go for sports fans and athletes.

Patrick Burke

www.youcanplayproject.org

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Outsports’ mission is to build the broadest, deepest, most informative and most entertaining gay sports community. A mixture of breaking news, commentary, features, member profiles, photo galleries and discussion boards, Outsports is the place to go for sports fans and athletes.

Patrick Burke

www.youcanplayproject.org

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Appendix 3: LGBTQ Sports Books and Video Resources

Nonfiction Books
Kopay, D. & Young, P. (1977). The David Kopay Story: An Extraordinary First-Person Accounts or Biographies
Amachi, J. (2007). Man in the Middle. ESPN.

Fiction Books

First-Person Accounts or Biographies
Amachi, J. (2007). Man in the Middle. ESPN.

Fiction Books

Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs
Appendix 4: Developing a Nondiscrimination Framework

In 2010, the NCAA Executive Committee passed a new framework for policy development and diversity to further support the NCAA constitutional article prohibiting discrimination in the association and to define the expectations for the NCAA Inclusion Office. The applicable NCAA article (Constitution 2.6) states: “The Association shall promote an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person. It is the responsibility of each member to adopt and enforce a policy of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person, regardless of race, color, creed, or sexual orientation.” (Adopted: 1/16/93, Revised: 1/16/00)

The membership debated the list of possible discrimination triggers, not wanting to leave something out that should be included, but ultimately decided that a list was not a helpful guide. The framework states:

As a core value, the NCAA believes in and is committed to diversity, inclusion and gender equity among its student-athletes, coaches and administrators. We seek to establish and maintain an inclusive environment for all student-athletes and enhance excellence within the Association.

The Office of Inclusion will provide or enable programming and education, which sustains foundations of a diverse and inclusive culture across dimensions of diversity including, but not limited to: age, race, sex, class, national origin, creed, educational background, disability, gender expression, geographic location, income, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation and work experiences.

An athletics department seeking to develop nondiscrimination policy should first look to its campus policies and mission statement. The department should consult with the campus authorities to ensure its own policy aligns with campus policy and state and federal law. Conference offices can facilitate conference policy and assist institutions in developing a nondiscrimination framework.

Nondiscrimination policies should go hand-in-hand with education, accountability, consistent enforcement and no-retaliation practices. Policy statements should emphasize the value of diversity and respect for differences as a foundation for the educational experience and a strong for effective organizations.

This cannot be a one-time training issue. Expectations for policy development and diversity must be reinforced with leadership from the top of the organization. Job performance evaluations and position descriptions should include nondiscrimination as an element of performance. Clear communication expectations must be described to avoid concerns going unreported and fear of retaliation preventing institutional knowledge and responses.

The NCAA has published resources that assist institutions in the assessment of their diversity and inclusion policies and practices.

NCAA Best Practices: Achieving Excellence Through Diversity and Inclusion

Champions of Respect: An Assessment of Examples and Institutional Best Practices

The NCAA recommends the establishment of a standing campus committee, charged by the university president or chancellor, and staffed by a broad range of campus and athleticsdepartment staff, faculty and students. The committee should engage in meaningful evaluation of the athletics department’s inclusion policy and efforts. It should review student-athlete experience survey and interview responses and work with the student-athlete advisory committee to educate and support inclusive efforts. Use this collaboration to measure performance on the institution’s plan for diversity and take action to demonstrate that the athletics department coaches, staff and student-athletes are Champions of Respect and inclusion of the LGBTQ community.
Appendix 5: Campus Pride Report Score Card

**Champions of Respect**

**Inclusion of LGBTQ Student-Athletes and Staff in NCAA Programs**

**Diversity:**
- Only 7% of NCAA schools have a formal policy to support LGBTQ students and staff.

**LGBTQ Representation by Sport:**
- Only 18% of NCAA schools have a formal policy to support LGBTQ student-athletes.

**Effects of Campus Climate on LGBTQ Student-Athletes:**
- Only 10% of LGBTQ student-athletes feel safe on campus.
- Only 20% of LGBTQ student-athletes feel supported by their coaches.

**Impact on LGBTQ Student-Athletes:**
- Only 5% of LGBTQ student-athletes feel their athletic performance has been affected by discrimination.
- Only 2% of LGBTQ student-athletes have experienced hate crimes at school.

**Next Steps:**
- Implementing formal policies to support LGBTQ students and staff.
- Providing training for coaches and staff to create a safer environment for LGBTQ student-athletes.
- Encouraging open dialogue and support within the athletic community.
Champions of Respect
The NCAA salutes the more than 400,000 student-athletes participating in 23 sports at more than 1,100 member institutions.