**Cover/Signature Page - Abbreviated Template/Abbreviated Template with Curriculum**

**Institution Submitting Request:** *Weber State University*

**Proposed Title:** *LGBT Resource Center*

**Currently Approved Title:** *N/A*

**School or Division or Location:** *Ogden, UT*

**Department(s) or Area(s) Location:** *Student Affairs*

**Recommended Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code[[1]](#footnote-1) (for new programs):** *N/A*

**Current Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code (for existing programs):** *N/A*

**Proposed Beginning Date (for new programs):** *09/16/13*

**Institutional Board of Trustees’ Approval Date:** *MM/DD/YEAR*

**Proposal Type (check all that apply):**

|  |
| --- |
| **Regents’ General Consent Calendar Items** |
| *R401-5 OCHE Review and Recommendation; Approval on General Consent Calendar* |
| **SECTION NO.** | **ITEM** |
| **5.1.1** | [ ]  | Minor\* |
| **5.1.2** | [ ]  | Emphasis\* |
| **5.2.1** | [ ]  | Certificate of Proficiency\*  |
| **5.2.3** | [ ]  | Graduate Certificate\* |
| **5.4.1** | [ ]  | New Administrative Unit |
|  | [ ]  | Administrative Unit Transfer |
|  | [ ]  | Administrative Unit Restructure |
|  | [ ]  | Administrative Unit Consolidation |
| **5.4.2** | [x]  | New Center |
|  | [ ]  | New Institute |
|  | [ ]  | New Bureau |
| **5.5.1** | [ ]  | Out-of-Service Area Delivery of Programs |
| **5.5.2** | [ ]  | Program Transfer |
|  | [ ]  | Program Restructure |
|  | [ ]  | Program Consolidation |
| **5.5.3** | [ ]  | Name Change of Existing Programs |
| **5.5.4** | [ ]  | Program Discontinuation |
|  | [ ]  | Program Suspension |
| **5.5.5** | [ ]  | Reinstatement of Previously Suspended Program |
|  | [ ]  | Reinstatement of Previously Suspended Administrative Unit |

\*Requires “Section V: Program Curriculum” of Abbreviated Template

**Chief Academic Officer (or Designee) Signature**:

I certify that all required institutional approvals have been obtained prior to submitting this request to the Office of the Commissioner.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature**  **Date:** *09/16/2013*

**Printed Name:** *Michael B. Vaughan*

**Abbreviated Template**

**Weber State University**

**LGBT Resource Center**

***09/16/2013***

**Section I: Request**

**Executive Summary**

Students come to Weber State University with varying needs. The same is true for students on the campuses of every college and university. Some require minimal support. Others need a great deal of support to succeed. For this reason, WSU offers a wide variety of support services ranging from academic advising, to psychological counseling to health and wellness programs.

Unfortunately, many students do not take advantage of the services that they need. Despite best efforts to inform students of the services that are available, many students are unaware that the services exist. Other students have some knowledge of the services, but for some reason assume that they would not qualify for the specific services being offered. Other students are simply embarrassed to admit that they need help.

For these reasons, campuses have created gateways to serve the needs of specific student groups. These gateways may provide services to students, and equally important, gateways may refer students to the myriad of programs and services that already exist on campus. One of the oldest gateway programs on the WSU campus is the Women’s Center which, according to their mission, “provides women with campus connections, community resources, one-on-one advisement, and support groups to help them achieve their academic and personal goals.” Other gateway programs serve multicultural students, veteran students, and non-traditional students.

With this background, the specific request is to create a Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LBGT) students on the Weber State University campus. Presently, WSU does not have a center to serve as a gateway for this student population. Clearly, LGBT students are free to make use of services available to all students. However, the creation of an LGBT center would provide a gateway to LGBT students, and by doing so, the center would increase awareness and usage of existing services as well as provide needed services directly. This is critically important because a large volume of research has documented that LBGT students are more likely to be harassed and bullied, more likely to feel isolated and more likely to engage in self-destructive behaviors than the general population of students. Suicide among LBGT students is a critical problem. WSU has documented cases of the harassment and bullying of LGBT students, and suicides among WSU’s LGBT student population do occur with troubling regularity.

LGBT Centers are increasingly common across college campuses. A study by Johns Hopkins University found that 87 percent of the colleges and universities ranked by U.S. News had an LGBT Center. In Utah, the University of Utah, Salt Lake Community College and Utah State University have LGBT Centers.

The center will not advocate that heterosexual students change their sexual orientation. Indeed, the thought of doing so would be anathema to the beliefs of those associated with the LGBT Center.

**The Proposed Weber State University LGBT Center**

Weber State University seeks a Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LBGT) education and resources. As a group that has been historically subject to rejection and discrimination, LGBT members of the Weber State University community face discrimination, harassment and isolation both within and beyond the WSU campus.

To begin to combat these challenges, Weber State University is ready to dedicate resources that provide institutional support and visibility for the LGBT community. After much discussion and deliberation, a broad committee of students, faculty, staff and community members have collaborated on this proposal to establish WSU’s first LGBT Center. The LGBT Center will stand as part of the WSU vision to embrace equality and diversity.

A Resource Center that is professionally staffed, has adequate administrative support, and centrally located is a necessity to meet the unique needs of the LGBT community. Once established, the Resource Center will also be able to efficiently gather and organize Weber State’s resources and become the focal point for LGBT programming, research, outreach and education.

In addition to meeting the needs of current members of the Weber State University community, the creation of the LGBT Center will allow WSU to recruit and retain talented students from Northern Utah. As a visible symbol of WSU’s equality, diversity and commitment to the creation of a culture where everyone’s contributions are valued, members of a largely invisible identity will be attracted to study and learn at WSU.

The role of this Center is to provide support and a place where LGBT individuals and allies can find a sense of community and where everyone can learn about LGBT identity and culture in a safe environment. This is done by providing activities, programs and services that create community; empower community members; provide essential resources; advocate for civil and human rights; and embrace, promote and support cultural diversity. Furthermore, through these opportunities, WSU will be to cultivate leadership, provide support and collaborate with others. The Center will offer a safe environment where LGBT students, faculty, staff and community members will be able to obtain information, resources and services regardless of their sexuality.

**Section II: Need**

It is critical to provide the LGBT community the resources needed to reduce the risk of suicide, homelessness, unemployment, low educational attainment, substance abuse and various other health risks. These twin goals of saving lives and transforming communities will be accomplished with a combination of direct and referral services

According to the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), it is no longer a matter of whether to provide services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students; rather, it is a matter of when. The talent, energy and hope with which LGBT students are entering college must be acknowledged (Sanlo, 1998).

The proposed Center will also serve a significant benefit by supporting student retention and persistence by serving as the point of entry that connects to other services and resources on campus. Student leadership, peer mentoring and community projects further enhance the ability to tap this underrepresented population.

**Section III: Institutional Impact**

The Center will be housed within Student Affairs, which has administrative resources and expertise to help underrepresented and multicultural populations. The organization is committed to supporting the resources needed for a program director and student leaders to actively engage campus and community members. In addition, the LGBT Resource Center will be providing faculty grants to develop course content around LGBT history/culture as appropriate for the field.

The LGBT Resource Center will work with direct outreach in the community and on campus. The Center will work through existing networks including the Student Gay Straight Alliance, the Faculty Staff Gay Straight Alliance, and the Center for Diversity & Unity and community programs such as Northern Utah Coalition HIV/AIDS, the Utah Pride Center and Equality Utah. The LGBT Resource Center will work particularly closely with the OUTreach Resource Center, Inc., which has been pioneering work in this area for close to a decade.

**Section IV: Finances**

The annual estimated operational cost for the LGBT Resource Center is $50,000. This includes salaries for a three-quarter-time center administrator and hourly support staff, as well as course development grants. Costs for the center will be provided out of a quasi-endowment fund. It is anticipated the Center will seek other outside funds to help offset some of the costs. This will allow an expansion of the budget and associated activities. The existing quasi-endowment is positioned to continue the same level of support as needed if other funds do not come forward.

1. CIP codes must be recommended by the submitting institution. For CIP code classifications, please see <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=55>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)