



**THE ACADEMIC SENATE OF
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH**

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual +
Campus Climate Committee (LGBTQIA+ CCC)

Annual Report: AY 2024 - 2025

Prepared by: Kathryn J. Perkins

Membership: Kathryn J. Perkins (Faculty, Political Science), Ash Preston (Assistant Director, LGBTQ Student Resource Center), Ann Kinsey (Staff, Academic Senate), Kelly Sanderson (Faculty, ASEC), Christian Bracho (Faculty, Teacher Education), Raul Pacheco (Staff, Human Resource Management), Anna Nazarian-Peters (Staff, Student Life and Development), Sara Dozier (Faculty, Science Education), Maria Sanchez-Reyes (Faculty, Romance, German, Russian, Language and Literature), Ashley Hopkins (Faculty, Journalism and Public Relations), Aurora Luksetich (Staff, Academic Technology Services), Sarah Trexler-Brandon (Staff, Research and Sponsored Programs), Selene Aguirre (Faculty, Communication Studies), Bruce Veal (Student, ASI Representative), Isaac Obert (Student, ASI Representative)

Alternates: Fafnir Adamites (Faculty, Art) and Michael L. Williams (Director, School of Nursing)

Officers: Kathryn J. Perkins, Chair; Ash Preston, Vice Chair; Ann Kinsey, Recorder

Summary: The LGBTQIA+ CCC held eight meetings over the course of the academic year. The committee adopted HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health as a substantive area of focus for the year and received a report from Student Health Services as part of its campus needs assessment. The committee also reviewed the impact of federal policy on the campus climate and received a report from the Office of the President and continued enhancing its collaboration and partnership with other campus organizations and stakeholders to represent and enhance support for campus LGBTQIA+ communities.

Committee Actions:

- **HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health**

- **Overview:** The committee decided to adopt the issue of HIV/AIDS and campus sexual health as its key area of focus for the academic year. This was suggested by members to ensure that this key concern was brought to the fore given its enduring relevance to the health and climate for LGBTQIA+ communities.
- **Campus Needs Assessment and Discussion**
 - At multiple meetings we discussed current needs with respect to information and resources on HIV/AIDS and Gender and Sexual Health and how we could better centralize gather and centralize information.
- **Report from Student Health Service**
 - The committee invited representatives from SHS to share existing campus support and resources for students, staff, and faculty regarding sexual health.
 - Michael Carbuto, DO, MPH and Heidi Girling, MPH reported on services available to students on campus. sexual, reproductive and gender affirming care available to students. HIV, SDI testing available at the clinic by appt. same day testing available for \$35, family pact enrollment available which is free. Treatment for HIV is not included, they will receive a referral to a LB provider. LB Public Health Dept comes out twice yearly for HIV and STD testing. They conducted 87 tests in a mobile unit. Workshops for hormonal birth care, STD's available. Sex Ed basics training also available. Sex positive week in February with a fair that is interactive. STI counseling in house. Pregnancy options counseling.
 - Gender affirming care explained by Dr. Carbuto. They work closely with CAPS. Students access care by making an appt. and assist in their gender journey. Informed consent used. Medication same day is available. Medication and lab fees are available at reasonable prices. Pharmacy available to staff and students at very low prices.

- **Post-Election LGBTQIA+ Climate Response**

- **Overview:** In the aftermath of the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election the committee sought to gather information on the campus response to possible policies that may impact the campus community and offer support and a space for discussion and collaboration for the LGBTQIA+ campus community.
- **Invitation to Chris Fowler (Chief of Staff, Office of the President)**
 - Chris Fowler kindly accepted an invitation to come speak to the committee about the campus response to policy changes and directives following the election and took questions from committee members and guests from the campus LGBTQIA+ community. Following his insightful report, the committee discussed ways to support the community and foster collaboration.

- **Current Policy Climate:**
 - The committee discussed and considered the new and continued impact of anti-LGBTQIA+ laws, policies, and directives building on the resolution on **LGBTQIA+ Anti-Discrimination** that was drafted and passed by this committee and referred to and passed by the Academic Senate in 2024.
 - The committee stressed the importance of clear and direct channels of communication from campus leaders to community members and the importance of campus community support resources.
- **Community Building and Collaboration**
 - **Overview:** Building on the critical and foundation work by the committee and campus partners and stakeholders in the last decade, we continued to strengthen, build, and enhance bridges across the university. We supported the work of these partners in enhancing the climate for our LGBTQIA+ campus communities through their programming, including OUTober, Trans Week of Joy, and the inaugural Trans Wellness Conference – “Embodied and Empowered”. Reports from these partners and their impact on the climate are below.
 - **Report from the (newly renamed) Trans and Queer Staff and Faculty Association (TQFSA):**
 - During the 2024-2025 Academic year, the TQFSA worked to create community on campus. We met regularly throughout the year to address issues of importance to our members. We kicked off the fall semester with an off-campus drag bingo event. In October we supported the planning of a luncheon for the TQFSA and President Conoley. We also participated in OUTober festivities, with a student, staff, and faculty Boba mixer. During the Trans Week of Joy in Spring, we held another mixer with students. At the end of each semester, we held a celebration for all members of our community on campus. In spring, we received extra funding for catering from LBS Credit Union, thanks to the hard work of Ann Kinsey. We closed out the year with a strong showing in the Long Beach Pride Parade, with a float driven and sponsored by Royce Smith, Dean of COTA.
 - **Report from LGBTQ Student Resource Center:**
 - The 2024–2025 academic year was an eventful and exciting time for the LGBTQ+ Resource Center (LGBTQ+ RC) at CSU Long Beach. Among the year’s highlights was the launch of a new annual program in Fall 2024: Drag Lotería. This collaborative event, co-hosted with the Latine Resource Center, merged elements of OUTober and Latine Heritage Month. Drag Lotería celebrated the intersection of LGBTQ+ and Latine identities

through a queer twist on the traditional Lotería game. The event was hosted by two local Latine drag queens—both proud CSULB alumni—adding a meaningful and festive touch.

- In partnership with Rainbow Café, CAPS, WGEC, SHS, and Beach Wellness, the LGBTQ+ RC also introduced a new initiative focused on the wellness of the transgender community. As part of the annual Trans Week of Joy, the center hosted a one-day conference titled “Empowered & Embodied: A Celebration of Trans Wellness.” This event centered on trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming students, offering resources, community-building opportunities, and a space for radical hope and trans joy.
 - In addition to new initiatives, the LGBTQ+ RC continued to grow and sustain its annual programs. As part of the Office of Belonging and Inclusion’s cultural welcome series, the Queer and Trans Welcome event in September drew 156 participants. The event featured on- and off-campus resource tabling, community-building activities, and giveaways to kick off the academic year. OUTober 2024, the university’s LGBTQ+ heritage month, featured eight events, each in collaboration with a different campus department or organization. Trans Week of Joy in April 2025 included six events, culminating in the “Empowered & Embodied” conference. The year concluded with the 19th Annual Lavender Graduation Celebration, honoring the graduating class of 2025. A total of 49 students registered to participate—one of the highest turnouts to date—with over 150 guests joining to celebrate their achievements.
 - Throughout the year, the LGBTQ+ RC continued to provide identity-affirming support spaces. Ongoing facilitated groups included Gender Universe, for transgender, non-binary, gender non-conforming, and questioning students, and Color Me Queer, for LGBTQ+ students of color. The center also provided financial support to the Queer Student Alliance (QSA) for their general meetings each semester. Additionally, the LGBTQ+ RC collaborated with QSA on a major event each semester, including partnerships with other student organizations such as Furies at the Beach.
- **Report from Rainbow Café**
 - **Overview:** Rainbow Café celebrated its 10th anniversary on campus. The group, hosted by Dr. Lauren Jensen in CAPS, continues to be a critical campus resource for our LGBTQIA+ students. Below is both a summary of the year’s actions and a history of the group spanning its first decade at the Beach.
 - **Annual Report:** Rainbow Cafe is a supportive community group created for students with diverse sexual, gender, and romantic identities. The group meet weekly on Mondays from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in PH1–230 throughout the fall and spring semesters. It is hosted by Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at California State University, Long Beach

(CSULB). During the 2024–2025 academic year, Rainbow Cafe was co-facilitated by Lauren Jensen, Ph.D. (she/her), Licensed Psychologist, CAPS Counselor, and founder of Rainbow Cafe, alongside Emilie Noah, M.A. (they/them), CAPS Doctoral Intern and Counselor.

- In Fall 2024, the group held 13 sessions, serving 50 unique students, with an average attendance of 14 students per session (ranging from 11 to 24). In Spring 2025, Rainbow Café held 14 sessions, serving 32 unique students, with an average of 10 students per session (ranging from 7 to 17). The majority of students who used the group learned about Rainbow Cafe through word of mouth, Week of Welcome, Beach Events & Organizations, social media, or referrals from CSULB faculty and staff.
- Students consistently reported seeking out Rainbow Cafe for community building, friendship, emotional safety, and stress relief. Additional reported needs included a safe space for self-exploration and creative expression.
- **History:** Rainbow Cafe is a drop-in support group for LGBTQIA+ students at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), as well as for those exploring their sexual, gender, and/or romantic identities. Since its inception, Rainbow Cafe has aimed to foster an affirming environment for community building and personal empowerment. The group seeks to provide a space for healing, visibility, and connection—where students can reclaim a sense of self-worth that can sometimes be eroded by systemic oppression.
- A foundational principle of Rainbow Cafe is radical inclusion, which entails the intention of rejecting identity policing and instead cultivating unity through a shared experiences of gender oppression (e.g., allonormativity, cishnormativity, and heteronormativity) to externalize the problem of disconnection from self and others.
- Name - The name “Rainbow Cafe” was inspired by Rainbow Cafe in Carbondale, Illinois—a program initiated in 2000 focused on community building for LGBTQIA+ youth. The program later evolved into an independent nonprofit and LGBTQ center. With permission from the original Rainbow Cafe, the name was adopted for the CSULB group.
- Foundation - Rainbow Cafe at CSULB was founded in October of 2014 by Dr. Lauren Jensen, Licensed Psychologist and Temporary Counselor Faculty, within the Counseling and Psychological Services department at CSULB. Dr. Jensen established the group shortly after her hire in September 2014, in collaboration with student leaders Shannon Cholakian, then Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) Secretary for LGBTQIA Affairs, and Logan Vournas, ASI Assistant Secretary for LGBTQIA Affairs. In

developing the group, Dr. Jensen also consulted with a variety of campus organizations and stakeholders, including Queer Chat, Queers & Allies (Q & A), the LGBT Student Resource Center, the Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Campus Climate, and Student Life and Development (SLD) to assess the needs for an LGBTQ+ support group on campus.

- These conversations led to identifying a need for a common space outside of the counseling center, to de-pathologize LGBTQ+ identities and a space outside of the LGBT Student Resource Center, to be able to close off a private space during the meetings and to create a welcoming environment for student who are still exploring their identities. This led to partnering with the Multicultural Center and using their conference room for the meetings. The group also adopted a flexible participation model to maximize access, allowing students to join at any time during the semester, arrive late, leave early, and attend as needed. As the group continued, the importance of consistency was recognized, resulting in a commitment to holding Rainbow Cafe at a fixed day, time, and location, and with a structured opening and closing to foster predictability, familiarity, and institutional trust.
- The inaugural meeting of Rainbow Cafe took place on Monday, October 13, 2014, from 3:30–4:30 p.m. in the Multicultural Center’s conference room (FO3–2), during National Coming Out Week. Since then, Dr. Jensen has facilitated weekly meetings each Monday at 4:30 p.m. throughout the fall and spring semesters. In Fall 2018, the meeting time was extended to 90 minutes in response to student feedback requesting more time for discussion and connection.
- When the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, Rainbow Cafe immediately transitioned to a virtual format via Zoom to preserve the consistency of this community support space. In February 2022, the group resumed in-person meetings. In Fall 2023, Rainbow Cafe was relocated to PH1-230 with support from Academic Affairs, following the repurposing of the Multicultural Center’s conference room to accommodate assistant directors of the campus’s student cultural resource centers.
- Over the years, Rainbow Cafe has also been co-facilitated by CAPS doctoral interns, including:
 - Emilie Noah (Fall 2024 – Spring 2025)
 - Rafael Garcia (Fall 2023 – Spring 2024)
 - Megan Ensley (Fall 2022 – Spring 2023)
 - Sam del Castillo (Fall 2021 – Spring 2022)
 - Zo Amaro N. Jimenez (Fall 2019 – Spring 2020)

- Rachel Fader (Spring 2018)
- **Ten-Year Anniversary**
 - On Monday, October 14, 2025, Rainbow Cafe celebrated its 10th anniversary. To commemorate the occasion, attendees created a time capsule to be opened on the 20th anniversary—Monday, October 16, 2034. The capsule includes student reflections on their lives in 2014 (when Rainbow Cafe was first founded), their experiences in 2024, and their hopes for themselves and their communities in 2034. Students compiled a playlist of meaningful songs. Students also shared personal reflections on what Rainbow Cafe means to them. Common themes included:

“My new safe space.” “Home and found family! A place where I can be myself.” “Radically welcoming!” “A nice respite from the chaos of academic life at Long Beach.” “A place to be creative.” “A safe space to find things out about myself and love.” “A space where we can gather safely for community with no judgment and pure empathy and understanding.”
 - A unifying sentiment expressed throughout the event was the collective hope that Rainbow Cafe will continue to serve LGBTQIA+ students for another decade and beyond. The time capsule is currently in the care of Dr. Jensen.

Recommendations to the LGBTQIA+ CCC for AY 2025 - 2026:

1. HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health

- a. Continue the needs assessment conversations to ensure that we have an accurate assessment of the ongoing need for resources and support for faculty, staff, and student sexual health.
- b. Consider expanding the focus to include Gender Health and to fully assess and understand the needs and availability of resources for gender-affirming care and continued support.
- c. Work with campus partners to revise or update web communications regarding these issues so that all stakeholders have clear and consistent access to quality information on available resources and support.

2. Policy Impacts on the Campus Climate

- a. Continue to maintain open channels of communication with campus leaders on responses to the evolving policy landscape and its impacts on LGBTQIA+ campus communities.
- b. Be a resource for helping to gather insight and perspectives on policy impact on our communities to share out with campus leadership.

3. Community Building and Collaboration

- a. Maintain and strengthen strong bridges with a variety of campus partners and stakeholders, including TQSFA and the LGBTQ SRC, as well as key offices such as CAPS, SHS, and Student and Faculty Affairs leadership.
- b. Encourage student representatives to work with queer and trans student organization leadership to foster clear channels of communication and representation.

4. Enhance Campus Communication

- a. Consider reviewing the website and other communication platforms for the campus and support campus partners who host information on LGBTQIA+ support and programming to ensure all information is current, accurate, and accessible to the campus community.

5. Campus Pride Index

- a. Investigate the possibility of having the university represented again on the Campus Pride Index.

6. Lavender Graduation 20th Anniversary

- a. Lavender Graduation will be celebrating its 20th anniversary at our campus in 2026. We were the first CSU campus to host this celebration.
- b. Support the LGBTQ SRC to bolster and enhance this year's anniversary commemoration and graduation celebration. Consider volunteering and aid in promotion and marketing.