

A Place at the Table? Exploring Acceptance of LGBTQ Students at Goshen College

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine how accepting the Goshen College (GC) community is of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) individuals and to learn about the lived experiences of LGBTQ members of the Goshen College community. Through an online survey (N=482), students and employees responded to questions regarding the atmosphere of acceptance at Goshen College, as well as to questions about their own personal beliefs and comfort level toward LGBTQ individuals. A focus group (N=7) of LGBTQ students explored the experiences of those students at Goshen College and allowed comparisons to be made between the attitudes of the campus community and the level of acceptance and hospitality experienced by LGBTQ individuals at GC. This study found that Goshen College is overall a welcoming and supportive place for LGBTQ students, but found that there is a disconnect between the support experienced from members of the GC community and the lack of perceived institutional support. It also notes the difference between homophobia (of which GC seems to have little) and heterosexism (which focus group participants experienced daily). Recommendations from the study include, as suggested by focus group and survey participants, that Goshen College recognize Prism in some sort of official capacity, that LGBTQ concerns be addressed in public settings like chapels and convocations, and that GC begin an intentional process of dialogue regarding the hiring of openly LGBTQ faculty.

Introduction

Goshen College (GC) seeks to be a welcoming community, extending hospitality to people from a variety of backgrounds and embracing the plurality of experiences, voices and opinions that accompany that diversity (Goshen College, “Diversity at GC,” n.d.). Establishing and maintaining a welcoming, inclusive community as Goshen College strives to do, requires an intentional effort to hear and respond to the minority voices on campus. In this spirit, this study seeks to discover how accepting the Goshen College community is toward one of its minority populations, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) individuals on campus. This mixed methods study used a survey (N=482) and a focus group (N=7) in order to measure the attitudes of the campus community and compare those attitudes to the actual lived experiences of LGBTQ students at Goshen College.

Goshen College is a private liberal arts college in northern Indiana, with an enrollment of about 1,000 students. Goshen College seeks to embody its core values of global citizenship, passionate learning, servant leadership, and compassionate peacemaking, while keeping Christ as the center of community life (Goshen College, “Core Values,” n.d.). A Christian school, Goshen College is owned by Mennonite Church USA and as such is accountable to the Mennonite Church. For better or for worse, Goshen College has the reputation within the Mennonite Church community of being a relatively liberal place, partly due to perceptions that GC is a safe place for LGBTQ

individuals to find support.

Same-sex sexuality has been a much debated issue within Mennonite Church USA, with people feeling strongly on all sides of this issue. While there seems to be little consensus, the Mennonite Church's official stance on the issue is that sexual intimacy is reserved for the context of marriage, which is between one man and one woman for life (Mennonite Church & General Conference Mennonite Church, 1995). Mennonite pastors in same-sex relationships or who perform marriages for LGBTQ individuals, as well as churches that take a stance in support of full membership and marriage of LGBTQ persons, have often been disciplined by area conferences, and congregations have split over the issue. Because Goshen College has the reputation of being on the liberal side of this debate, in many ways it has become the center of this conflict. Goshen College's affiliation with the Mennonite Church, as well as the opinions of donors and alumni, means that any actions or inactions taken regarding the issue must take into consideration the broader implications and responses they will provoke from the many and varied constituencies to which Goshen College is accountable.

The purpose of this study is to explore the acceptance, or lack thereof, of LGBTQ students at Goshen College. A mixed methods design which employs a survey of the campus community and a focus group of LGBTQ students was chosen, with the purpose of answering the question of how accepting the Goshen College community is of LGBTQ individuals and what the lived experiences are of LGBTQ students at GC.

Review of the Literature

There is a significant amount of background history and literature necessary to review for this project. First, the history of same-sex sexuality issues at Goshen College

from the 1970s to the present is described. Then we examine studies about homophobia and same-sex sexuality on college campuses, including student attitudes and interventions. Finally, we review available scales used to measure attitudes towards same-sex sexuality.

History of Same-Sex Sexuality Dialogue at Goshen College

The history of the issue of same-sex sexuality at Goshen College began in the 1970s, when GC professor Willard Krabill began offering a Human Sexuality course, according to Lapp (1997) in his senior thesis entitled “Victory for Ambiguity? The Struggle and Dialogue for a Policy on Homosexual Students at Goshen College.” A number of events occurred at Goshen College throughout the 1980s related to same-sex sexuality, including numerous postings on the opinion board, an attempt at forming an informal support group that lasted less than a year, and a few controversial speakers and course content. The first openly gay student came out to the college in 1984 as well (Lapp, 1997).

In 1990, several students in Krabill’s Human Sexuality course sent out a non-randomized survey assessing the attitudes of Goshen College students and faculty at the time, the results of which were reported in the *Record*, Goshen College’s student newspaper. The study found that 50% of students and 37.7% of employees said that lesbian and gay relationships were “morally wrong,” while 23.9% of students and 11.3% of employees said that such relationships were “natural and valid” (Grace, 1990, p.5).

The first continuous support group for lesbian and gay students was formed in 1991. After they posted an advertisement in the Campus Communicator (at the time an

official publication of Goshen College for events and news on campus), many parents and Mennonite congregations responded, questioning the legitimacy of such a group. Vic Stoltzfus, president of Goshen College at the time, wrote a letter to various regional Mennonite conferences which together made up the Mennonite Church denominational body in 1993 explaining that Goshen College was still in compliance with the 1987 Mennonite General Assembly statement on sexuality (also known as the Purdue statement), which affirmed that sexual relations belonged only within the context of a heterosexual marriage relationship (Lapp, 1997).

In 1994, the support group became the Lesbian, Bisexual, and Gay Alliance, or LBGA, and began to discuss becoming an official club on campus. Several members of the LBGA met with four faculty members to submit a proposal asking for club status. As Lapp (1997) documents, the group made additional requests as well, such as,

to be on a list of the college clubs; to produce a pamphlet about the club because no one had joined the club that year through the campus communicator; for the college to include the words, ‘sexual orientation,’ in its non-discrimination clause of the Standards; and for more attention to gay/lesbian issues in convocations and public affairs lectures. (p.60)

The Goshen College Board of Overseers discussed the proposal in the spring of 1995, and after several months decided not to grant the LBGA club status. In fact, all of the LBGA requests were denied, except that they were allowed an additional faculty adviser. Stoltzfus also decided not to make an official college policy regarding LGBTQ students, which he argued would allow for more ambiguity in relating with them. In the spring of 1996, Stoltzfus produced a “Memo of Understanding” outlining the decision the

previous fall, and noting his continuing commitment to “loving dialogue,” as per the Mennonite Church Purdue statement on sexuality (Lapp, 1997).

Kennel’s (2000) thesis titled “The Politics of Delay: Advocating for Homosexual Rights at Goshen College in the mid-1990s” picks up where Lapp’s (1997) thesis leaves off. In March 1997 a campus-wide forum was held to discuss the issues of alcohol use, homophobia, enrollment, as well as the recent resignation of the Dean of Students. Out of the frustrations expressed at this forum, some students decided to form a group called “the Advocates” with the goal of obtaining club status for the LBGA. In April 1997, the Advocates submitted another proposal requesting club status for the LBGA to the President’s Council, who then passed it on to the college’s Board of Overseers. Club status for the LBGA had come to be a symbol of how the campus related to lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Students who were members of the Advocates did not want the Advocates to be seen as a substitute for the LBGA, but wanted to continue to push for club status for the LBGA. In June 1997, however, the board’s Executive Council decided that for three years it would not revisit its previous decision to deny club status to the LBGA, imposing a moratorium that would last until June 2000 (Kennel, 2000).

Kennel (2000) argues that this three-year moratorium on the issue was a form of institutional violence because of the way it continued to oppress and alienate lesbian, gay and bisexual students and encouraged others to do the same. He asserts that it also silenced the voices of students who may have been questioning their own sexual orientations and would have come out but feared the reaction of the campus community. A time frame of three years was especially damaging in that it was just long enough to outlast the students who had been most active around the issue and ensure that incoming

students would not be aware of the controversy.

In September 1998, members of the Advocates used chalk to write informative messages on the sidewalks around campus (Kennel, 2000). One night, a group of seven male students responded by crossing out the Advocates' messages and adding their own derogatory, vulgar and violent messages. All of the chalkings were promptly removed, but news of them spread quickly around campus. Lesbian, bisexual, and gay students were frightened and believed that the administration was not listening to their concerns. Campus opinion was divided over the incident. Advocates responded by holding a vigil, the college held a special convocation, and students wrote unprecedented numbers of articles regarding the chalkings, the Advocates and same-sex sexuality in the *Record*. Seven representatives from Advocates and the seven students who had defaced the original chalkings participated in a mediation process, but Kennel (2000) states that the Advocates representatives came away from the process feeling dissatisfied with the reluctant participation of those who had defaced the original chalkings.

Kennel (2000) concludes his report by describing the complexities of Goshen College's accountability to Mennonite Church USA, noting that since the college is owned by the denomination, change at Goshen College will not be possible without support from the broader Mennonite Church, support which he imagined will be slow in coming.

There has been no official written history about same-sex sexuality at Goshen College since 2000. Informal conversations with several faculty members indicate that there has not been substantial discussion around this issue since that time. Following Kennel's (2000) thesis, the LBGA did not receive official club status, but the two

groups—LBGA and Advocates—morphed into Prism, a support group similar to the LBGA under the supervision of the campus counselor, and Advocates, an official club focused on education and awareness about same-sex sexuality issues at Goshen College. Several times throughout the 2000s, there were articles written in the *Record* or comments posted on the Opinion Board about same-sex sexuality, but nothing to the extent that happened in the 1990s.

A related issue that emerged in the past several years is the current hiring policy at Goshen College. Employees of Goshen College are expected to abide by the Mennonite Confession of Faith, which specifies that sexual relations are only appropriate in the context of marriage between one man and one woman for life (The Mennonite Church & The General Conference Mennonite Church, 1995). This has generally been interpreted to mean that individuals employed by Goshen College should not engage in same-sex sexual relationships. There have been several critical responses to this policy in the past several years, culminating with “An Open Letter to the Goshen College Community” in the spring of 2011, which encourages Goshen College to become a welcoming place for all, especially openly LGBTQ employees (Rich, 2011). At the time of this report, over 320 students and over 750 alumni have signed the letter (“An Open Letter to the Goshen College Community,” 2011). While same-sex sexuality does not receive nearly the same amount of attention on campus now as it did during the 1990s, it is still an issue that many students care about, which is one thing the researchers hoped to quantify through this study.

Studies Addressing LGBTQ Issues on College Campuses

There have been a number of studies regarding ways in which college

communities interact with the LGBTQ community. These studies come in different forms, from studying campus attitudes, support and inclusion, policy, discrimination, or LGBTQ individuals themselves. Many of these studies attempt to examine and compare a given portion of a college population to see if various factors have affected their views on same-sex sexuality.

A study by Kim, D'Andrea, Sahu, and Gaughen (1998) found a correlation between students' knowledge of same-sex sexuality and the attitudes students hold about same-sex sexuality. The primary objective of the study was to examine whether advanced higher education positively influenced more open-minded and welcoming attitudes of same-sex sexuality. Results of their study of 397 college students at the University of Hawaii confirmed a relationship between knowledge and attitudes as they pertain to same-sex sexuality.

Chonody, Siebert and Rutledge (2009) also looked at attitudes of college students towards lesbians and gays. They hypothesized that exposure to information would significantly alter students' attitudes toward people identifying as gay or lesbian. Over 200 college students in a human sexuality course took a pretest that measured attitudes toward lesbians and gays as well as a posttest following completion of the human sexuality course. There were significantly lower homophobia scores on the posttest. The researchers also discovered that men tended to score higher on the pretest than women, but showed more change in the posttest. The authors conclude that human sexuality courses that include exposure to information about gays and lesbians are an effective way to combat negative attitudes toward this population.

Stotzer (2009) used qualitative methods to study college students with professed

positive attitudes towards the LGB community. Using semi-structured interviews, Stotzer (2009) sought to understand how students came to hold supportive attitudes toward this population. The results of her study indicate that early childhood experiences which “helped normalize the idea of non-heterosexual people” as well as high school experiences of “empathizing with LGB people, or finding reasons to resist those who were unsupportive of LGB people” were key factors in the formation of positive attitudes toward the LGB community (Stotzer, 2009, p. 78). This study is helpful because it explores reasons why some people are more accepting than others.

Bowen and Bourgeois (2001) incorporated social psychology into their study of attitudes towards LGB college students. They surveyed both male and female dormitory residents about their levels of comfort with LGB people living among them, as well as their assumptions about other students’ attitudes. The researchers found that many students reported themselves as dramatically less “anti-gay” compared with others living on their floor and the average student at their college. Additionally, students who knew of at least one LGB student on their residence hall were more likely to have supportive attitudes as well.

Schellenberg, Glenn, and Hirt (1999) demonstrated a correlation between students’ majors and their views of same-sex sexuality. They found that students in Humanities and Social Science majors were generally more open to the LGBTQ community than those in Business or Science departments. This study also showed that males were more likely to become more open-minded towards same-sex sexuality the longer they were in college.

Another study by Gortmaker and Brown (2006) explored perceptions by lesbian

and gay students. Eighty lesbian and gay students were surveyed using five questions relating to lesbian and gay issues on campus. The researchers found that lesbian and gay needs can be addressed in several ways, including the creation of more social networks, safe spaces for dialogue, and the acknowledgment of the victimization of lesbians and gay individuals as an issue that must be responded to proactively rather than in silence and passivity.

Burleson (2010) also looked at the needs of the lesbian and gay student population. The researcher conducted a survey of graduate, undergraduate, and high school students about their educational choices and found that an open and accepting campus was an important factor used by members of the LGBTQ community in choosing a college.

Measuring Homophobia

The research team examined several existing scales that measure attitudes towards same-sex sexuality to determine which scale would be best suited for our study. The Wright, Adams, and Bernat Homophobia Scale (1999) consists of 25 items scored on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 meaning “strongly agree,” 3 meaning “neither agree nor disagree,” and 5 meaning “strongly disagree.” Some items ask about general attitudes towards the lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) community, for example: “Homosexuality is acceptable to me.” Some questions ask about the respondent's feelings towards gay and lesbian individuals: “It does not matter to me whether my friends are gay or straight.” Other questions ask about the respondent's prior or current behaviors towards gay and lesbian individuals: “I would hit a homosexual for coming on to me.” The developers of this scale tested their instrument and found that it strongly correlated with Hudson and

Ricketts' Index of Homophobia (IHP), confirming construct validity for the instrument (Wright, Adams, & Bernat, 1999). During testing the scale showed very good internal consistency and one-week test-retest reliability. Levels of homophobia appeared to be stable during a week-long period. However, unlike the IHP, the Homophobia Scale measures not just attitudes but also behavioral aspects of homophobia.

The researchers chose the Wright, Adams and Bernat Homophobia Scale for this study because of how short and understandable it is for the participants. It is also the only instrument that we found that looks at the behavioral response of homophobia, not simply attitudes and beliefs towards gays and lesbians—other scales neglect to look at the behavioral response to same-sex sexuality.

We also considered other instruments that have been used in the past to study attitudes towards same-sex sexuality by college students. Schellenberg, Hirt, and Sears (1999) used Herek's Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale. Herek's scale consists of 20 items intended for adult heterosexuals in the United States, with 10 items referring to gay men and 10 items about lesbians. Respondents to this survey indicate their level of agreement with the 20 statements, measured using a Likert scale, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

Chonody, Siebert, and Rutledge (2009) used the Index of Attitudes Toward Homosexuality, which has respondents rate 25 items, also using a five-point Likert scale. In this study, they made the decision to expand to six possible responses, with the third choice being "slightly agree" and the fourth being "slightly disagree." We noticed that researchers have used several different scales in the past to study homophobia, and chose the Wright, Adams, and Bernat Homophobia Scale because it was the most applicable to

this research question, as it measures a more complete understanding of homophobia.

For this project it was necessary to understand both the history of same-sex sexuality at Goshen College as well as review previous studies of attitudes towards the LGBTQ community at other colleges and universities. It was also helpful to discern which of many pre-existing and standardized scales to use to study homophobic or accepting attitudes of students and employees at Goshen College.

Methodology

For this study, we decided that the most adequate and comprehensive approach would be to incorporate a mixed methods research design. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized through administering both a focus group of the Goshen College LGBTQ community and a survey to the broader college campus. We chose to model our study on the Triangulation Design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The goal of this design is to obtain two different sets of data (focus group data and survey data) that will ideally complement one another. This was accomplished through comparing the focus group data with the survey data in order to gain an extensive view of both the LGBTQ community's personal experiences at Goshen College and the campus' opinions about policies and practices geared toward the LGBTQ community, as well as the campus' level of homophobia. Another benefit of using a mixed methods design was that the study encouraged various LGBTQ individuals to voice their opinions. At Goshen College and many other places, these opinions are not generally well-represented. Comparing these two different sets of data allowed the researchers to better understand the LGBTQ community's relationship with the broader Goshen College campus. The study was approved by the college's Institutional Review Board.

Quantitative study phase

The methodology for the quantitative portion of this study regarding LGBTQ acceptance on the Goshen College campus utilized two different sections to make up the 41-item survey. The first section was a 10-item non-standardized instrument developed specifically to examine the way Goshen College interacts with and accepts its LGBTQ community (Appendix A). The 10 items were designed to ascertain respondents' opinions toward Goshen College's LGBTQ policies and practice. Themes for the items in this portion of the survey were based on categories used in the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index (Campus Pride, 2006). The second portion of the instrument was a 25-item standardized instrument known as the Wright, Adam, and Bernat Homophobia Scale (Appendix B). This instrument was selected in order to understand the GC community's levels of homophobia. Other items on the survey solicited demographic information from the respondents (relationship to the college, years at GC, age, gender, identification with the LGBTQ community).

The survey was administered via email to every person with a current participating status in the Goshen College database. This database includes all students, employees, as well as recent graduates and retired faculty. A census rather than a sample was used in order to gather a general interpretation of the opinions of Goshen College as a whole. As Goshen College is a somewhat homogeneous population, the census was beneficial towards reaching a large, representative selection of the campus community. The survey and its results were all tabulated using the Qualtrics computer software program. The survey was available to be taken for a week.

Qualitative study phase

The other methodology we employed in order to answer the research question was a focus group. A focus group is a guided discussion that allows participants to give their perspectives on a particular issue, which was the most appropriate means to explore the lived experiences of LGBTQ individuals on the Goshen College campus (Cargan, 2007). The sample included seven students who consider themselves a part of the LGBTQ community at GC. They were asked eight questions to explain their experience at GC as members of the LGBTQ community. The questions were:

1. What did you expect GC to be like before you came? What were your expectations, if any, of Goshen College's LGBTQ community?
2. What was your experience of coming out? What was it like to come out to people at GC?
3. In what ways do you experience support at GC? Are there professors or other faculty who have been particularly helpful with this?
4. Are there ways in which you are reminded of your minority status in day to day interactions?
5. Have you experienced harassment or discrimination at GC? If so, how?
6. What more could the GC community do to support LGBTQ individuals and community?
7. Given your experience at GC, would you recommend it to other members of the LGBTQ community?
8. Is there anything that we haven't asked that you would like to mention?

A focus group was appropriate for the research question because it allowed a recording of the actual words of LGBTQ students while they reflected on their

experiences at Goshen College. By using a focus group we were also able to gain in-depth knowledge and detailed answers to the questions while still maintaining the participants' anonymity. The researchers used snowball sampling to recruit participants for the focus group. Snowball sampling is done by contacting one person or several people, who then contact the rest of the potential participants. A contact person for these individuals was identified, who then contacted the other members of the community. This sampling method was useful because the LGBTQ population on the Goshen College campus can be difficult to identify. The focus group was audio recorded. The audio file was then transcribed into a Word document, with the participants listed under code names to ensure their anonymity. From the transcription specific meaning units were identified and placed into categories. These categories were used to discover patterns and themes that occurred throughout the participants' responses. The frequency of each category was noted, and specific quotes were then chosen that represented predominant ideas.

Results

Quantitative study phase – Findings

The survey was well received by the GC community. The survey was sent to 1,410 people; 482 people started the survey and 440 people completed it, with a response rate of 31%. Of the respondents, 291 (66%) were students, 125 (28%) were employees, 14 (3%) were retired faculty, 2 were recent graduates, and 8 (2%) identified as other. Of the total participants, 257 (58%) identified as female, 168 (38%) identified as male, and 15 (3%) preferred not to answer. The survey also asked if the participant identified as a member of the LGBTQ community. Of the respondents, 407 (93%) answered no, 22 (5%) answered yes, and 11 (3%) preferred not to answer.

The first section of the survey consisted of a 10-item, non-standardized tool created to ascertain opinions about practices and policies at Goshen College with regards to the LGBTQ community. The first three items pertain to policies related to the recruitment and retention of LGBTQ students. In response to the first item, “It is important for the Goshen College (GC) admissions department to reach out to prospective lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) students,” 64% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. In response to the second item, “It is important for GC to address LGBTQ issues (i.e., use of inclusive language) during colloquium,” 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. For the third item, “It is important for GC to offer a mentoring program to welcome and assist LGBTQ students in transitioning to college life,” 67% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

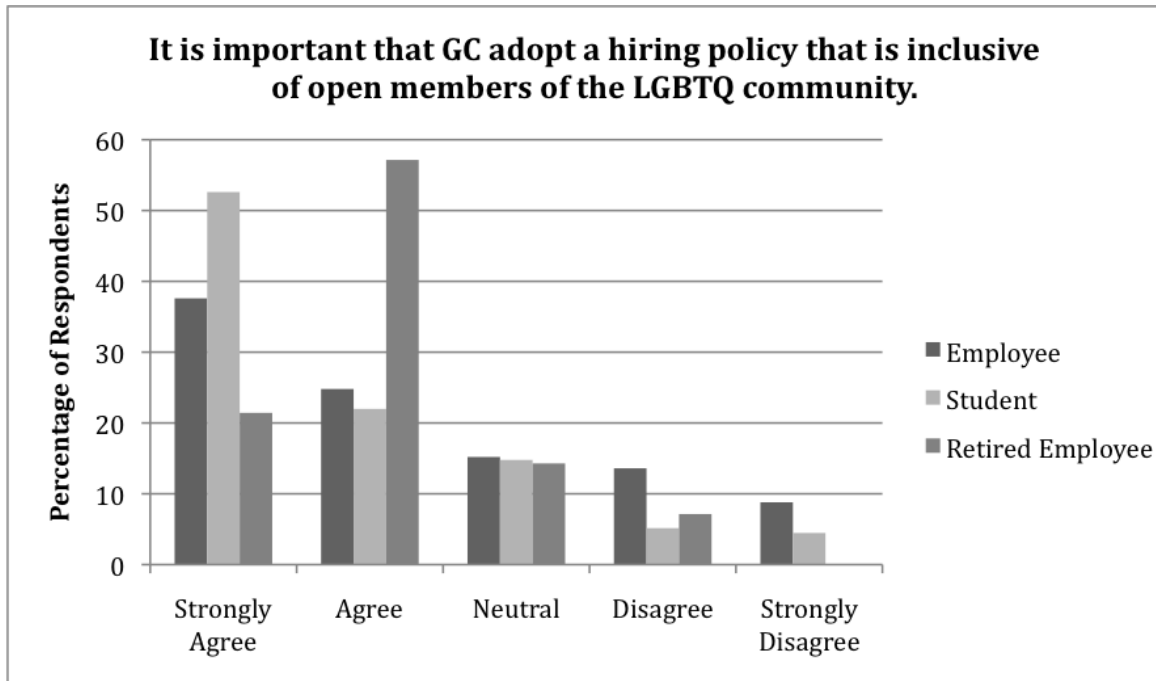
The next four items pertain to services available to LGBTQ students. The fourth item states, “It is important for GC to offer counseling services specific to LGBTQ students if they request it,” to which 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. In response to the fifth item, “It is important for GC to have a separate procedure to report and investigate incidents of LGBTQ-related harassment,” 54% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. The sixth item states, “It is important for GC to offer LGBTQ students a way to be matched with an LGBTQ-friendly roommate in applying for campus housing,” to which 76% percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. The seventh item states, “It is important that there are campus-wide events, such as chapel/convocation, which address issues relevant to the LGBTQ community,” to which 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

The last three items pertain to the general climate on campus and the policies and

practices in regards to faculty at GC. The eight item states, “It is important to have a climate on campus that encourages open discussion of LGBTQ issues,” to which 89% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. In response to the ninth item, “It is important that faculty and staff receive mandatory training to increase their sensitivity to LGBTQ issues,” 58% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Finally, for the tenth item, “It is important that GC adopt a hiring policy that is inclusive of open members of the LGBTQ community,” 71% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

Three items from this 10-item questionnaire revealed statistically significant differences between students and employees. When presented with the statement, “It is important for GC to have a separate procedure to report and investigate incidents of LGBTQ-related harassment” (item 5), 61% of students answered “agree” or “strongly agree,” while 38% of current employees and 57% of retired employees responded similarly. The statement, “It is important that faculty and staff receive mandatory training to increase their sensitivity to LGBTQ issues” (item 9) elicited responses of “agree” or “strongly agree” from 65% of students, 50% of employees, and 43% of retired employees. Finally, for the statement, “It is important that GC adopt a hiring policy that is inclusive of open members of the LGBTQ community” (item 10), 76% of students, 62% of employees, and 79% of retired employees answered “agree” or “strongly agree” (Figure 1).

Figure 1



The second part of the survey consisted of the Wright, Adams, and Bernat Homophobia Scale. Using the scoring information provided by the authors (Wright, Adams, & Bernat, 1999), a composite score for the GC community was calculated.

Possible scores for the Homophobia Scale range from 0 to 100, with 0 being the least homophobic and 100 being the most homophobic. The composite score for respondents to the Homophobia Scale was 16.37.

The research team examined responses to items referring to more aggressive behaviors to see if there was any correlation between aggression and the gender of the respondent. When we conducted cross-tabulations on items that reflect aggressive behaviors, like item 16 (“I make derogatory remarks about gay people”) and item 29 (“I would hit a homosexual for coming on to me”), there was no statistically significant correlation with the gender of the respondent. This was the case for all the items that pertain to aggressive behavior.

Although the items that refer to more aggressive behaviors do not correlate to the gender of the respondent, there were other items that did correlate with the gender of the respondent. A few examples of these items include “Gay people make me nervous,” “Homosexuality is acceptable to me,” and “It does not matter to me whether my friends are gay or straight.” In all 10 items that indicated statistically significant differences with regards to gender, women tended to be more supportive of the LGBTQ community and demonstrate less anxiety towards LGBTQ individuals. While previous research by Wright, Adams, and Bernat (1999) found that men score significantly higher on the homophobia scale, we were not able to calculate separate composite scores for men and women, and thus can make no general conclusions about gender and homophobia.

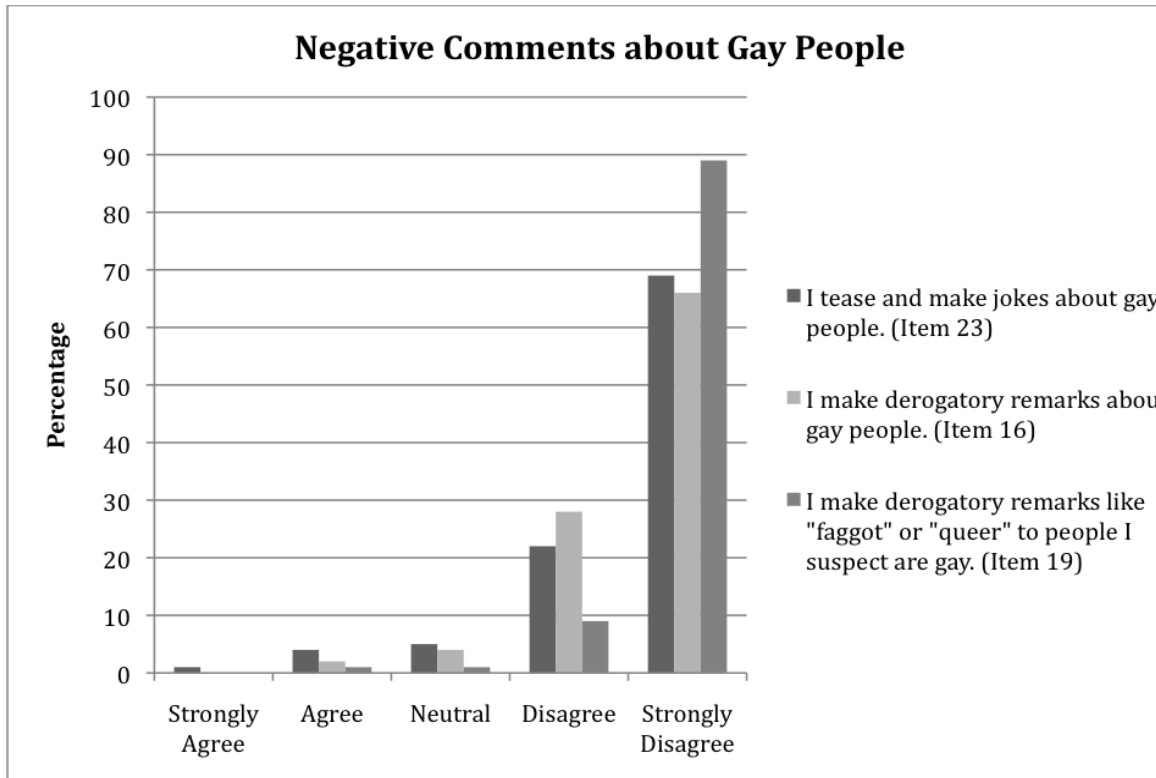
Three items in the Homophobia Scale indicated a significant difference in responses from employees and students: item 23, “I tease and make jokes about gay people,” item 25, “I fear homosexual persons will make sexual advances towards me,”

and item 34, “When I meet someone I try to find out if he/she is gay.” Employees in all three cases were significantly less homophobic.

Several items on the Homophobia Scale indicated similar themes to each other, but reflected differing levels of acceptance, based on how strongly the statements were worded. For example, in item 14, “If I discovered a friend was gay I would end the friendship,” 97% of respondents answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” However, when posed with the statement in item 21, “It would not upset me if I learned that a close friend was homosexual,” only 74% of respondents answered “agree” or “strongly agree,” which is significantly less accepting.

Similarly, in item 23, “I tease and make jokes about gay people,” 91% of respondents answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” In item 16, “I make derogatory remarks about gay people,” 93% responded “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” In the even more strongly stated item 19, “I make derogatory remarks like ‘faggot’ or ‘queer’ to people I suspect are gay,” 98% indicated “disagree” or “strongly disagree” (Figure 2).

Figure 2



From these examples, it is clear that respondents were more accepting and supportive of items worded more generally, such as “I tease and make jokes about gay people,” and more homophobic for items stated more strongly.

An open-ended optional item (“Please feel free to share further opinions you have about Goshen College policies and practices regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) individuals”) was included on the survey. There were 163 responses representing many different viewpoints regarding the LGBTQ community. Responses to this open-ended item were coded and grouped into 16 categories. The following six categories reflect typical comments: Loving and supportive comments towards the LGBTQ community (mentioned 49 times), support of an open hiring policy (mentioned 32 times), same-sex sexuality as sinful (mentioned 11 times), desire for

dialogue (mentioned 7 times), embracing diversity on campus (mentioned 5 times), and concerns about Goshen College's reputation (mentioned 4 times).

The following quotes illustrate predominant themes from the comments to this item: "It is time that we, as a Christian community, came together to love and accept all people, not just the ones who most resemble us." Another person stated, "I feel homosexual behavior is immoral and is clearly against Biblical principles." Yet another noted, "If we are going against Mennonite tradition by playing the [national] anthem, we can certainly go against Mennonite tradition by becoming an affirming institution."

Qualitative study phase – Findings

The focus group demographics consisted of seven participants. Three of the participants identified as bisexual, two identified as gay, one as lesbian, and one as asexual. The age of the participants ranged from 19 to 22 years, with five of them being sophomores as well as one junior and one senior.

The findings from the focus group were categorized into six different themes: expectations and assumptions, coming out, identity, support, minority status, and recommendations.

Expectations and Assumptions

The theme of expectations and assumptions from the focus group revealed that the participants had high expectations of Goshen College because of the college's reputation within the wider Mennonite Church community. One person said, "*Just hearing from other people and also growing up in the Goshen College community I assumed that it*

would be a little bit more open than other Mennonite schools,” while another declared, “Goshen sounded like a pretty open-minded place about people of alternate sexual orientations.” Goshen College’s reputation of LGBTQ friendliness actually drew one student to enroll here: “I had actually heard a lot of bad things about Goshen because of how accepting they were of gay and lesbian people. So I kind of knew that you know, this might be the place for me.” Another student said, “Overall I’ve just felt very accepted both by this community, Prism, and also by the broader student body, and by many faculty members as well.” These comments, and many others, from the focus group paint the picture of Goshen College being assumed to be quite affable and accepting of LGBTQ persons.

Coming Out

Coming out was another theme that was quite prevalent throughout the focus group as the participants talked their experiences with this monumental decision. Some came out during high school but the majority of the participants did not, commenting about their difficulties of the coming out process before Goshen College: “In high school and at the other college I attended I just felt very much like I had to keep it a secret.” Most focus group participants identified Goshen as a reasonably safe and accepting environment to be open about their sexuality. As one participant commented, “I only came out to myself at Goshen, and I found it a warm and welcoming environment.” One participant was surprised at the acceptance he received from his peers: “I remember the first time I came out to anyone here was with the group of people I’m living with. I built it up to be this huge thing, like ‘I have to tell you all something,’ and then I said it and they were like, ‘Oh, ok that’s awesome,’ like it was so chill, and that’s part of what I’ve

experienced here.” Experiences like this made it easier for the focus group participants to fit into the GC community.

Identity

A recurring theme that came out of the focus group was identity—how the participants viewed themselves as members of the LGBTQ community and their self-acceptance of this identity. One participant who recently came out described the ambiguity of an LGBTQ identity: *“I’m figuring it out myself, honestly, and so that’s hard because I’ve only been gay to myself for a year and a half so it’s all coming together and I don’t have it figured out at all.”* Another said, *“This is not something I would want for myself, and I’ve come to terms with it, but there’s still times when I wish I could...live a ‘normal’ life.”* One participant explained the importance of self-acceptance: *“You’re very forced to own that identity. You won’t be happy unless you own that identity.”*

Support

Emotional support was another heavily discussed topic of the focus group as participants mentioned the various ways in which others advocated for them. The campus group Prism was identified as being a key function of support for the participants. Prism, as well as other groups, was vital for one student. This student went on to say, *“Groups like Prism or Advocates or GSWA [Goshen Student Women’s Association] are all really supportive, and it’s really important to have them there.”* One participant described why Prism and other groups have been so affirming:

When you have a group of friends that has a strong percentage that is gay or lesbian or bisexual or whatever, just all those boundaries are out the window completely. Which I think is one of the biggest benefits of being friends with

people like that, or having that community. You don't have to sit around and worry about whether you'll make the right impression, or give someone the wrong idea by the way you talk, or the way that you touch them or interact with them. And that can be really, really big and really valuable.

Some students and professors were also recognized as being supportive, in particular those who posted Safe Zone stickers. One participant, upon seeing the Safe Zone stickers on office doors, commented, *"I just remember coming here as a prospective [prospective student] and even though I didn't know these people...I just felt more welcome there than I did at my other college because I knew people there that made an effort to say, 'I am somebody who you can talk to and who you can be open with and I'm not going to reject you.'"* Participants identified the individual support of students and professors as vital in the process of coming to terms with their sexuality. *"Professors in particular are, as much as students, very open-minded,"* one participant said. She identified herself as LGBTQ to professors she felt comfortable enough with, and the general consensus of the focus group regarding professors was that they are reasonably affirming of the LGBTQ community: *"Overall faculty here do a decent job of being open about the fact that they are allies."*

Despite the positive experiences of support on an individual level from students and professors, there were more negative issues relating to the administration and institution as a whole. One participant expressed her annoyance: *"Just knowing that no matter how open the individuals are on our campus, that the actual institution is not, that's kind of frustrating."* This frustration with the institution's intolerance was also heightened by the handling of particular student clubs and other LGBTQ-affirming

endeavors: *“One of the first things I heard about Prism or Advocates or even GSWA or the Human Sexuality class or all of those things was that they kind of flew under the radar of the administration a lot of the time, or were kind of on the administration's black list,”* commented one participant. While there certainly was frustration and agreement that the college as an institution does not support LGBTQ people, there were areas in which there was a much more positive view of Goshen College as an institution. *“The Human Sexuality class right now is really great, and there have been a couple other classes that I have taken that have at least dedicated some amount of time to talking about gay rights issues. I think that the fact that it’s something that gets talked about in classes is a really positive thing,”* commented one participant.

A lack of support was also clearly noted when the topic of the Mennonite Church appeared in the conversation. One Goshen College professor wrote an article on sexuality for a publication, to which one student responded, *“It wasn't necessarily gay-bashing or something like that, but said we've talked about the issue of being gay in the church; we made the decision that we don't want to have to be inclusive to that community, so why are we still talking about it? And that I found to be incredibly offensive.”* This article impacted her on a personal level. The student continued,

This is a very important part of my identity. It's really important; it's an even more important part of the identity for a lot of people I care about immensely. So to say,... ‘We can stop talking about it...we've already figured out that we don't want you to be a part of the church, now why don't you just go away or deny a very strong part of your identity’ just seems very insensitive....

Minority Status

The most prevalent theme that came out of the focus group was that of minority status for LGBTQ people at Goshen College, as they are constantly reminded that their sexual orientation is different than that of the heterosexual majority. This difference in sexual preference was especially evident in the language used by LGBTQ members themselves and the broader student body and faculty.

Gay jokes were an element of the theme of minority status from the focus group. One participant mentioned, *“My friends...make a lot of jokes about me being gay. I know they're only joking, they're just picking on me, but sometimes they do it all the time. I don't really see it as a big deal.”* While the participant understood his friend’s comments as jocular banter, there were occasions when he thought that his friends took the joking too far. Students indicated that gay jokes often occurred when heterosexuals were unaware of LGBTQ students being around them. One participant said, *“I've also heard some comments from students on my hall when they don't realize there are people around who could be hearing it, and then if I confront them it's, like, ‘Oh ok I shouldn't have said that.’ Sometimes that's a little thing that bothers me, if people are still being discriminatory when they don't think people can hear you.”* Occasionally heterosexual students would forget that they were in the presence of LGBTQ students.

Gay jokes were also used by LGBTQ persons themselves in a humorous fashion as one participant noted, *“I call my friends, I make fun of them for being gay if they do things like, I don't know, wear purple argyle sweaters.”* Although these jokes were quite prevalent in the LGBTQ community, it was still understood that the jokes did reinforce stereotypes; a participant said, *“That's all perfectly harmless and stuff like that, but it does reinforce the stereotype that you know, gay men wear purple V-neck shirts and*

lesbians wear flannel.” While they were aware that stereotypes were being reinforced, the humor of the comments was seen as overriding the potentially harmful stereotypes, as another participant noted, *“I think that when it happens in the gay community it's a way of just laughing at yourself, because I think that's a defense mechanism.... I realize we're reinforcing [stereotypes], but I think you have to have a sense of humor about yourself, just like everyone else.”*

Focus group participants view close friends as allies, which can give them special permission to use language that would normally be viewed by members of the LGBTQ community as derogatory. Allies can sometimes use this language without it being deemed discriminatory by those LGBTQ people granting these allowances. One participant noted: *“I have a friend that calls me a dyke pretty often, and I'm okay with that when it's just your friends and whatever.”* This participant complained that at times these allowances are misused, not fully appreciated or completely understood, however:

I think some people don't understand, like I've had to clarify that with my friend, 'You know you can call me a dyke, but you're not allowed to call anyone else a dyke, that's not cool. That's some language that gay people can use in their own community, but that's not language that you can use, and you can use it with me because I say you can, but that's not something you can say.'

Another participant described this situation as analogous to that of pejorative language use within racial minority groups when it was used within the gay community:

With the gay community, it's like with the Latino community when they use slang or in the African American community where they have the N-word and its okay

for them to say it amongst each other. But if someone, a white, or someone of another race would use it against them it would just be really, really offensive, that's how I kind of see it.

Contributing to the minority status of LGBTQ members on Goshen College's campus is the fact that issues relating to the LGBTQ community are considered to be taboo topics. One participant described an experience in convocation in which LGBTQ issues were directly neglected:

They did that survey where students listed off problems they had with the church and I would say over half of the responses that they had on the screen had to do with LGBTQ people in the church not feeling welcome, or not being welcome. And then the speakers that day, didn't, I think one of them once mentioned homosexuality, but they never really said that as an issue. I think some of them skirted around the topic, but it just didn't feel like they could say it in chapel that [the exclusion of LGBTQ people] is an issue.

This participant added, *"I know for a fact that the people who spoke that day were accepting, but they for whatever reason didn't feel like they could say that in the chapel setting."* Since chapel and convocation are held twice a week, and are forums where personal, intellectual and social questions are addressed, the fact that LGBTQ issues are not discussed would certainly contribute to reinforcing the participants' minority status.

Heterosexual privilege was another way in which participants were reminded of their minority status at Goshen College. Much like white privilege, heterosexual privilege is the daily norms that are taken for granted that LGBTQ people must be aware of and

negotiate. This was a daily occurrence as one participant described, *“I feel like I can’t be in a relationship here on campus really, just because of how many straight couples I just see walking around kissing or walking with [someone] holding hands and it’s just hard for me to see that.”* This heterosexual privilege also leads into the dilemma of attraction versus friendship and the frustration that goes along with the complication of heterosexual versus same-sex sexual relationships. *“I feel like it’s rule number one. Don’t have crushes on straight people, and that’s almost impossible,”* said one participant, while another commented, *“I just feel in a weird middle ground where I have no options, or social power.”* Sexual power is also associated with this dichotomy of attraction and friendship as one participant described a situation with a friend she experienced:

It’s a weird line between saying, ‘I’m going to treat you like any other friend’ and realizing that they have power over you, and not to mess with that power. [I have a friend who can be] manipulative with the way she does touch me, or the things she does say to me. It’s just a hard place to be in, because either way I feel like I wouldn’t be quite happy, like if she just stopped completely, it would be like ‘No, I can control this,’ but when she sticks her hand in my back pocket in a really flirtatious way it’s like, ‘Hmm... don’t do that, that’s messing with my head.’

Suggestions for improvement

Toward the end of the focus group, the participants identified suggestions and recommendations they believe could help improve the campus climate for LGBTQ persons. In particular, participants suggested the recognition of openly gay faculty. As one participant pointed out, *“I think it would be helpful if there could be openly gay faculty.”* Another participant added, *“I’m kind of aware of the fact that there are a few*

gay faculty members, but I think that's pretty, you don't talk about that. So if I knew them better I would feel comfortable going to them and wanting to talk about it.” One participant expressed her need for a confidant and a source of comfort. *“It would be nice to talk to someone who knew what it was like, and I don't feel like I can because I feel like it has to be kind of a hush-hush thing.”*

Official recognition of Prism by Goshen College was another recommendation that was strongly supported during the focus group. While there was concern about it achieving club status because of the vulnerability of its members, some of whom may not be ready to be openly gay, some students have accepted the idea that Prism does not fit the qualifications to be a club. One student said, *“I think the only issue with that is it's not an open club, and to be recognized by the school it must be open to everyone, which is also why it's not recognized as a club,”* while another said, *“If we're going to stay with Prism, no, we would like to keep it GLBTQIA then we can't be officially a club.”* While official club status was understood as unattainable, one participant commented, *“Even if we weren't at club status I still wish we were recognized by the school as something that is going on.”* Another student continued with this idea by saying, *“I wish they included it on the website under the clubs saying this is another resource, this is not an official club but this is a part of the resources that we have available on campus.”*

A recommendation that clearly stood out from the rest was that of respect for LGBTQ persons. Paralleling experiences from the civil rights and women's suffrage movement, one participant summed up the issue of respect for LGBTQ students on campus:

I think it's important to respect. We ask for respect as a community, for people to respect our existence, and we in turn will respect the fact that there are straight people that are sometimes going to be uncomfortable with us, but at the same time I think there should be at least a mutual respect for beliefs, if not a complete acceptance. And so, in some ways that's the most important thing to happen, so it's very frustrating when students can't respect the fact that we at least want to have our own presence here on campus.

Discussion and Recommendations

The intent of this research project was to explore the attitudes of the Goshen College community towards the LGBTQ population and better understand the lived experiences of LGBTQ students on campus. Using a mixed methods study design with a focus group and a survey revealed different but complementary data on the topic.

Survey Data

The survey responses to items 1 through 10, regarding the importance of various statements about policies and practices relating to same-sex sexuality at Goshen College, were fairly supportive—though not as much as the Homophobia Scale. The average of those who agreed or strongly agreed with the first 10-item questionnaire was 72%, while the average of those who agreed or strongly agreed with items on the Homophobia Scale (after reverse-scoring some items) was 85.2%. Three of the first ten items contained responses that indicated statistically significant differences between students and employees, with students being more supportive in all three cases. Two of these are issues directly relating to employees, which could be a reason employees were less likely to be supportive. Additionally, employees might have been less supportive of item 9

because they are opposed to receiving any type of mandatory training, rather than any resistance towards becoming more LGBTQ-friendly, as indicated in several responses to the open-ended question.

The survey data indicated a fairly low score on the Homophobia Scale of 16.37. The Homophobia Scale revealed several statistically significant differences in responses to specific items from males and females, though there is no indication that the overall data is significantly different with regards to gender. Although we thought there would be a gendered difference in the items relating to aggression, this was not the case.

There were few statistically significant differences in the responses from students and employees on the Homophobia Scale. Only three items indicated a significant difference between employees and students, and in each case employees were more accepting. We wonder if this difference in responses is because these items are perceived as more directly relating to students than to employees, younger rather than older adults. Additionally, those items that are more abstract, such as item 22, “Homosexuality is immoral,” received responses that were more supportive (73% said “disagree” or “strongly disagree”) than statements that brought the issue closer to home, especially for college students, as in item 28, “I would feel comfortable having a gay roommate” (64% indicated “agree” or “strongly agree”). This may indicate that individuals are less comfortable with LGBTQ individuals in such a close, personal context.

Over one third of survey respondents commented on the open-ended item, and most of these comments were supportive as well. Responses came from both students and employees, males and females, and covered a broad range of opinions, though the vast majority of comments reflected support of LGBTQ people at Goshen College. The

fact that there were so many comments, some of which were paragraphs long, shows that this is an issue that is important to many people at Goshen College, and indicates very clearly that people at GC, both students and employees, are interested and willing to engage issues of same-sex sexuality at this point in time.

Focus Group Data

Overall, the researchers heard positive responses from the focus group of LGBTQ students, and affirmation that Goshen College is generally a good place to be. The LGBTQ students noted, however, that while individuals that make up the Goshen College community are generally supportive, they often receive mixed messages from the institution itself. While they acknowledged that many individual students and faculty are supportive, they also get a different message from the institution as a whole, which reminds them that they are not fully accepted at Goshen College. As students, many recognize that they have benefited from being able to meet in a support group and have allies among the faculty, but some also noted frustration with the fact that Goshen College would not hire them if they wanted to be open as an LGBTQ employee.

Overall Data

Both the survey and focus group demonstrated the extent of acceptance of the LGBTQ community at Goshen College, though in different ways. Several major themes emerged from both the focus group and the survey, namely the difference between individual and institutional acceptance, the desire to change the hiring policy, and the need for dialogue. While the Homophobia Scale revealed a relatively low score, indicating general acceptance, statements on the survey regarding policy and practice at

Goshen College were not supported to the same extent. However, one policy that did receive a significant amount of comments in the open-ended question on the survey, as well as conversation in the focus group was with regards to Goshen College's current policy to not hire openly LGBTQ employees. As mentioned, 71% of all respondents indicated "agree" or "strongly agree" with the need to change the hiring policy, and 20% of the open-ended items were clearly in support of an open hiring policy as well. A number of comments in the survey and focus group also referred to a desire for more dialogue on the subject, and a campus climate that encourages discussion of LGBTQ issues.

Limitations and Further Study

One limitation of this research was the use of the Homophobia Scale, which provided an accurate reflection of the degree of homophobia at Goshen College, but could have been more nuanced as well. Homophobia refers to extreme dislike of and lack of support for LGBTQ persons, which has been shown to be minimal at Goshen College. However, as the focus group identified and is apparent to some extent in the survey responses as well, heterosexism continues to be a significant problem at Goshen College. Heterosexism is a more subtle privileging of a heterosexual standard, something Goshen College certainly assumes for its employees, if not hopes.

Another limitation pertains to the anonymous nature of the survey. The Homophobia Scale is designed for individual use, while this research project combined the responses to calculate a composite score for all of the respondents. We decided that offering anonymity to the respondents of a survey such as this, which dealt with a sensitive issue, outweighed the ability to calculate individual scores for the Homophobia

Scale.

We would also like to recognize that this research focused more on issues relating to lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals than transgender people. While it is our hope that trans issues are also addressed at Goshen College, another limitation of this study was the strong focus on same-sex sexuality, especially in the Homophobia Scale.

Additionally, we found that throughout the process, a theme emerged of Goshen College's relationship with the Mennonite Church, which is a complicating factor in institutional acceptance of the LGBTQ community at GC. A number of survey respondents commented on the role of Goshen College in the broader Mennonite Church, arguing that GC should either lead or follow the Mennonite Church on this issue. Perhaps a future study could focus more on the attitudes of members of the Mennonite Church on the issue of same-sex sexuality.

Recommendations

Both the focus group and the open-ended item on the survey identified several suggestions that we would like to offer as recommendations. First, the focus group asked that Goshen College as an institution recognize Prism as an official group and give them funding as they do to other clubs. Many of the students in the focus group understand that Prism should not necessarily have the same status as a campus club, because the members prefer to remain confidential and anonymous. However, a number of the focus group participants noted that Prism is not given the same official recognition as other clubs and wish for more direct institutional support, including funding. While Prism receives some financial support from other sources, the issue is about more than the money—members of Prism want to feel that the institution of Goshen College supports them.

A second recommendation concerning the hiring policy emerged from both the focus group and the survey responses. Currently, employees are required to abide by the Mennonite Confession of Faith, which declares that sexual relations are only appropriate in a marriage of one man and one woman for life. It is current practice at Goshen College to hire either celibate or “closeted” LGBTQ employees—a hiring policy colloquially referred to as “don’t ask, don’t tell.” Openly LGBTQ employees are currently prohibited from working for Goshen College. The focus group identified a lack of LGBTQ role models as one issue they would like to see changed, and expressed dissatisfaction with the hiring policy, calling it a justice issue of discrimination against sexual minorities. A number of survey respondents also commented on the hiring policy at Goshen College.

With this data in mind, we recommend that Goshen College begin an intentional dialogue process with regards to the current hiring policy. This should involve conversations among students, employees, alumni, and other Goshen College constituent groups throughout a specific time period, listening to the plurality of voices around this issue and determining next steps in order to reconcile the hiring policy with the desires of the GC community. This public process will involve some risk for the LGBTQ individuals who work for Goshen College but are not open about their sexual orientation, as well as potential LGBTQ employees. We acknowledge this reality, and believe that the long-term benefits of a public dialogue process outweigh the possible disadvantages.

Along with this, we recommend that there be more intentional conversation about same-sex sexuality at Goshen College. There are currently two courses that deal specifically with this issue—Human Sexuality and Religion and Sexuality. It is our hope that discussions and information about same-sex sexuality can be made more widely

available to the student population. The focus group participants mentioned that they would like to see LGBTQ issues addressed to a greater extent in chapels and convocations. Also, of all respondents to the survey item, “It is important that there are campus-wide events, such as chapel/convocation, which address issues relevant to the LGBTQ community,” 75% indicated “agree” or “strongly agree,” while 75% “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement “It is important for GC to address LGBTQ issues (i.e., use of inclusive language) during colloquium.” Thus, we recommend that Goshen College more intentionally include issues relating to the LGBTQ community in convocations, chapels, and the colloquium class for incoming first-year students, among other venues.

Conclusion

This mixed methods study used data gathered through a survey of the Goshen College community and a focus group of LGBTQ students to explore acceptance of LGBTQ students at GC. The results indicate that while LGBTQ individuals at Goshen College are, for the most part, accepted and supported by the students and employees that make up the college community, the institution of Goshen College does not demonstrate the same level of acceptance. LGBTQ students and allies identified recognition of the support group Prism, chapels and convocations that address LGBTQ concerns, and the hiring of openly LGBTQ faculty as important steps that Goshen College can take to become more welcoming and inclusive at the institutional level.

Is there a place at the table for our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning brothers and sisters? At Goshen College, there are no place settings, but many of the other dinner guests are pulling up chairs and sharing dishes, squeezing them

in as best they can. It is time for those who have the power and authority to set the table to stop pretending that by not setting a place for LGBTQ individuals, they can keep them from showing up, and that the voices of these individuals will not be heard. What is hospitality if not the work of Christ? What is the church if not the body of Christ? And what is Goshen College if it fails to do the work of the church? We hope that the data and recommendations from this study will be used to promote more intentional dialogue at Goshen College and in the broader Mennonite Church, as both entities grapple with what it means to be Christ-centered, inclusive institutions.

APPENDIX A

This questionnaire is designed to measure your opinions to Goshen College policies and practices regarding Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender, and Questioning individuals (LGBTQ). It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item by checking the number after each question as follows:

- 1 = Strongly agree
- 2 = Agree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Disagree
- 5 = Strongly disagree

1. It is important for the Goshen College (GC) admissions department to provide outreach to prospective lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) students.

2. It is important for GC to address LGBTQ issues (i.e., use of inclusive language) during colloquium.

3. It is important for GC to offer a mentoring program to welcome and assist LGBTQ students in transitioning to college life.

4. It is important for GC to offer counseling services specific to LGBTQ students if they request it.

5. It is important for GC to have a separate procedure to report and investigate incidents of LGBTQ-related harassment.

6. It is important for GC to offer LGBTQ students a way to be matched with a LGBTQ-friendly roommate in applying for campus housing.

7. It is important that there are campus-wide events, such as chapel/convocation, which address issues relevant to the LGBTQ community.

8. It is important to have a climate on campus that encourages open discussion of LGBTQ issues.

9. It is important that faculty and staff receive mandatory training to increase their sensitivity to LGBTQ issues.

10. It is important that GC adopt a hiring policy that is inclusive of open members of the LGBTQ community.

APPENDIX B

This questionnaire is designed to measure your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors with regards to homosexuality. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers.

Answer each item by checking the number after each question as follows:

1 = Strongly agree

2 = Agree

3 = Neither agree nor disagree

4 = Disagree

5 = Strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
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1. Gay people make me nervous.

2. Gay people deserve what they get.

3. Homosexuality is acceptable to me.

4. If I discovered a friend was gay I would end the friendship.

5. I think homosexual people should not work with children.

6. I make derogatory remarks about gay people.

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7. I enjoy the company of gay people.

8. Marriage between homosexual individuals is acceptable.

9. I make derogatory remarks like "faggot" or "queer" to people I suspect are gay.

10. It does not matter to me whether my friends are gay or straight.

11. It would upset me if I learned that a close friend was homosexual.

12. Homosexuality is immoral.

13. I tease and make jokes about gay people.

14. I feel that you cannot trust a person who is homosexual.

15. I fear homosexual persons will make sexual advances towards me.

16. Organizations which promote gay rights are not necessary.

17. I have damaged property of a gay person, such as "keying" their car.

18. I would feel uncomfortable having a gay roommate.

19. I would hit a homosexual for coming on to me.

20. Homosexual behavior should not be against the law.

21. I avoid gay individuals.

22. It bothers me to see two homosexual people together in public.

23. When I see a gay person I think, "What a waste."

24. When I meet someone I try to find out if he/she is gay.

25. I have rocky relationships with people that I suspect are gay.

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