

UC SANTA CRUZ

PROPOSAL
FOR A
GAY, LESBIAN,
BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDERED
RESOURCE CENTER
AT UCSC

Submitted to the
Student Fee Advisory Committee
March 12, 1997

Why a GLBT Resource Center at UCSC?

When we began writing this proposal, we imagined that we knew all of the (very compelling) reasons to initiate a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Resource Center (GLBTRC) at UCSC at this time in history. But as we talked with students, staff, and faculty, even more reasons emerged.

As we did our research, two points, in particular, became clear: GLBT students face more retention challenges and are in more pain than even we realized. And, just as important, a great many folks on campus—both GLBT and not—feel that a GLBT center would do far more than support GLBT students (important as that work is). Over and over, we heard how much a GLBT center would do to deepen the entire campus community's awareness and celebration of the ways in which all of us are and feel different.

We have listed below what we see as the most pressing reasons to bring a GLBT center into being. In addition, we have attached an appendix that tries to convey a detailed idea of the challenges that GLBT students face because of their GLBT identities (overt or not). We would also be happy to talk with the SFAC about any questions, reactions, or concerns you may have as you read through our "needs statement," our list of proposed GLBTRC activities, and our budget below. Thanks so much for your attention to this heartfelt proposal!

1) UCSC's Analysis and Planning Office did a very extensive report (titled "The Educational Climate for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Students") that outdoes any statistical work we could have performed. It notes that "about 1,450 UCSC students are gay, lesbian or bisexual"—a very large cohort, and one that needs targeted support services that just aren't available right now.

2) The "Climate" report drew several other major conclusions—some heartening, some not. For example, more than 50% of the GLB students surveyed had suffered some form of harassment, 30% said that they were uncomfortable in on-campus housing because of their sexual orientation, over 20% said they concealed their orientation to avoid harassment, 20% felt that homosexuality was generally talked about negatively on campus, and 16% feared for their physical safety on campus (among many other dismaying results). On the other hand, the report noted: "Students who had attended workshops or courses which discussed GLB issues were significantly less homophobic than those who had not. In addition, the more GLB people a student knew, the lower the student's homophobia. Further, the better a student knew a GLB individual, the lower their homophobia." In other words, the report documented statistically some bad news about life for GLBT students—but it also made clear that targeted education and outreach make a huge difference for all.

3) The report explored several other aspects of the campus climate, finding that only 40% of students knew about UCSC's policy prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Encouragingly, though, it also discovered that most students wanted more information on GLB issues. These facts, combined with the statistics above, give a strong, positive idea of how needed—and welcome—the activities of a GLBT center would be.

4) The situation reflected in the "Climate" report is not, of course, unique to UCSC—so much so that four other UCs have already decided to create GLBT centers with reg fee funding (Riverside, Irvine, UCLA, and Berkeley). The systemwide Association of Chancellor's Advisory Committees on GLBT issues has made the establishment of GLBT resource centers at the remaining campuses their top priority—and when the Association

meets at UCSC next spring, we would be delighted to announce that UCSC is at the front of the pack! (In addition, there are GLBT centers at Indiana, Iowa State, Penn State, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, UMass, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, Wisconsin, and 30+ other state schools.)

5) At UCSC, there are about 1,450 GLBT students needing targeted support and an entire campus wanting education and outreach on diversity issues. Yet responsibility for this support and education now rests with two staggeringly overworked student CLUH coordinators (who, of course, change every year and are away in the summer) and whomever among the staff and faculty can manage to free up a few hours week to week. The size of the GLBT cohort, and the desire for campuswide education, clearly call for the kind of thoughtful, well-coordinated, full-time presence that a GLBTRC would provide. Without a center, the campus will keep on burning out the few volunteers able to commit to GLBT support and education each year, campuswide education will never happen on the scale that so many would like to see, and GLBT students will wonder where to turn for help with their particular needs.

6) As that suggests, one of the greatest problems that GLBT students face is the question of where they can safely seek support with personal, academic, and work issues that touch on their GLBT identities. Often, a situation that is already painful for them becomes much more so, as they decide to keep quiet about it or mention it only to friends who share their uncertainty about where to turn. A GLBTRC would let the entire campus know that reliable, seasoned, "one-stop" help is available with a wide range of dilemmas—coming out, classroom and workplace homophobia, verbal and physical harassment, roommate discomfort, parental disapproval and rejection, job and housing loss (and, unfortunately, much, much more).

"Slice-of-Life" Stories from GLBT Students

These are only a few of the personal stories we gathered for this proposal.

From a recent graduate:

"My first year, I lived in dorms where there were only three 'out' people (myself not included). There were no role models, no one to identify with. Even though I have a liberal family, I still had great concern that I would lose all support from them. I came out to my employer because of fear that I would be fired if he found out another way.

"My second year, I lived on campus again, as an RA. My door was spit on at least every week. People wrote 'Die Fags' on my door, and crossed out my gay-positive quotes. Flyers establishing a safe space and pride were regularly torn down. My personal property was continually damaged. My second job downtown was very hostile towards gays, and fag jokes were common. During Awareness Week, College 8 residents threw pennies at us during the Queer Take Back the Night March.

"Third year, I was again an RA. Cowell students yelled, 'Kill all fags' and 'All fags should die.' My door was knocked on and before I was able to answer, someone yelled, 'Fucking fag.' For a long time I was worried about opening my door. There was a bomb threat at a GLBT theme residence hall.

"While these are extreme cases of harassment, there was also daily harassment: dirty looks, tsk-tsk-ing, mutterings under the breath, finger-pointing, staring, spitwads shot in class, paper thrown in class, an abundance of anti-gay graffiti in the bathrooms, fag jokes told everywhere, and a general lack of support (or knowledge of where to get support) from faculty and staff."

From current students:

"We have to change our housing all the time. It's much better off-campus."

"We get lots of verbal harassment."

"People have no idea what it's like to always worry whether it's safe to hold hands in public. Or what it's like to walk around at night being scared—realistically—of gaybashing."

"My dorm-mates sent a woman up to my room to try and seduce me into being straight."

"Our posters for GLBT events are torn down and defaced."

"When we put women's faces on our flyers, they're burned out. Our other posters are left in strips on the ground, partly burned."

"Right next to the pink triangle at Porter, someone wrote: 'Fucking dyke' and 'No fags.'"

"I was beaten up at a club in San Jose. It was a hate crime, but it was totally mishandled."

What a GLBT Resource Center Would Do

- Increase retention of GLBT students by identifying specific factors related to their retention, connecting them with existing retention-enhancing services, and developing other services as needed and appropriate
- Assist students with personal, academic, and career concerns as needed and appropriate, utilizing existing on- and off-campus services, developing a peer advising program, and offering direct informal counseling
- Serve as a resource in identified instances of discrimination, harassment, and hate crimes against GLBT students
- Assist with campus recruitment efforts as needed and appropriate
- Develop (and assist other campus units with) activities designed to promote a campus environment that is sensitive not only to GLBT needs and concerns but also to diversity issues in general
- Provide coordination and support for the campuswide CLUH (Coalition for Learning about and Undermining Homophobia) program to ensure maximum effectiveness, quality, and continuity
- Support and/or develop GLBT component in campuswide orientation programs as needed and appropriate
- Via diverse speakers bureau and direct trainings, offer campuswide programming on homophobia in the classroom and workplace
- Design, implement, and/or support social/cultural/educational programs for the benefit of both the campus at large and GLBT students (e.g., lectures, panels, workshops, National GLBT History Month, World AIDS Day, UCLGBTA annual conference, National Coming Out Day, Queer Awareness Week, year-end celebration, film festival, town hall meetings, monthly Sunday brunches, art shows, GLBT 12-step programs, mentorship program, self-defense classes, HIV prevention/education programs, alumni group, volunteer opportunities, speakers bureau, youth outreach)
- Support academic programming as needed and appropriate (e.g, co-sponsor field study and internships, publicize GLBT-related courses/lectures/scholarships/research, investigate GLBT minor and/or program)
- Develop web site and electronic newsletter for campus GLBT community
- Produce publications (e.g., brochures, newsletters, flyers) as needed and appropriate
- Develop up-do-date, reliable, extensive referrals to off-campus agencies and businesses, housing, health care providers, etc.
- Coordinate drop-in center and meeting-space that feels welcoming and safe to students, and offers regular open hours
- Offer coordination and support for student GLBT organizations

—Promote linkages between GLBT groups and other student organizations, especially those involving underrepresented student groups

—Maintain up-to-date lending library (books, CDs, periodicals, videos, etc.) and network with McHenry staff as needed and appropriate

The Budget for the Proposed GLBT Resource Center

40,300	Mimimum salary for fulltime, non-furloughed director at SAO IV level (based on level of other resource center directors at UCSC and of GLBT directors on four other UC campuses*)
11,284	Standard benefits package for director above (27-29% figure supplied by Staff Human Resources)
3,000	Administrative expense (based on figures from comparable centers at UCSC and on other campuses)
3,000	Programming expense (assumes considerable fundraising from other sources, and does not include/would not replace SOAR, or Core Council funding)
<u>4,000</u>	Work/study staff (including CLUH coordinators)
\$ 61,584	TOTAL REQUESTED**

*Irvine, Riverside, and UCLA now have GLBT resource centers, and Berkeley is in the process of creating one. Three are entirely student reg-fee funded; one receives modest chancellorial funding in addition to reg fee support.

**This budget (gratefully) assumes that Merrill College will continue to house the Resource Center and to cover such costs as maintenance, utilities, small-quantity copying and printing, etc.

Proposal prepared and submitted by:

The four student organizations comprising the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Network (Stonewall, Queers of Color, Sappho, and Bi Women)

The Chancellor's Advisory Committee on GLBT Campus Concerns

The UCSC Women's Center