

LBGT Student Services

Mission

The Office of Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender (LBGT) Student Services is to ensure equitable access for all at Western Michigan University and promote a campus climate that affirms and supports the academic and personal development of all students inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

About LBGTSS

The Office of LBGT Student Services offers support, education and advocacy around issues of gender identity/expression and sexual orientation to the WMU community.

Since 1989, the WMU Office of LBGT Student Services has supported lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) students. Through diverse workshop learning options, engaging programs, social support, and advocacy, the Office of LBGT Student Services strives for inclusion, safety, and acceptance throughout the WMU campus.

Sense of Belonging

The Office of LBGT Student Services is able to provide a sense of belonging for LGBTQ student through both direct and indirect services, events, and spaces. Examples of direct student engagement include facilitation of bi-weekly discussion groups, co-hosting events in different spaces (e.g. Friendsgiving Dinner at Spectrum House), and providing a student lounge space for students to study and connect with other LGBTQ students.

Indirect student engagement included training faculty, staff, and student leaders in how to become an LGBTQ ally through Safe on Campus training or facilitating a student panel for a class (e.g. First-Year Experience class). These experiences are considered “indirect” because a majority of participants do not identify as LGBTQ, but are individuals who contribute to the campus environment of inclusion.

Student Recruitment

The Office of LBGT Student Services has tabled at 18 orientation, open houses, and welcome events for the [Office of Admissions](#). Additional opportunities for outreach will occur for orientations in May (3) and June (8) as well as off-campus outreach at [Kalamazoo Pride](#).

Retention

Student Retention

LBGTSS engages in several programs that encourage student retention including:

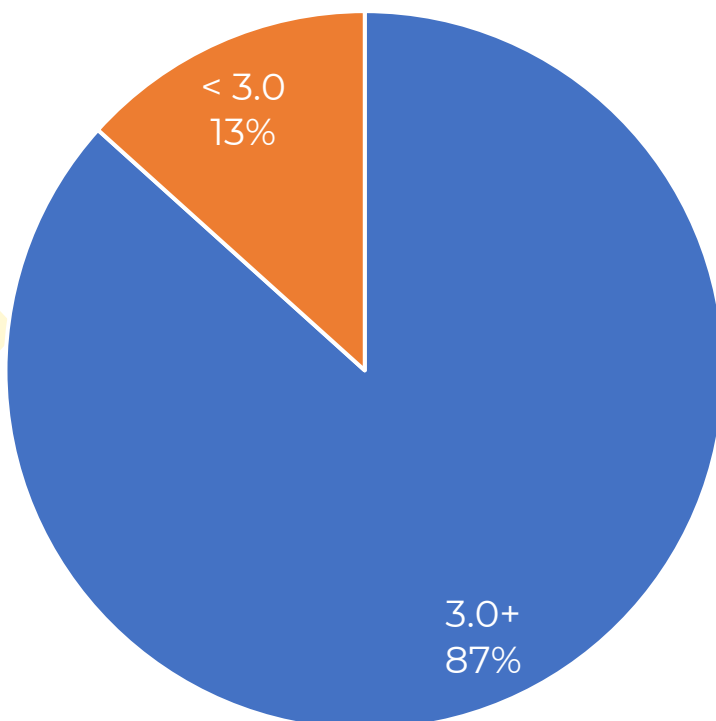
- [Safe on Campus](#) certification training,
- [SpeakOut](#) student panels, and
- Bi-weekly discussion groups.

Additional retention opportunities include collaborative on-campus programs with [Housing & Residence Life](#), [FIRE Sexual Assault Peer Educators](#), and [Multicultural Affairs for Students](#) (MAS).

LBGTSS has hosted (or co-hosted) programs and events for our LGBTQ students to encourage community development, connecting students to resources, and to engage with the LBGTSS office.

LGBTQ students can explore their identities, engage in conversations, and build community by participating in bi-weekly discussion groups or becoming a SpeakOut panelist. Student panelists provide visibility of LGBTQ identities, awareness of current issues, and opportunities for student leadership development.

Lavender Graduation GPAs
(undergraduates)



19

Average number of participants per program.

60

Programs hosted or co-hosted by LBGTSS.

15

Number of times an LBGTSS representative spoke or facilitated a presentation.

1,129

Total participants for AY24.



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Persistence

Student Persistence

Although LBGTSS does not track how many WMU students identify as LGBTQ, graduating LGBTQ students are welcome to participate in our annual [Lavender Graduation](#) ceremony. This spring, LBGTSS had 39 students (31 undergraduate, 8 graduate) registered for Lavender Graduation to receive a rainbow tassel and certificate.

Safe on Campus

All members of the WMU campus community (faculty, staff, and students) are welcome to attend a Safe on Campus workshop to learn how to be a better ally or advocate to the LGBTQ community. Upon completion, participants can receive a placard to signify that they are an LGBTQ-welcoming person who is aware of the available resources on campus.

Safe on Campus encourages participants to display their placard, practice inclusion across campus, and to learn about the available resources.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will learn about LGBTQ-friendly resources that are available on and off campus.
- Participants will practice how to respond to common on-campus scenarios that affect LGBTQ students.
- Participants will reflect on the interplay of privilege and/or marginalization and how it impacts LGBTQ-identity development.

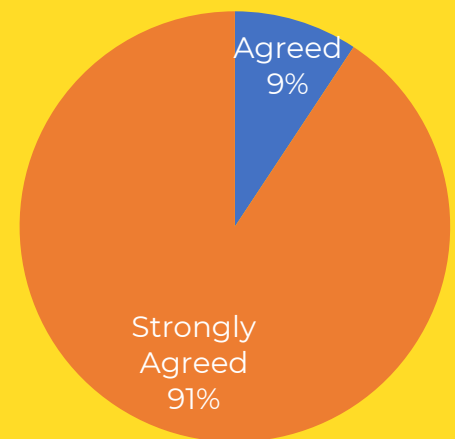
83.9%

LGBTQ students who graduated with a 3.0 GPA or higher (undergraduate).

63

People have completed Safe on Campus Training (AY24).

Safe on Campus encouraged me to become a better ally.

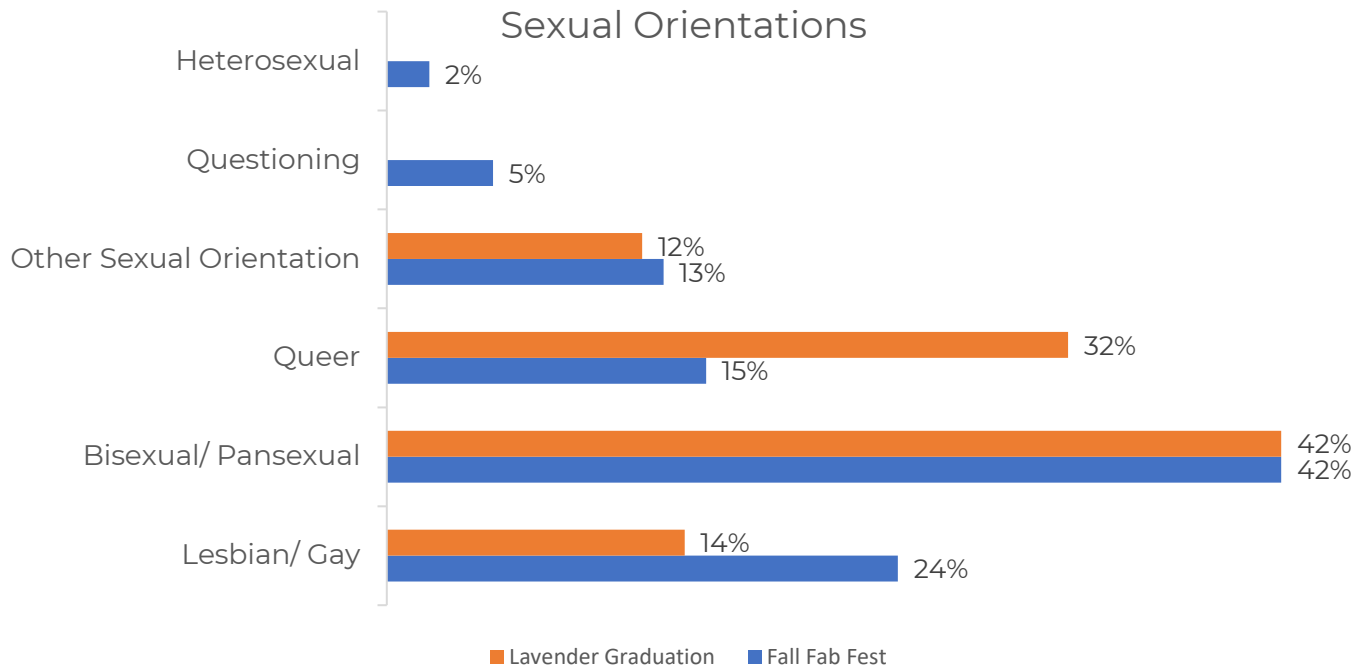


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Annual Programs

Fall Fab Fest

Fall Fab Fest is hosted at the beginning of fall semester as an opportunity to welcome LGBTQ and questioning students while offering opportunities for students to connect with LGBTQ-friendly resources that are available on and off campus.



Lavender Graduation

Lavender Graduation is hosted at the end of spring semester as an opportunity to celebrate graduating LGBTQ students and acknowledge their on-campus accomplishments while at WMU.

