

A Brief History of the LGBTQ Community at Davidson College

1986 – Sponsored by the Chaplain's Office, the College Union, and the Housing Office, the "Gay Support Group" was formed.

1992 – FLAG (Friends of Lesbians and Gays) was founded as a recognized student organization.

1993 – Sexual orientation appeared in the non-discrimination policy in the college catalog for the first time.

1994 – The college hosted The Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt for the first time (also hosted in subsequent years including 1997, 2003, and 2011).

1995 – The Charles Nelson Williamson Endowment was created by Dr. Charles Nelson Williamson '64 to promote understanding of gay and lesbian issues through support of student organizations and through appropriate projects and programs undertaken by members of the college community.

1998 – The Gender Resource Center (GRC) was founded by a group of students from FLAG and the Women's Issues committee on the Union Board; the GRC was first housed in the Belk residence hall.

1999 – FLAG was reconstituted as BGLAD (Bisexuals, Gays, and Lesbians at Davidson).

2000 – The college first offered domestic partner benefits to LGBTQ employees.

2001 – The GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) was founded as a recognized student organization.

2002 – The Gender Resource Center was given an office space in the new Alvarez College Union.

2003 – YANASH (You Are Not a Stranger Here) was founded as a confidential student organization.

2003 – The Residence Life office began to allow coeducational living groups in apartments and suites at the request of the GSA.

2004 – The Alumni Office sponsored Davidson's first dedicated Gay Alumni Reunion Weekend featuring keynote speaker Bill Eskridge '73, a leading legal scholar on same-sex marriage.

2006 – The Alumni Office sponsored a Gay Alumni Reunion Weekend featuring keynote speaker Anne Stanback '81, who led the fight for marriage equality in Connecticut. Following the weekend, a group of alumni formed GSAND (the Gay-Straight Alumni Network of Davidson).

2006 – The college hosted Judy Shepard for a campus-wide lecture about hate crimes and discrimination against LGBTQ people. Mrs. Shepard is the mother of Matthew Shepard, who was brutally murdered in 1998 in Laramie, Wyoming because of his sexual orientation.

2007 – GSAND began hosting receptions during Homecoming and Reunion Weekends.

2007 – Famous Davidson alumna and acclaimed author Patricia Cornwell '79 came out publicly.

Updated October 2013

2007 – The Gender Resource Center office in the Alvarez College Union closed. It had been a largely student-managed space and was not receiving enough use to merit continued occupation of the office.

2008 – The GSA sponsored a "Safe Space" training program with the Patterson Court houses for the first time. (This training was repeated in subsequent years, including 2009-2010.)

2009 – A student opinion article published in the *Davidsonian* campus newspaper argued that the college was going against the bible by hosting a National Coming Out Day celebration. This sparked intense campus-wide discussion and numerous response articles.

2009 – The Residence Life office began to introduce gender-neutral bathrooms in residence halls.

2011 – Writing under pen name Ann McMan, a Davidson staff member published *Jericho*, the first of several books that quickly climbed to the bestseller list for gay & lesbian fiction.

2012 – The academic department of Gender and Sexuality Studies was formed.

2012 – The Union Board held a student-wide vote about the organization's use of Chick Fil-A as a food provider in response to that company's president releasing a statement against gay marriage. The Union Board ultimately chose to cease using Chick Fil-A as a vendor, and there was a great deal of discussion among the student and alumni populations about this issue.

2013 – A group of faculty and staff came together to form the LGBTQ Caucus.

Glossary of Common Terms for the LGBTQ Community

Ally – Someone who demonstrates a concern for the well-being of LGBTQ people and who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and heterosexual or gender normative privilege in themselves and others.

Asexual – Someone who does not experience sexual attraction. Asexual people still have emotional needs and experience attraction; however, they feel no need to act out that attraction sexually. Asexuality is intrinsic and should not be confused with celibacy, which is a choice.

Bear – A subculture term for a large, hairy male-identified LGBTQ person who projects an image of rugged masculinity.

Biphobia – The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexuals, which is often times related to the societal binary standard.

Bisexual – Someone who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to both males/men and females/women.

Butch – A person who identifies as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally or emotionally. Butch is sometimes used as a derogatory term for lesbians, but it can also be claimed as an affirmative identity label.

Coming Out – May refer to the process by which one accepts one's own sexuality, gender identity, or status as an intersexed person (to "come out" to oneself). May also refer to the process by which one shares one's sexuality, gender identity, or intersexed status with others (to "come out" to friends, etc.). This can be a continual, life-long process.

Cross-dresser – Someone who wears clothes of another gender/sex.

Down Low – Also referred to as "the D/L," this can be another term for being "in the closet." It is most often used by the African American gay male community.

Drag – The performance of one or multiple genders theatrically.

Drag King – A person who performs masculinity theatrically.

Drag Queen – A person who performs femininity theatrically.

Dyke – Derogatory term referring to a masculine lesbian. This is sometimes claimed by lesbians as an affirmative identity label (whether masculine or not).

Fag – Derogatory term referring to someone perceived as non-heterosexual, usually an effeminate gay man.

Family – In-group term referring to suspected or confirmed members of the LGBTQQIAAP community ("family of choice," as opposed to a person's biological "family of origin").

Updated October 2013

Femme – Feminine-identified person of any gender/sex.

FTM / F2M – Abbreviation for a female-to-male transgender or transsexual person.

Gay – 1. Term used to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense.
2. Term used to refer to the LGBTQQAAP community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.

Gender Binary – The idea that there are only two genders, male/female or man/woman, and that a person must be strictly gendered as either/or.

Gender Cues – What people use to attempt to identify the gender/sex of another person, including hairstyle, gait, vocal inflection, body shape, facial hair, etc. Cues vary by culture.

Gender Expression – The ways in which a person externally manifests masculinity, femininity, androgyny, etc.

Gender Identity – A person's sense of being masculine, feminine, or other gendered.

Gender Normative / Gender Straight – A person who either by nature or by choice conforms to gender-based societal expectations or norms.

Gender Variant / Gender Queer – A person who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based societal expectations or norms.

Hermaphrodite – An out-of-date and offensive term for an intersexed person.

Heteronormativity – The assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality/bisexuality.

Heterosexism – Any attitude, action, or practice, backed by institutional power, that subordinates people because of their presumed non-heterosexual orientation.

Homophobia – The irrational fear or hatred of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior or belief that does not conform to sex role expectations.

Homosexual – A person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex.

Heterosexual – A person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to member of the opposite sex.

In the Closet – Refers to a homosexual, bisexual, trans-person or intersex person who will not or cannot disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society. There are varying degrees of being in the closet; for example, a person can be out in social circles but in the closet at work or with the family.

Updated October 2013

Intersexed Person – A general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with mosaic genetics or with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. Modern estimates are that 1 in 200 babies are technically intersexed.

Ladyboy – A Southeast Asian term that refers to an effeminate gay male or a male-to-female transgender person. This term may be considered offensive in other parts of the world.

Lesbian – Term used to describe female-identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female-identified people.

LGBTQQIAAP – The current abbreviation for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersexed, asexual, ally, and pansexual community.

MTF/ M2F – Abbreviation for a male-to-female transgender or transsexual person.

Outing – Involuntary disclosure of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status.

Pansexual – Someone who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to people of any gender identity or gender expression.

Passing – Describes a person's ability to be accepted as the normative sexual orientation or gender identity (to be perceived as heterosexual or gender normative).

Queen – An in-group term used to refer to flamboyant or effeminate gay men. There are many cultural variations, including but not limited to: "rice queen" (a gay male who prefers or exclusively dates Asian men), "bean queen" (a gay male who prefers or exclusively dates Hispanic/Latino men), "hummus queen" (a gay male who prefers or exclusively dates Middle Eastern men), and "potato queen" or "dairy queen" (a gay male who prefers or exclusively dates Caucasian men).

Queer – 1. An umbrella term that embraces a matrix of non-normative sexual orientations and behaviors. 2. A term used as a sexual orientation descriptor indicating non-heterosexual identity without a specific label. 3. A reclaimed word that was formerly used solely as a slur but that has been semantically overturned by members of the maligned group, who use it as a term of defiant pride. Some people to whom this term might apply still hold 'queer' to be a hateful insult, and its use by those not in-group can be considered offensive.

Questioning – Someone who is exploring feelings about sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.

Same Gender Loving / SGL – A term sometimes used by members of the African-American / Black community to express an alternative sexual orientation without relying on terms and symbols of European descent (such as "lesbian," from the Greek "lesbos").

Sex – A medical term designating a certain combination of gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics, and hormonal balances. Because usually subdivided into 'male' and 'female', this category often does not recognize the existence of intersexed bodies.

Sex Identity – How a person identifies physically, which may include female, male, in between, neither, or beyond.

Updated October 2013

Sexual Orientation – The desire for intimate emotional and/ or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes.

Sex Reassignment Surgery / SRS – A term used by some medical professionals to refer to a group of surgical options that alter a person's physical sex. In most states, one or multiple surgeries are required to achieve legal recognition of gender variance.

Sexuality – A person's exploration of sexual acts, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, and desire.

Stealth – A term that refers to a person's choice to be secretive in the public sphere about gender identity/history, either after transitioning or while successfully passing. Can also be referred to as "going stealth" or "living in stealth mode."

Stone Butch / Femme – A person who may or may not desire sexual penetration and/or contact with the genitals or breasts.

Straight – Another term for heterosexual.

Stud – An African-American and/or Latina masculine lesbian. Also known as "butch" or "aggressive."

Top Surgery – This term usually refers to surgery for the construction of a male-type chest, but may also refer to breast augmentation.

Trans – An abbreviation that is sometimes used to refer to a gender variant person. This use allows a person to state gender variant identity without having to disclose hormonal or surgical status/intentions. This term is sometimes used to refer to the gender variant community as a whole.

Transgender – 1. An umbrella term that encompasses people who identify or express gender in a non-normative way. 2. A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex, regardless of hormonal or surgical status/intentions.

Transition – The process a gender-variant person undergoes to change bodily appearance to be more congruent with the gender/sex felt internally and/or to be in harmony with a preferred gender expression.

Transman – An identity label sometimes adopted by female-to-male transsexuals to signify that they are men while still affirming their history as females. Also referred to as "transguy."

Transphobia – The irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to accept gender ambiguity.

Transsexual – A person who identifies psychologically as a gender/sex other than the one assigned at birth, usually intending to transform the body hormonally and surgically to match the inner sense of gender/sex.

Updated October 2013

Transvestite – Someone who dresses in clothing generally identified with the opposite gender/sex. The modern preferred term is “cross-dresser” in the United States, but the term “transvestite” is still used in a positive sense in some countries.

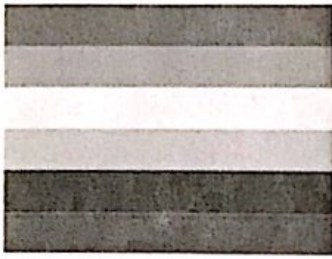
Transwoman – An identity label sometimes adopted by male-to-female transsexuals to signify that they are women while still affirming their history as males.

Two-Spirited – A Native American person who has attributes of both genders but is seen as a separate or third gender, has a distinct social role in the tribe, and is often involved with mystical rituals (shamans). The person's attire is usually mixture of male and female articles. The term “two-spirit” is usually considered to specific to the Zuni tribe; similar identity labels vary by tribe and include “one-spirit” and “wintke.”

Ze / Hir – Alternate pronouns that are gender-neutral and preferred by some gender variant persons. Pronounced “zee” and “here,” they replace “she/he” and “his/hers” respectively.

Updated October 2013

Common LGBTQ Symbols



Rainbow Flag

Use of the rainbow flag by the gay community began in 1978 when it first appeared in the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Freedom Day Parade. Borrowing symbolism from the hippie movement and black civil rights groups, San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker designed the rainbow flag in response to a need for a symbol that could be used year after year. Rainbows have since become a symbol representing pride for the LGBTQ community.



Gender Symbols

Double interlocking male and female symbols have been used by gay men and lesbians since the 1970s. Some feminists have also used the double female symbol to represent the sisterhood of women.



Bisexual Flag

The bisexual flag was designed in 1998 to create visibility outside of and within the LGBTQ community.



Pink Triangle

In Nazi Germany, Hitler declared all homosexual acts prohibited and had any identified homosexuals sent to death camps and marked with pink triangles. Today, the pink triangle serves as a reminder and a symbol of persecution and oppression of the LGBTQ community.



Black Triangle

There is evidence to indicate that the black triangle was used in Nazi Germany to designate prisoners with antisocial behavior. Black triangle prisoners may have included lesbians, prostitutes, women who refused to bear children and women with other "antisocial" traits. As the pink triangle is historically a male symbol, the black triangle has similarly been reclaimed by lesbians and feminists as a symbol of pride and solidarity.



Transgender Triangle

The International Foundation for Gender Education is an educational and charitable organization addressing cross-dressing and transgender issues. One of the organization's logos, this symbol combines the lavender color and the pink triangle shape with a ring denoting various genders all fused into one.

Updated October 2013

Resources for LGBTQ Students at Davidson College

LGBTQ Caucus

<http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/multicultural-life/lgbtq-at-davidson>

The college's LGBTQ Caucus advocates for and supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer persons at the college by attending to the issues, ideas, social history, and cultural practices that are of interest to them, and which matter to a diverse community. This recently formed group connects the campus community together to educate on LGBTQ issues, supports the college's non-discrimination policy, collaborates with other social justice groups, and disseminates LGBTQ achievements. The group meets monthly and meetings are posted on the Campus Calendar under student and employee events.

Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)(NOW Q&A)

<http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/student-activities/student-organizations/gender-and-sexuality>

The Gay-Straight Alliance includes students, faculty and staff and represents members of the Davidson community who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning, along with straight allies. The group advocates for increased awareness and acceptance of LGBTQ issues and aims to provide a safe and supportive environment for all LGBTQ individuals in the school community.

You Are Not A Stranger Here (YANASH)

<http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/student-activities/student-organizations/gender-and-sexuality>

You Are Not A Stranger Here (YANASH) is a confidential student group created by students for students who identify as LGBTQ. Look for meeting announcements in the Crier and on Inside Davidson, and contact Georgia Ringle for the meeting location.

Gay-Straight Alumni Network of Davidson (GSAND)

<http://www.davidson.edu/alumni/get-involved/gsand>

The Gay-Straight Alumni Network of Davidson serves as a source of support, advocacy, visibility, and programming for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender alumni population of Davidson College. GSAND is an informal affinity network created to facilitate connections between LGBT alumni and the college.

Department of Gender & Sexuality Studies

<http://www.davidson.edu/academics/gender-and-sexuality-studies>

The Gender and Sexuality Studies interdisciplinary major trains students to examine gender relations and the construction of gender and sexual difference from a globally-informed perspective and to consider how gender and sexuality intersect with the social categories of race, class, ethnicity, disability, and age to produce our complex social identities.

Multicultural Affairs

<http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/multicultural-life>

The mission of Multicultural Affairs is to foster mutual respect and understanding among, and for all, people of different cultures, backgrounds, experiences, and worldviews. Programs and services include Intergroup Dialogue, the Multicultural Ambassadors program, and multiple safe spaces on campus. Students can also report incidents of hate or bias related to the LGBTQ community through a reporting form on the Multicultural Life website.

Updated October 2013

Student Counseling Center

<http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/health-and-counseling>

The Student Counseling Center offers a range of counseling services that help students address adjustment issues and other challenges that they may typically face during their college years. The clinical staff consists of master's and doctoral-level licensed counselors and psychologists.

College Chaplain

<http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/religious-and-spiritual-life>

The Chaplain's Office values the life of the spirit and fosters openness to and respect for the world's various faith traditions. Staff members are informed about on- and off-campus resources and spiritual organizations that are open and affirming to the LGBTQ community.

Center for Career Development

<http://www.davidson.edu/offices/career-development/students/lgbtq-resources>

The Center for Career Development has compiled a page of resources related to LGBTQ rights in the workplace, gay-friendly job search organizations and web sites, industry and geographic resources, and tips for assessing the inclusivity of employers. The Center also hosts career panels specifically geared toward LGBTQ students.

Department of Public Safety

<http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/public-safety>

The Department of Public Safety & Campus Police is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for Davidson's students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Staff can work with students on reports of any incidents of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, etc. related to the LGBTQ community.

The Trevor Project

<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ youth. The organization hosts a wide variety of training programs and events, and is most well known for The Trevor Lifeline, a suicide prevention hotline.

Campus Pride

<http://www.campuspride.org/>

Campus Pride is a national online community and resource network committed to student leaders and campus organizations. The organization hosts Stop the Hate training sessions, summer leadership experiences for LGBTQ students, and sponsors a wide variety of research initiatives related to LGBTQ college students – including specifically within the context of the Greek system. Campus Pride is actually housed right here in Charlotte, NC...

LGBT Community Center of Charlotte

<http://www.lgbtcharlotte.org/>

...As is the LGBT Community Center of Charlotte, a growing organization that provides a variety of services and programs for the LGBTQ population in the Charlotte metropolitan area. The center has recently moved to the NoDa neighborhood, so it is just a short 15 minutes down the road from the college. The center works closely with the Charlotte Pride committee to plan the area's biggest event every year in August.

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