Introduction

The President's Committee on Issues of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity is charged to (a) advise the President on matters pertaining to issues of sexual and/or affectional orientation and gender identity and expression as they pertain to USF faculty, staff, and students, and (b) evaluate and monitor the university environment for problems and issues related to these matters.

The concerns of the Committee on Issues of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (CISOGI) are based on the continuing burdens of prejudice and discrimination that people of different sexual orientations and gender identities experience in society, including the workplace and academic settings such as a university. It is CISOGI’s goal to assist the President in bringing equity and fairness to all members of the LGBTQ+ community in order to maximize their talents and their contributions to the university, which bring value to the educational outcomes of USF, and are consistent with USF’s commitment to diversity and inclusion as indicated in the USF Statement on Diversity.

USF has made steady and significant progress in creating a positive climate for LGBTQ+ employees and students by including sexual orientation in the USF faculty and staff personnel rules in 2004, then to the diversity and nondiscrimination policies in 2005, and in 2010, offering domestic partner benefits to all qualified employees. In 2012, as a result of a recommendation of this committee, the university added gender identity and expression to the university’s nondiscrimination policy. We deeply appreciate the efforts of the administration to value diversity within our USF campuses and will continue to support all activities that seek to achieve the goal of inclusion and equity.

There have been a number of LGBT efforts that have occurred across our USF system this year, and as a result, we now see a more positive working environment evolving for the campus LGBT community. The continued collaboration and planning among CISOGI, the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity (DIEO), USF Alumni Association, Office of Multicultural Affairs, PRIDE Alliance, Trans+ Student Union, Safe Zone Ally Training Program, Pride Awareness Committee (USF Polytechnic), Gay
Straight Alliance (USF St. Petersburg), the USF GLBT and Allied Medical Student Association, the USF Women’s Status Committee, the USF Title IX Committee, and several community organizations/partnerships have contributed to these results.

**2015 – 2016 CISOGI Goals and Accomplishments**

During the 2015-2016 academic year, CISOGI met regularly to assess progress on key goals, plan events, and address new issues as needed. We were especially pleased to have regular representation at these meetings from invested students representing the PRIDE Alliance, the Trans+ Student Union, the GLBT and Allied Medical Student Association, the GLBT Pre-Med Society, and other interested groups. We had newly hired faculty and staff members who expressed interest in serving on CISOGI. Additionally, we introduced the formation of 4 sub-committees to encourage membership participation and expedite moving initiatives forward. These sub-committees include Policy and Campus Pride Index, Programming, Communication, and Scholarship. CISOGI, in conjunction with USF Student Affairs and the Office of Multicultural Affairs is in development of a USF LGBT website to link all of USF’s and Tampa Bay’s LGBT resources.

**I. Key goals**

A. Partner to bring a nationally recognized LGBT speaker to USF, for future partnership and fundraising for LGBT Alumni Scholarship.

B. Continue to work with the USF Alumni Association to increase the endowment of the LGBT Alumni Scholarship, and offer at least $4000 in awards in 2016.

C. Continue to monitor the potential development of a cross-discipline LGBT studies initiative through a certificate program or minor.

D. Host our 12th Annual GALA event in collaboration with campus partners.

E. Additional faculty members and strategic staff to be invited to serve on CISOGI

F. Complete Campus Pride Index

G. Recommend trans related policies

A. Partner to bring a nationally recognized LGBT speaker to USF, for future partnership and fundraising for LGBT Alumni Scholarship.

**Status: Ongoing**

Through the University Lecture Series, USF had negotiated to bring Lavern Cox who is a well-known transgender woman and an internationally recognized speaker and activist on transgender and LGBTQIA+ issues. However, due to a scheduling conflict with an upcoming film, Ms. Cox has to cancel her March lecture.

As a part of the Title IX Conference hosted by DIEO, Dr. Kathleen Robbins presented as the Featured Speaker. Dr. Robbins was a graduate of the United States Air Force
Academy, served in Vietnam, and has numerous projects within the United States and abroad. She brought her experience as a veteran, corporate executive, and transgendered woman to the table in her activism for equality and inclusiveness.

B. Continue to work with the USF Alumni Association to increase the endowment of the LGBT Alumni Scholarship, and offer at least $4000 in awards in 2016.

Status: Ongoing

1. Continue to increase the endowment
   The Alumni Association/USF Foundations representatives Kemel Thompson and Tyrone Gray met with Dr. Karen Berkman and Dr. Jose Hernandez during spring/summer 2015 and discussed developing a reception in 2015 and other opportunities to continue to raise funds for the LGBT Scholarships. A dinner held on November 18th was well attended and resulted in a successful increase in the endowment fund by $10,000.

2. Offer at least $4000 in awards in 2016
   Seven $2000 LGBT Scholarships recipients were selected and presented at the 12th Annual USF LGBT Community GALA in April 2016 by the Alumni Association and CISOGI members.

CISOGI will continue to work with the USF Alumni Association to increase the endowment of the LGBT Alumni Scholarship.

C. Continue to monitor the potential development of a cross-discipline LGBT studies initiative through a certificate program or minor.

Status: Ongoing

The committee does not have the purview to make curricular decisions that affect academic units. Hence, this item has only been an issue to monitor, not one the committee can act upon. We will continue to monitor this issue for future progress. Although none has been accomplished this year, we are hopeful that progress will be made in coming academic years. Recently, new faculty have allowed for offering introductory courses in the Women’s and Gender Studies Department (WGS). We hope these new additions will allow for the appropriate curriculum to begin offering a sexualities certificate at either the undergraduate or graduate levels or both in the future.

D. Host our 12th Annual GALA event in collaboration with campus partners.

Status: Completed

See details below under II. Events. We continue to pursue corporate/community sponsors and partnerships with other USF organizations that advocate for diversity and
inclusion. The annual GALA is our way of celebrating those efforts together, and reaching out to the USF System and Tampa Bay communities.

E. Additional faculty members and strategic staff to be invited to serve on CISOGI

**Status: Ongoing**

The Co-Chairs attended New Faculty Orientation at the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year to increase the visibility of CISOGI to potential faculty members to the committee. This resulted in interest from various faculty and staff, and the inclusion of a new staff member to the committee.

We will continue to actively increase the visibility of the committee and recruitment of new faculty and staff stakeholders.

F. Complete Campus Pride Index

**Status: Ongoing**

CISOGI is leading the initiative to complete the Campus Pride Index as a campus-wide effort analyzing LGBT inclusive policies, academic offerings, programming/involve opportunities, and staffing. The national index provides great benchmarking data related to other institutions who offer LGBT inclusive collegiate experiences. A goal for CISOSGI moving forward will be to use this data to quantitatively identify and strengths and weaknesses of the campus environment to improve USF’s inclusion. While we made great strides in identifying much of the information, we were not able to complete the index this academic year. We anticipate it being completed early in the fall and will continue to update as the campus environment changes to allow for annual qualitative data. The vacancy of the LGBT Programs Coordinator this academic year may have impacted our ability to complete this important index. The filling of this position for the 2016-2017 academic year will be a great benefit to this effort, along with many others.

CISOGI will continue to pursue the completion of the Campus Pride Index and prioritize the annual review and updating of information.

G. Recommend trans related policies

**Status: Ongoing**

Resources for the trans community include the newly instituted ability to request a first name change in Canvas, which also changes one’s name in the campus directory. The ability to request a name change gives students the respect they deserve by being referred to in a classroom setting by their preferred name, thus increasing the likelihood that a classroom is a safe space for trans students.
II. Events:

On October 29, 2015 CISOGI co-sponsored a LGBTQIA+ USF and Community Mixer, along with the Tampa Bay Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce and Balance Tampa Bay.

On March 26, 2016 CISOGI sponsored the Tampa Pride Parade Student Delegation and Street Festival Booth as a part of the 2nd Annual Tampa Pride event in Ybor City.

On April 18, 2016 CISOGI, along with all Presidential Advisory Committees, co-sponsored the USF Diversity Summit.

On April 20, 2016 CISOGI, the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the USF Alumni Association, and the USF PRIDE Student Organization hosted the 12th Annual USF LGBT Community GALA. At the event, LGBT Alumni Scholarships were presented to 7 USF students who represented every USF campus. USF alumna Samira Obeid was featured as the guest speaker.

On April 21, 2016 CISOGI, the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, PRIDE Alliance, the Trans+ Student Union, the GLBT and Allied Medical Student Association, Iota Eta Epsilon Adelfosity and GLBT and Allied Pre Med Student Association held the first LGBTQ+ Student Organization Roundtable. Leadership from all of the aforementioned organizations met to discuss their missions, visions, goals and planned activities for the next semester. The leaders also made the decision that they will continue to have these roundtables in order to ensure that collaboration occurs when opportunities are present and no organization will hold an event on the same day as another organization. Subsequently, these roundtables will continue to unify the LGBTQ+ organizations at USF.

IV. Committee Recommendations for 2016-2017

- Increase campus visibility and highlight safety of the LGBTQ+ community by working with campus police. Work with campus partners to continue the development of efficient methods to relaying safety information to the campus community.
- Continue to work with the USF Alumni Association to increase the endowment of the LGBT Alumni Scholarship, and offer at least $8000 in awards in 2017.
- Continue to monitor the potential development of a cross-discipline LGBT studies initiative through a certificate program or minor.
- Work with campus partners to develop a booklet of financial resources for LGBTQ+ students.
- Host our 13th Annual GALA event in collaboration with campus partners.
- Complete Campus Pride Index
This year while we have made an effort to involve more representatives from around various offices and colleges from campus, we realize that we would benefit from additional membership from different areas of the USF community. We would particularly appreciate seeing additional membership from the faculty, an individual from residence life and an individual from human resources.

In closing, CISOGI wishes to express gratitude to President Judy Genshaft, Provost Ralph Wilcox, Senior Vice Provost Dwayne Smith, Vice President for Student Affairs and Student Success Paul Dosal, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the USF Alumni Association, PRIDE Alliance, the Trans+ Student Union, the GLBT and Allied Medical Student Association, Iota Eta Epsilon Adelfosity, GLBT and Allied Pre Med Student Association, Safe Zone Program, the USF Libraries, and Dr. Jose Hernandez and the DIEO staff for continued work to achieve CISOGI's overall goal to create a welcoming campus climate for LGBTQ+ employees and students at USF.

Submitted By:

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