

**From:** [Campus Climate Proposal form](#)  
**To:** [Libby Peterek](#); [Carrie Olson](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Campus Climate Proposals  
**Date:** Thursday, April 21, 2016 10:20:56 PM

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**First name:**

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**Phone number:**

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**Group name (if applicable):**

Allies for All

**What is your affiliation with UW-Madison? For group submissions, please respond for main contact.**

- Student (including undergraduate, graduate, professional)

**Describe the concept. If already in use here or elsewhere, please indicate this.**

Something that I've come to realize is that there is a plethora of queer-only spaces on campus, but still a lot of misunderstandings and prejudices around the queer community throughout the rest of campus.

Why? Because there aren't any spaces for allies and outsiders to learn. There aren't any spaces for outsiders to ask questions without fear of judgment or retaliation, and that space needs to exist in order for this prolonged prejudice to stop.

It is my goal to create intentional spaces to ask questions about the queer community here on campus. I plan to have an open dialogue that addresses frequently-asked, seldom-asked, and always-wondered-about questions that deal with the queer community.

We will have a presentation a month with different established queer-dominant organizations (such as the LGBTCC, Ten Percent Society, or QUELP), and each organization will be paired up with a non-queer-centric organization (such as Greek life, academic clubs, The Black Student Union, or business/STEM clubs) in order to reach out to and include the majority of the student population in these important educational sessions. People will have the opportunity to submit anonymous questions they want addressed at presentations online in the weeks leading up to events, and time will be left open at the end of each session for more anonymous written questions. Queer kids and allies will have the opportunity to challenge themselves by choice in the amount of involvement in the project: they can help book spaces, invite others, encourage allies, create PowerPoints, figure out information to address and to help compile info and resources for people to use when they want answers. Other roles include actual presenting and perhaps finding professors or prestigious speakers to give guest speeches at these educational information sessions--but what is most important is that peers are learning from queers and allies in a way that breaks down barriers rather than creating new ones.

**How would this affect cultural change on campus?**

Through consistent and fruitful educational sessions, LGBTQ+ identified individuals, allies to the queer community, and complete outsiders will be given the opportunity to break down barriers and eliminate

stigma and mystery around the queer community. Although Madison is fairly liberal, there is still plenty of prejudice for the LGBTQ+ community to overcome, and the United States is drastically changing in terms of queer rights. This is the best point in time to intervene and educate about the evolving state of the LGBTQ+ struggle in the years following federal same-sex marriage recognition and transgender bathroom bills appearing all over the country.

There is still significant stigma attached to being a member of the LGBTQ+ community because it has been kept a mystery for so long and because allies do not get the chance to ask questions in what are supposed to be safe spaces, and so this would sweep the campus by storm to begin to really think about queer students as more than "others." Allies for All would change the culture on campus in ways such as all-gender bathrooms, avoiding "gay" and other demeaning words as insults, and ultimately creating a more knowledgeable, united community on campus. By educating others, those outside of the queer community will in turn become advocates for it, and the lessons learned in information sessions will spread like wildfire. Additionally, and most importantly, these presentations will help to eliminate the anger that surrounds ignorance or the unknown for both the queer community and its allies.

**For new ideas, how would you propose piloting this idea to see if it would work? If the idea is already in use at UW-Madison, how would you propose expanding or altering this program for greater impact?**

I will measure involvement of both the queer community as well as others through numbers and surveys: how many people are involved in putting presentations together, how many attend presentations, the amount of questions submitted to be answered, and anonymous questionnaires following every presentation to see what information was retained by those that attended. An optional survey for participants will be sent out before every presentation asking the following: Gender Identity, Sexuality, Year (if a student), and a list of questions relating to the topic of the month with a scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." For example,  
"1) I think that using the wrong pronouns is not offensive.  
1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neutral; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly Agree; 0 Don't Know

**What resources would be needed to implement your suggestion?**

Large spaces for presentations, volunteers, money to pay special speakers that visit once a semester, and funding for campus-wide advertisements in the form of posters, announcements, lectures, websites, social media, etc.

**If this proposal was developed in partnership with any other organizations, please list them below.**

All Minds Matter and the Multicultural Student Coalition. I also plan to reach out to (but have not yet contacted) the LGBT Campus Center, Sex Out Loud, The Open House Learning Community, The Ten Percent Society, The Campus Women's Center, and the Queer Emerging Leadership Program (QUELP)

**Please use this space for any additional information about your proposal that you wish to share:**

After this project gains momentum, this framework could be used to address other campus climate issues such as race, religion, and class.