GBLT at the University of Washington
For UW Diversity Appraisal

Submitted by
Shirley J. Yee & Sheryl Schwartz, Co-Chairs
GBLT Committee of the UW Diversity Council

May 2004

During the 2003-04 academic year, University of Washington began to address important GBLT (Gay, Bi-Sexual, Lesbian, Transgender) issues, as outlined in the 2001 Task Force Report to President McCormick. The new Q* Center and a new GBLTQ* reading group, as well as the activities of the GBLT Committee and the GBLTC ASUW Commission, have brought greater visibility to GBLT issues at the University of Washington. Although there is still much work to be done, this year has been a landmark one for initiating a range of GBLTQ activities that raise visibility and awareness of GBLT as a vital component of the University’s diversity goals. The narrative below summarizes both the accomplishments and the areas that still need attention. Part I summarizes the work of GBLT organizations; Part II identifies areas that need further attention.

Part I.

The “Q Center”
We are happy to report that in September 2003, the Provost’s office and the Office of the Vice President of Minority Affairs each provided start-up funds to establish the Q Center. Jennifer Self was hired as part-time director of the Center, which is currently housed in the HUB, under the supervision of L. Lincoln Johnson, Director of Student Activities and Union Facilities. In the fall of 2004, the Center will re-locate to a permanent space on the 4th floor of Schmitz Hall. Ms. Self is in the process of creating an advisory board made up of UW students, UW employees, and community members. The purpose of the Center is to provide information about campus resources and organizations related to GBLT activities.

GBLT Lecture Series
The Diversity Council’s GBLT Committee launched the University of Washington’s first GBLT lecture series. Prof. Gail Dubrow initiated the series with a slide show and lecture in February 2004, entitled “Blazing Trails with Pink Triangles and Rainbow Flags: Preserving the Landmarks of Gay and Lesbian History.” Crispin Thurlow followed in May with a lecture, co-sponsored by the Department of Communication and the GBLT Committee, on intercultural communication and the politics of difference.

The series will continue in the next academic year when Michael Brown, Assistant Professor of Geography, will participate in a presentation by the Northwest Lesbian & Gay History Museum Project in October 2004. This event will showcase the links between the UW GBLT community and Seattle-based GBLT activities.

* Q is used at times in reflect “queer” and at times “questioning.”
We are hoping to bring two non-UW, nationally-known scholars in GBLT studies to campus in February, 2005. The GBLT Committee has tentatively scheduled Leila J. Rupp and Verta Taylor, both professors at the University of California, Santa Barbara, to give a lecture on their recent book, *Drag Queens at the 801 Cabaret* (2003). The funding proposal has been submitted to the Office of Minority Affairs for approval.

The GBLT Committee also made two nominations to the Danz and Walker-Ames lecture series, and recognized GBLT civil rights leader Urvashi Vaid is expected to come to campus in the next academic year.

**GBLTC Activities**
Under the energetic and focused leadership of UW senior Dick Sprick, the ASUW Commission has been very active this year. In addition to staging a drag queen/king show and other social activities, Dick created a booklet that contains information about many GBLTQ resources, activities, and organization at the University of Washington Seattle campus.

**Campus Connections**
Several informal GBLT organizations are active on the UW campus, including QUIIG, Outdawgs, the CampusQ listserve, and BOHGOF. This year, the GBLTC worked to bring together these various informal GBLT organizations in the UW community.

**Undergraduate Research**
We were pleased that two students, Zaedryn Meade and Sarah Crowder, presented their GBLT-related research projects at the annual UW Undergraduate Research Symposium in Mary Gates Hall in May. It is encouraging to see students engaged in GBLTQ research.

**Part II**
As the above activities illustrate, faculty, students and staff have been actively involved in increasing the visibility of GBLT issues. As a new component of the Diversity Council, however, the GBLT Committee is still somewhat on the periphery of the concept of “diversity” at the University of Washington. We hope that as we continue working to regularize GBLT activities on campus, this climate will change. The GBLT committee looks forward to continued collaboration with the Office of Minority Affairs and the Diversity Council.

One issue that warrants further attention is curriculum. Although there are a number of graduate and undergraduate courses at UW that specifically address GBLTQ issues and topics, or contain GBLT content, the list of courses does not constitute a curriculum. There are a number of possibilities for enhancing the curriculum in this area: GBLTQ minor, area of concentration in A&S, or a certificate program. This is an area in which the GBLT Committee intends to focus its work in the 2005-2005 academic year.