



This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible

due -

Discussion #1-Sexual Orientation

10 53

[AC360 - Should Gay Educators Come Out In Class? \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlrhdEtXuOM\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlrhdEtXuOM)



[\(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlrhdEtXuOM\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlrhdEtXuOM)

This video is about how coming out of the closet at work is difficult, but when your job involves children, being openly gay can be even tougher. Steve Perry talks with Tom Greene (Chapel Hill High School), Robert McGarry (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) & Danielle Riley (Jordan High School)

In this short video, identify the reasons why some teachers choose to keep their identity to themselves while others are free to share their personal story. Respond to the posed sentence starters with at least 1-3 tangible ideas:

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

Due on Saturday. Respond to at least 2 other classmates by Sunday.



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480> **Russell Fung (He/Him/His)** <https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>

Nov 2, 2020

There is no right or wrong way to approach how open a teacher can be about his/her sexual orientation. If I were gay, I would probably choose to be out in the open about it. I personally don't like to hide who I am. I would want students to know what/who they're dealing with, so that they can trust me. I have no secrets. I'm open, honest, transparent. Any negative consequences will at least be out in the open to me and I'll know what I'm dealing with.

On the other hand, it might be less of a hassle if I just kept my orientation to myself. If I were to get "Teacher of the Year," it would totally suck to be known as the Gay Teacher of the Year, as much as it would suck to be the Asian English Teacher of the Year. Or how about, Male Teacher of the Year. Able-bodied Teacher of the Year. All these descriptors are unnecessary. I just want to be Teacher of the Year. Also, it's nobody's business what my orientation is, because it has ZERO bearing on the quality of my work. These are some of the reasons I would choose to keep my orientation to myself. I wouldn't hide it. I just wouldn't deny it if someone asked.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

- 1) Ask students what pronoun they prefer to be addressed by: He/She, Him/Her, They/Them, etc.
- 2) Integrate LGBTQi stories in the curriculum, like any descriptor amongst race, religion, physical appearance, etc. Acknowledge LGBTQi issues and normalize open communication about tolerance and acceptance.
- 3) Change the language around these issues. Instead of assuming orientation, refer to people as partners, instead of boyfriend/girlfriend, spouse instead of husband/wife.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization of LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

- 1) Reach out to the victim and tell them I have their back. If there's anything that person needs, I can offer support.
- 2) Report to proper authority, such as HR, supervisor, etc.

To help LGBTQ people in my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

Integrate that disclaimer in conversation. I like to say it out loud. On top of words, my actions will show that I don't judge people's work or character based on orientation. When expressing praise or criticism, I focus on the actions, not personal details of somebody. When talking about other people in front of my peers/students, I will often speak to their actions and quality of work. When correcting other people's behavior/comments, I do it firmly, but without putting the perpetrator on defense. This is hard sometimes. I'm very blunt, and may come off as self-righteous. But I like to let people know where I stand. It helps me filter negative people out. If that can't be helped, I'll align myself with like-minded people to back me up.

← [Reply](#)



[Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907)

Nov 2, 2020

Hi Russell,

I agree that sometimes it's less of a hassle to keep things to yourself at work. Not only with sexual orientation but also with all things personal. I'm not teaching as of yet so I can apply this to my life in corporates. I normally try to refrain from sharing too much about myself at work because it causes extra work having to think of how my personal life is being perceived among my coworkers and superiors. It can cause unnecessary stress. Back at my old job few years ago, my coworkers casually asked me if I'm planning to have a baby anytime soon. I answered yes eventually but I'm not rushing. Then my boss made a comment telling me not to plan it around our busy season and laughed as if she was joking. Her comment was simply rude and inappropriate and it lingered in back of my mind for a long time. When she refused to promote me even when I was the best performer of our team, I was convinced to think the bit about my personal life I shared with her must have gotten her to think I'm not a good candidate for the bigger role. Maybe she thought I can quit anytime to become a mom? I'm not sure but I can only imagine how much tougher it would be to open up about themselves for those with self-identities that are considered nontraditional.

I also want to add that I like your ideas of asking 'students what pronoun they prefer to be addressed by: He/She, Him/Her, They/Them, etc.' and changing 'the language around these issues'. So simple and easy but very important.

Edited by [Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907) on Nov 2 at 6:16pm

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Nov 3, 2020

Wow, thank you for sharing that story. You made me think a lot about what I've said and done that made me not advance or get a promotion. I'm very open and transparent, so that might've cost me friendships, career opportunities, etc. I will never know how far I could've gone in life if I just kept personal details to myself. I'm a cis-gendered Asian male, and I thought that would be enough to get through life. Sharing every thought, feeling, and opinion might've been my downfall. I can't imagine what it's like for women, especially around the idea of having children could be a deterrent for people to promote you. What a harsh world.

[← Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Nov 3, 2020

Kelly, I believe your experience is a prime example of why some people tend to focus on their job in the workplace and just be cordial with their co-workers, instead of taking the risk of developing a personal relationship in fear of undergoing what you experienced. In a world filled with people with their own opinions those views have a way of possibly hurting others. Seeing Russell point of view, on why a person would hide their sexual orientation I can imagined the opinionated view they will undergo if they reveal that information.

Which brings me to you Russell. I really admire your courageousness of being open to your students in the given scenario. I want to further ask you sir, if it occurred how would you deal with possibility hostility from students,co-workers, and administrative staff ?

[← Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Nov 4, 2020

Monta, that's a really good question. Hostility from students, coworkers, and admin staff combined, I'd honestly quit. That's a trifecta of hate. If it was only students, then that's an opportunity to grow and learn. If it was only coworkers, I can deal. My work would speak for itself. Admin staff, I can deal

as well. My boundary is when people in every position are hostile, then I won't stay where I'm not wanted.

Breaking it down, with students I would deal with them by designing a culturally relevant classroom environment: desk arrangement, posters on the wall, rules. Curriculum would include PSA's, short films that teach tolerance and other perspectives. Then there's this teaching exercise that I learned from my sixth grade teacher. Everyone wearing a blue jacket, stand up. Go to the back of the room. For the rest of the day, these arbitrary "blue jacket people" are to be ignored, treated less than. An acting role and exercise. It has worked so well to exhibit what hate on a person looks like.

Coworkers: That's probably harder. In my experience, I learned that when a coworker ignores me, treats me less than, then I should practice the art of not giving a f***. I would focus on my job, keep interaction civil, and keep email records to cover my ass.

Admin staff. Same as coworkers.

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Nov 6, 2020



Hi Russell. I like the idea of being straightforward about your position on LGBTQ issues ("Integrate that disclaimer in conversation. I like to say it out loud"). Not only will any LGBTQ students know where you stand, but it also lets other students know the expectation for behavior in the classroom and it also models tolerance for them.

← [Reply](#)



[Gabriela Miranda Laguna \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177)

Nov 6, 2020



Hello Russell,

I like your idea about ask students what pronoun they prefer and integrate LGBTQi stories in the curriculum.

Good job explaining every point.

← Reply

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[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907)

[Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907)

⋮

Nov 2, 2020

The extent to which teachers share about their identity depend on the level of safety and comfort they feel in the environment they find themselves in. Whether it's the institution they work for or the community they teach in, if the teachers feel confident their identities and stories will be accepted and respected, they will have more freedom to share their beliefs and lifestyles.

- ***To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:*** incorporate relevant topics into my course curricula to promote deeper understanding and use materials that convey the concepts of social equity, inclusiveness, and acceptance to encourage healthy development of all students. Especially with the younger generations who have access to social media, teachers should keep in mind that their students are highly exposed to mass information that are usually segmented, biased and misleading. To prevent them from forming skewed worldviews, I would actively incorporate the concept of information literacy into my lessons and help them become educated thinkers. I would also establish rules that prevent discriminatory languages and actions in my classrooms, so they learn how to create an environment of inclusiveness and respect for one another.
- ***If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:*** escalate the issue to rise above the surface so we recognize and resolve it together as a community. This can be a class, school, or other external groups. The focus here should not be to simply condemn or punish but rather to reform the social and cultural environment that condoned such actions. The entire community involved should work on it together. I would suggest ways to educate all parties involved, starting with adults such as educators, parents, and staffs. Either by holding workshops and mandatory training sessions or by providing selected reading materials, there are many ways to promote learning. Since I believe adults are responsible for creating safe environment for all, they should educate themselves first to guide the students to right paths.
- ***To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching, or personal***

skills, I can: be transparent about my assessment standards and how I build my lessons to be inclusive of all students. I can also share fair approach in the evaluation process of my students' academics in my classes. With personal skills, I will acknowledge the differences in every single member of my community, whether in their sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, economic circumstances, or family dynamic. Rather than being blind about it and try to apply same standard for all, I will focus on their differences and uplift them with respect and acceptance. This can be reflected in the conversations, attitudes, and action I take in my community in my daily life.

Edited by [Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907) on Nov 2 at 5:43pm

← [Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Nov 3, 2020

Hello Kelly hope your day is going well ! Social media is encyclopedia source of information. It's almost acts as its own learning source for students. I think it is important that they become educated thinkers, while also having aspiring instructors such as yourself guide them through the process. I was curious to know your take on how in classroom instruction can combat that which is the worldwide web. Do you believe it is an uphill battle for instructors teaching lessons, as oppose to that located online.

I also like you take on assessment standards, as that is important in focusing on the task of aiding in their academic journey while also create a safe environment for the students

← [Reply](#)



[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Nov 2, 2020

Issues of safety and privilege allow some individuals to share their sexual orientation and/or gender expressions while limiting others from doing the same. For instance, the male teacher, Tom Greene, might feel empowered by his administration and gender expression to reveal his identity with the class. In other words, even though he is gay, being white and male affords him certain privileges and safety that being a woman and a person of color might not in a place like North Carolina. The female teacher, Danielle Riley, for example, appeared more apprehensive about revealing her sexual orientation, especially because members of the community may take issue with "being their child's teacher, if your sexuality is not what they feel is traditional," revealing how precarious she feels her job is in a community that may not fully accept her being a lesbian.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can share my own coming out experiences, include a variety of LGBTQ voices in my curriculum (some recommendations are Kacen Callender's *Felix Every After*, Janet Mock's *Redefining Realness*, Carmen Machado's *In the Dream House*, Russell Leong's *Phoenix Eyes*, among others), and promote the LGBTQ Center on my syllabus and throughout the semester.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization of LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can report those doing the victimizing to their respective department chairs/deans and follow up with those chairs and deans to see what has been done to address the issue. I can also familiarize those individuals with the Board-approved LGBTQ+ Bill of Rights that seeks to protect LGBTQ individuals on campus. Finally, I can walk people falling victim to bullying to a safe space (although, ideally, the entire campus should be a safe space), such as the LGBTQ Center on campus, and reaffirm that they belong on campus and that there are many more allies than non-allies.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can create clear rubrics that do not include sexual orientation or gender expression as a criteria for grading or evaluation.

Edited by [Luis Orozco \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922) on Nov 2 at 6:05pm

← [Reply](#)



[Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907)

Nov 3, 2020

Luis, I find it brilliant that you pointed out that it also has to do with the 'privileges.' You mentioned this about Tom Greene: 'even though he is gay, being white and male affords him certain privileges and safety that being a woman and a person of color might not in a place like North Carolina.' I agree that it's hard to define what it's like to be a homosexual from only one person's experience because even in the same community, everyone is made up of different sets of privileges and circumstances that affect their decision to share their identities. I also like that you mentioned that this is in North Carolina. US is so diverse within itself and every part of the country has its own distinctive character and this has a huge impact LGBTQ communities. They would feel much safer to share their stories in California than in Mississippi!

← [Reply](#)



[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Nov 4, 2020

Hi Kelly!

Thank you for your comments. Yes, it's sad that the place a person lives in can afford certain privileges and sense of safety, even within the U.S. There is still much work to do to create a more accepting society.

← [Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Nov 3, 2020

Hello Luis, hope your day is going on this election day. I really enjoy reading your perspective on this topic. Two points of view caught my eye that I wanted your further thoughts on

For instance, the male teacher, Tom Greene, might feel empowered by his administration and gender expression to reveal his identity with the class. In other words, even though he is gay, being white and male affords him certain privileges and safety that being a woman and a person of color might not in a place like North Carolina.

Do you feel designated categories (color-gender) depending on where one lives and works can make them exempt from persecutions of being gay? I ask this because I was reading our class book, which discussed the prescribed attributes of what a man and a woman should be in the 1950s and the consequences of not fitting those descriptions, leading one to being chastised by society, including the workplace. Obviously, times are different now, but still prevalent in some areas.

Also, what did revealing your identity do for personally, and how did it influence your students (academically and personally) ?

← [Reply](#)



[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Nov 4, 2020

Hi Monta!

Thank you for your comment and questions!

Do you feel designated categories (color-gender) depending on where one lives and works can make them exempt from persecutions of being gay?

While I don't believe anyone who openly identifies as LGBTQ is completely exempt from discriminatory practices or even the threat of violence, being a white and cis-

gender man, even if that man is gay, can make it easier for that man to be who he is. Conversely, transgender women of color continue to have the highest rates of homicide and threats of violence, [even in liberal places like Los Angeles \(https://abcnews.go.com/US/black-trans-lives-matter-activists-call-inclusion-racial/story?id=73571954\)](https://abcnews.go.com/US/black-trans-lives-matter-activists-call-inclusion-racial/story?id=73571954).

Also, what did revealing your identity do for personally, and how did it influence your students (academically and personally)?

Coming out as gay allowed me to live happier, as I no longer needed to "hide" that part of who I am. Not only that, but I was lucky that my mom and sisters were very accepting and supportive. I also think it's important for students who see themselves as "different" to have allies and feel safe in the classroom. One of the issues that worries me now, during COVID, is that LGBTQ students have no respite from toxic environments, especially when those toxic places include their homes. Ironically, homes are supposed to be places of safety and protection, but, sadly, they can be far from that for LGBTQ individuals.

[← Reply](#)



[Ting Tai Lui \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284)

Nov 2, 2020

Role model. It's the role model teachers who must play at school. Teachers' behavior and personal lives must be whiter than white. So, opening the closet is not yet acceptable in the Chinese community - even in a society under British rule for over 150 years. Ahem, Britain was not that liberal. Gay code-breaker Alan Turing, a national hero of Britain during WW2, was convicted of "gross indecency" in 1952. A statutory pardon to Turing from the UK Government came very late: in 2012. Being gay was a criminal act in Britain's last important colony Hong Kong until several years before they handed the city over to China. In 1980, a 29-year-old gay Scottish police inspector was found lying in his blood in his police apartment in Hong Kong and shot dead with his police revolver. 5 gunshots in his left chest. Upon police investigations, the coroner court reported that the young Scot had not been murdered but committed suicide. It was shocking news in British Hong Kong, for the incident had involved many top officers and the lingering negotiations about Hong Kong's future handover between Britain and China were about to begin. *A Death in Hong Kong: The MacLennan Case of 1980 and the Suppression of a Scandal* (2nd Edition), published this year, reveals the details of MacLennan's death and the bias against gay government officials in colonial Hong Kong. I am still reading this book, so I can't tell you all the author's findings.

Back to sexual orientation in Hong Kong schools. It seems to me that being a gay or lesbian has always been a taboo at school - before and after the handover. Some people may say that Hong Kong Congressman Chan Chi-chuen has successfully opened the closet in the city. Yes, because he represents the interest of the LGBT group. So, he has the mandate from his constituents.

But what about the educational sector in this Chinese city? Almost all parents are the Chinese people. Given the low birth rate, the strong power of the parent-teacher association in school, and the rise of neo-liberalism and consumerism in the sector, school management and front line teachers succumb to parents', or technically customers', preference. Colleges, particularly not government-funded, I believe, are falling to their knees. Why? Because tuition fees are their major source of incomes. Government subvention? No way.

Last year I made acquaintance with a former high school teacher in a Christian fellowship in Hong Kong. He was gay. He told me he had taught in his school for many years and recently resigned from the school. He did not tell me why, but I strongly believed that it should be his opening the closet that caused his resignation.

Why is heterosexuality the mainstream orientation in schools in Hong Kong? It is perhaps because almost all top-notch schools are either Catholic or Christian ones. Correct me if I am wrong: The sponsoring bodies of these schools and the religions in question oppose the LGBT idea and encourage human reproduction. The Hong Kong Government won't have the nerve to irritate religious leaders in order to cater to the interests of minority groups in Hong Kong.

All in all, the trio - Chinese parents, religious leaders in top schools, and the Government - won't encourage both teachers and students to open the closet. For this reason, LGBT teachers and students must continue to keep their sexual orientations to themselves.

Edited by [Ting Tai Lui \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284) on Nov 2 at 11:02pm

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Nov 3, 2020

Hi Ting,

What a fascinating read. Thank you so much for going into detail and sharing the experience of gay people in Hong Kong. It is very unfortunate that people have to hide themselves because of the various reasons you covered. It seems like there isn't anything you can do about it, so answering those three prompt questions is well, out of the question. Would there even be victims of LGBTQ people if they are all hidden in the closet? What about those people who can't really hide it? Truly unfortunate.

← [Reply](#)



[Ting Tai Lui \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284)

Nov 3, 2020

Hi Russell

I know lots of school teachers in the city. But, as far as I know, no school publicly discusses LGBTQ policy. Perhaps they turn a blind eye to this issue. School principals and teachers do not show bias against these students, but they won't set rules and regulations to protect their rights either. I've heard that there are an increasing number of gay and lesbian students in school.

Ting

[← Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Nov 3, 2020

Hello Ting hope you are doing well. Very interesting read. During its history has there been any suggestion to institute rulings of discrimination practices toward these groups ?

[← Reply](#)



[Melissa McConnell-Quinn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617)

Nov 6, 2020

Thank you for opening our minds to what goes on around the world. It is always an interesting perspective to see outside of America. I live in Saudi Arabia and the LGBTQ lifestyle is most definitely decades behind the progress in the USA. Having only lived in the states and now in the middle east, I appreciate the lens of how other countries view our discussions/topics.

[← Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Nov 3, 2020

The decision for a teacher to come out in the classroom or with colleagues is entirely a personal choice, in my opinion. While I applaud those who are able to come out and be open about who they are that is not a reality for everyone. Some teachers may have had terrible experiences that make it difficult for them to be open about their sexual orientation. Some may fear that they will be fired, may not advance in their career, may be ridiculed, or worse. Some may just not feel safe coming out even in an inclusive, supportive environment and that is okay. I think it's important that teachers be allowed to make their own decisions about whether or not to be open about their sexual orientation.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can first be aware that many people may not identify as heterosexual and may not feel comfortable disclosing that to anyone as they may feel that they will be discriminated against or harassed if they are open about who they are. The assumption should not be that someone is heterosexual just because they haven't openly identified as LGBTQ. So it is important to create an atmosphere where they can see themselves in the work. To do this, I can include LGBTQ role models for learning, whether it be in the curriculum, guest speakers, or through any media used to enhance teaching. I can validate any student who is open about their LGBTQ status by treating them with the respect and by conveying the message that their personal stories are as important as everyone else's. I can convey this by making room for their voices, by expecting all in the class to treat each other with respect and advocating for the LGBTQ student, defend them, or to link them to resources if needed.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

If I hear or see evidence of victimization of any LGBTQ student/staff/faculty/members of my community I can speak out or get help to stop the victimization if it is happening at the time. I can verbally defend the person being victimized. I can make sure that the appropriate authorities are contacted whether that be police, or the school principal, vice principal, or that the school board is made aware if need be. I can reach out to the person being victimized to see if I can be of support. If it happens in my classroom, I can speak to the perpetrator and/or the parent(s) of the perpetrator to see what is happening in their world that would make the child behave in such a way and to see if the parents can assist in instilling the importance to respect others. I would also have a class discussion about treating others with respect and make room for the students to add their thoughts, experiences, or opinions about the importance of respecting all.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

I can create an inclusive atmosphere in my classroom from the beginning where I outline the expectation of respect for all members of the classroom (and school at large). I can be specific when talking about respect for differences and be specific in naming some of the differences including sexual orientation. I can be a vocal advocate and lend support when and where it is needed. I can treat any of my colleagues with respect and professionalism.

← [Reply](#)



[Erica Wahlgren \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386)

Nov 5, 2020

Hi Erin,

Thanks for sharing your ideas. Your post highlights the importance and impact of how we carry ourselves as instructors and the environment we create. We cannot control everyone and their words/actions but we can make sure that we are inclusive, respectful, and committed to equality and representation for everyone in our classrooms and our actions.

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Nov 6, 2020

Thanks Erica!

← [Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Nov 5, 2020

If it happens in my classroom, I can speak to the perpetrator and/or the parent(s) of the perpetrator to see what is happening in their world that would make the child behave in such a way and to see if the parents can assist in instilling the importance to respect others.

I love this idea Erin ! never thought of talking to the parent. Speaking to the parent not only looks to accomplish your goal of supporting the victimized students, but it also gives you an in-depth look into someone else's world of life perspective. Not to say their outlook is right, but it is always great getting knowledge. It helps builds ourselves, and from an

instruction standpoint, it's a great tool to create other culturally responsive lesson plans for the students geared toward awareness.

← [Reply](#)



[Melissa McConnell-Quinn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617)

Nov 6, 2020

Sometimes speaking to the parents is a great moment for the teacher because you are able to see why the child is speaking in the tone that you are hearing in class. Knowing where the parents are at with the situation, it does help us to better address the student because we can either work as a team or realize that we are going to need our school and set rules to support us moving forward.

← [Reply](#)



[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)

Nov 6, 2020

Hi Erin,

I agree that we can contact the appropriate authorities when we see evidence of victimized LGBTQ students. In a corporate world, HR and lawyers take care of these cases, but I should be prepared for when this happens in my classroom.

Thanks for sharing!

← [Reply](#)



[Erica Wahlgren \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386)

Nov 3, 2020

In this short video, identify the reasons why some teachers choose to keep their identity to themselves while others are free to share their personal story.

In this video we see a teacher choosing to share their personal story because it is who they are as a person and they should not have to hide that. They also want the students to feel comfortable being who they are and sharing their stories. This teacher's choice to share also seems to be motivated in part by wanting to emphasize there is no shame in being and sharing who you are even if that doesn't fit the stereotypical norms.

We also see a teacher choosing not to share her sexual orientation because it does not impact her ability to do her job. She is there to be an effective teacher and help her students succeed academically and develop critical thinking skills. Her ability to do this is not impacted by her sexual orientation.

Both approaches are valid and it really is a personal choice to share details and stories about any aspect of our identity. It is a multifaceted conversation that this video only scratches the surface of. We see why these individual teachers made the choice to share or not share their sexual orientation but I would also like to delve deeper into other underlying factors in the decisions such as gender, racial, and economic inequalities.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

- Provide reading materials authored by and about people of varied sexual orientations and identities
- Ask students for their preferred pronouns

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

- Speak up and say something in the moment
- Report it to the appropriate authority

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

- Create clear policies and statements about how I grade and evaluate their work emphasizing that it is about their performance
- Rubrics can be a helpful evaluation tool because they clearly articulate the expectations for the assignment correlated with a specific grade/point range

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Nov 6, 2020

Hi Erica. I agree with you that the decision to come out is very personal and complex. What might be the right choice for one person, may not be the right choice for another. It's unfortunate that we still live in a world where people are judged for loving differently than what many in our society accept as normal.

← [Reply](#)



[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)


 Nov 6, 2020

Hi Erica,

I have the same opinion. It is a personal choice and no right or wrong. I like your idea of rubrics. This should really clarify that the evaluation is made equally.

← [Reply](#)



[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Nov 3, 2020

We live in a society where judgment is conducted in the cruellest scenarios of what is labeled bad. My recent studies of the LGBTQ people living conditions revealed the harsh reality that has negatively affected their personal and professional lives. The paranoia is real, even in today's working climate of being a school instructor. Understanding the ramifications of being labeled a gay or lesbian, the instructor will conceal their identities.....

- To be exempt from persecution and ridicule by their surrounding peers, as school's environment can be hostile toward people of LGBTQ
- Fear of being removed from their job positions, which has happened in cases such as the [Lavender Scare](https://www.thelavenderscare.com/) and frequent occurrences today in [28 states](https://www.foxnews.com/us/teacher-suspended-for-being-gay-how-this-is-legal-in-28-states) for one's sexual orientation.
- Distrust from Parent/Guardian, specifically if a child is raised under a designated religious or cultural background
- Simple comfort of not having their business exposed and focus on their job as an instructor.

On the other hand, you have instructors willing to take a risk and reveal their personal story to.

- Serve as a support system to students who face their own battle of discriminations
- Build a stronger relationship with the students
- Push for positive change and equality in what may be a hostile learning environment.

Creating a safe environment is essential to the house of learning.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I must first create a code of conduct for students to follow in respect to our fellow peers. AS mentioned before, LGBTQ students face many struggles in a school setting. Suppose a student of this group is being attacked by someone else. In that case, it not only causes a problem in that student's ability to perform well, but it also disrupts the entire learning environment for other in attendance. Once

the courtesy rules are established, the other duties require me to create lessons that resonate with the student and assess students' progress.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

1. Talk about issues in class setting by enforcing anti-discriminatory rules. My LGBT students need to know I have their backs.
2. Address issues in faculty and staff meetings to promote change in the school environment.
3. If changes aren't produced by admiration, I will address issues through social media to encourage change in the institution.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

1. Have personal conversations with my students and being open with them that I hold no ill will toward them and will not judge them for their identity
2. Generate discussions focusing on their academic performance.
3. Support them in their daily struggles, with my actions (*mentioned in the evidence of victimization section*)

← Reply



Erica Wahlgren (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386>)

Nov 5, 2020



Hi Monta,

It's so great that you want to be there for your students. Knowing you have their backs will definitely help create a supportive learning environment. When I taught at CSUSM I let my students know that I had an open-door policy. They were welcome to stop by during my

office hours whenever they needed, without an appointment, and to talk about anything. It's another way to show them you support them.

← [Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617>

Nov 4, 2020

Hello Classmates. I am struggling to put my thoughts on paper this week. My naive self automatically wants to say, "My classroom will be a safe space." "My classroom will not tolerate victimization." "I will always support students and teachers who are part of the LGBTQ community." What I am struggling with is the "how"; *how am I going to do this?* My struggle is that I cannot relate personally to being LGBTQ therefore I don't want to say or act in a way that shows that I have no clue what I'm talking about. My ideas might not work or be realistic so please educate me if you are able to.

One of the things that Tom Greene mentioned in the video was how teachers typically tell their students about themselves personally. That is what we do, that is what humans do. This is how we connect with one another. I constantly tell my students stories about my family.

Being a homosexual and having a partner, should not force you to hide who you are. I have had this discussion in the past with a former classmate of mine. We were in our admin program trying to get administration degrees. She was offered a job as an assistant principal and one of the families found out that she had a wife. She and another classmate, who happens to be a lesbian, were talking and Teresa said, "should I respond about my wife or should I not respond?" My comment to her was, "you are who you are. You shouldn't have to hide your personal life for work. You don't owe anyone an explanation" They told me, in a kind way, that I didn't understand because I had never been judged for my marriage and that I didn't know what it felt like to have families judge me without knowing who me are as a person, a teacher, or in this case, a principal. They were right. I can't relate to what she was going through. This is my struggle. I don't personally relate and I guess I don't understand how people can be mean to those who are LGBTQ.

I also have always taught young children, 5 years -10 years of age. I have never, in 18 years, had to talk to a child about their sexuality or even gender identification. I have had parents who were LGBTQ and I have always had wonderful relationships with them. I have sat in parent conferences with two dads or two moms or a mom with her ex-husband who had transitioned to a female. These were my student's parents and I had the same relationship with them that I had with parents who were heterosexual. I was never told that I made them feel bad or different. But then again, I don't know what I don't know.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

I myself will be kind, loving, caring, and accept all students in my class regardless of sex, sexual preferences, or gender identification. When planning instruction, I always make sure to include different learning styles in the activities that I teach. Instruction should also include pictures, videos, and articles written from a variety of perspectives: color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, LGBTQ, and heterosexuals.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

My classroom has always been a community of kindness. Whenever we have had issues in my classroom, my approach has always been to have the children talk to one another. I make them look at one another as they speak. While one child is speaking, the other is actively listening. I then make the child listening repeat what has been said. Then they switch roles. I feel that it is important for those victimizing others to hear how their behavior has impacted the victim. When I was in my admin program, I learned a lot about Restorative Justice. That practice is all about teaching empathy and having conversations with those around you.

As we discussed previously in this course, there are those who silently support others and those who speak up. For students, staff, and faculty members, I will never be the silent supporter. I've always felt like a mama bear when it comes to my students. This situation would be no different.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

Treat them like I treat everyone else. Listen to them when they speak because there is always a new perspective that I can learn. I will build relationships with students/staff/faculty/members of the community. I take interest in them and their lives. I have never been told that I judge others and I truly don't think that I do. Maybe I have biases that I am unaware of. I'm always willing to learn and try to be a better person.

← Reply



Luis Orozco (He/Him/His) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922>)

Nov 4, 2020

Hi Melissa!

I appreciate that you are so introspective; it shows how much you care about others. I agree, restorative justice is a great way to begin to resolve so many of the problems that have been ignored. I also love the idea of having conversations with each other and

intently listening before responding. Empathy and understanding can go a long way in humanizing others and dissolving boundaries that lead to misunderstandings and hate.

I realize I'm also guilty of not fully listening to the other side on certain issues; in this highly polarized climate, it's too easy to dismiss the other side. However, simply dismissing others will not resolve the issues that are pushing people to extremes. I've started asking others "Why do you think that way?" and really listening.

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Nov 6, 2020



Hi Melissa. I appreciate your openness here. It sounds like you've got the right idea with treating everyone with respect, asking questions, listening, engaging in introspection regarding possible biases. Those things will go a long way.

← [Reply](#)



[Gabriela Miranda Laguna \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177)

Nov 6, 2020



Hi Melissa,

I liked your ideas, good job explaining every point. It is clear and kind. It is important to behave in the classroom, to maintain respect in every way, you explain it very well.

I loved when you are talking about "mama bear", it is so nice to hear about supporting your students.

← [Reply](#)



[Gabriela Miranda Laguna \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177)

Nov 6, 2020



Discussion #1-Sexual Orientation

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

I can first promote a deeper understanding of respect, appreciation, and love. In my classes, I use an Infographic with my classroom rules. It says: "Be Prepared to Learn, Listen Carefully, Do Your Best, Help Others, Respect Other, Say Please and Thankful...etc.

It is important to behave in the classroom, to maintain respect in every way.

Be aware that not everyone should identify as I identify me, as my friend identifies herself or as the majority identifies. Be aware that many people may not identify as heterosexual or come from same-sex parent households. If I know that is happening in my classroom I must include some examples (providing reading materials) in my lessons that incorporate all the types of family or sexual identification that I am observing in my class to encourage the healthy development of all students.

I think that as a society we need to develop as beings of love, as beings of acceptance and tolerance.

I am going to write in front of my classroom, in a clear, marked, salient way:

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

I believe that this is the first rule to have a healthy environment to start learning.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

I can speak, and "speak loud" to stop the victimization helping verbally defend. I believe that public support is meaningful and vital for people who may have received threats, intimidation, blackmail, and little support for their lifetime.

Disrespecting the teacher or any student is disrespecting the entire class. Lend support when and where it is needed. I will congregate small meetings with those affected and ask the school counselor for help.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

Creating policies and statements about how I will evaluate: rubrics, topics, and performances. Every single rule must be clear from the first day of classes.

← Reply



Silver Park (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686>)

Nov 8, 2020



Hi Gabriela, I like how you said every single rule must be clear from the first day of classes. Making every clear in the beginning is very important to start with.

← [Reply](#)



[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)

Nov 6, 2020

LGBTQ teachers consider the risks of sharing their sexual orientation because they may face pressure from coworkers, students, parents, and society. Schools and administrators are afraid that if you come out as LGBTQ it would raise concerns. This reality leads LGBTQ teachers to choose to keep their identity to themselves.

Now we live in a society where marriage equality is generally supported, and movement is being made towards making society more inclusive for LGBTQ. It is a very private decision to come out or not, LGBTQ educators can be role models and supportive adults for LGBTQ youth. They can give them a safe place to ask questions or get advice.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can keep an open mind and listen. I recognize that students may be hesitant to trust me. I should educate myself that a student's reality may be different from my own. I will also use gender-neutral language. For example, use spouse/partner instead of husband/wife.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization of LGBTQ students, staff, faculty or members of my community, I will try to create a safe space in my classroom. I will remind students that everyone should feel safe and should be respected. I will also check the school policies regarding LGBTQ, so that students who are harassed or assaulted can report it.

To help LGBTQ students, staff, faculty, and members of my community know that their sexual orientation is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can be open with them. I will not hold different attitudes depending on sexual orientations. If I accidentally say something offensive to LGBTQ people, I will ask how I can do better. I will also listen. I think listening is one of the most powerful, healing resources educators can offer. I want there to be a safe place to talk, to study, to live authentically at school.

← [Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411)


Nov 7, 2020

Hi Aya,

I agree with you that listening, alone, can do so much for students who are struggling. Therefore, I also agree with you on your statement that it is important for teachers let students know they are there for them. If there is a lack of trust between teachers and students then it can be extremely difficult to open up.

[← Reply](#)**Geronima Garcia** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244>)

Nov 8, 2020

Hi Aya,

I like that you mentioned making mistakes, "If I accidentally say something offensive to LGBTQ people, I will ask how I can do better." I think many of us fear not knowing what to say or saying the wrong thing, but I've realized over the years that our students can be very forgiving if we are genuinely sorry for our errors. For instance, during my first year of teaching, I had a student suddenly pull the door closed on another student. In the moment, I raised my voice at the student which of course made her let go of the door, but was not how I should have reacted. A little later, I apologized to her clarifying that my response was because I was scared the other student could get hurt, but that I should not have raised my voice and should have dealt with the situation differently. She was SO shocked. I don't think an adult had ever apologized to her before. In the same way, when we make mistakes regarding pronouns or other LGBTQ issues, the best course of action is to respond with empathy and sincerity. Students might correct us, but they will also forgive us and help us grow.

Thank you for sharing.

[← Reply](#)**Caitlin Flynn** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934>)

Nov 7, 2020

In this short video, identify the reasons why some teachers choose to keep their identity to themselves while others are free to share their personal story.

As Tom Greene expresses in his section being able to just talk about the basic and important facts of your life requires being out. When someone chooses not to be out there is so much of their life they are forced to keep secret. But being out always comes with a risk of being met with prejudice and discrimination. I remember several years ago I had a co-worker who was struggling to find housing because every time a prospective landlord or seller found out she had a wife suddenly the house was rented by someone else or they decided not to sell and they were always perfectly happy getting as far as drawing up papers sometimes until she mentioned her marriage but there was no law guaranteeing equal housing where we lived and even if there was taking it to court would have been expensive and difficult to prove since no one was saying directly it was because of her orientation. The decision of being out will vary a lot from person to person and situation to situation.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

This week a writer I've followed and enjoyed for many years came out and one of the reasons they said that they hadn't come out earlier in their life is that for a long time they didn't know the words that could really describe who they were and how they felt. I think one of the things I would like to do in my classroom is try to introduce those words and concepts to my students so that students who are working out their identity can find a way to describe who they are and how they feel. I think it benefits everyone to understand there are all these different ways of being and by introducing them to these ideas hopefully being to build an acceptance of people among those I teach.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

It depends on the situation. As an authority figure to my students I can step in when I see evidence of victimization among them. I can report incidents. I can make it known that there will be no tolerating that behavior. But in other situations, like the one with my co-worker, there wasn't much I could substantially do at the time other than offer my emotional support.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

For students having a clear rubric by which grades will be given is an easy way to start as well as explaining that grades will be based solely on performance when I explain the rubric. A lot of helping the LGBTQ people in my life to know that their sexual orientation/gender identity is not how I judge their performance requires not just saying it but showing it through action. Saying it is important, but saying things is easy and it's important that I follow through in my actions.

[← Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411)

Nov 7, 2020

Hi Caitlin,

I agree with you on the second point. Not every situation is the same so it is important to think about how to solve the problem. I also agree that having a clear rubric is important for students to know they will not be judged based on sexual orientation identity.

[← Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411)

Nov 7, 2020

Teachers should be able to choose if they want to be open about their orientation or not. It is their personal lives so whether they decide to share that with others is a personal decision as well. For Tom Greene, he is sharing about his personal life to relate to his students who might identify with marginalized groups. Danielle Riley, on the other hand, keeps her sexual orientation to herself because it can be limiting. She had been proud to be named “teacher of the year” but if people know of her sexual orientation they can put labels onto that title that can downplay the achievement.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can:

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can first ask students about their preferred pronoun. Some students may not be as open so I think it is better to ask through a written form rather than spoken. Educating students on people who identify as LGBTQ+ will help to gain awareness. This can be by directly going over definitions but also including reading materials, interviews, etc.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

There are different levels of bullying and victimization. I think that use of derogatory language and speech should be correct immediately. People can be more aware of what they are saying if others are there to correct them and if they understand why it is wrong to use such language. While I think that speaking up about the issue to higher-ups are good, I think it is important to think about my actions before I take them when it comes to physical bullying or psychological abuse. I would want to take to the person who is being harassed to discuss what kind of actions they want to be taken. Even if I speak up to stop victimization, it could lead to backlash if rumors start and names of those victims get thrown around. I would like to use my classroom

as a space where students can open up to me about their situation privately before taking action.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

I think that is it important to put it into words for students to know that they are not being judged based on their sexual orientation identity. Putting it in the syllabus is important and they can also be restated on rubrics of projects. If I am able to reflect these values in my teaching, then I think that staff and faculty members will also understand that sexual orientation identity does not factor into how I see them.

← [Reply](#)



[Caitlin Flynn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934)

Nov 8, 2020

Hi Michelle,

I think that what you said about talking to the victim about what actions they want you to take was really great point that we should try to remember.

← [Reply](#)



[Shuo Niu \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757)

Nov 8, 2020

Hello Michelle:

Thank you for your response!

This is great to let the students choose the pronoun. I think it shows great respect and nowadays most of the class teachers choose to do that. Every time I see this statement of choosing the pronouns, I feel the instructor or the organization is friendly even though I am not a part of the LGBTQ community.

← [Reply](#)



[Geronima Garcia \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244)

Nov 7, 2020

Some teachers choose to share their personal story because it is integral to their identity and ability to connect with their students. Other teachers do not disclose this information because their communities may not be receptive to them and some may fear the impact to their jobs. This fear is completely understandable. Teachers are held to a higher behavioral and moral standard than most occupations. The social expectations of teachers are more rigid than other professions to the point where even posts on social media can threaten their employment. Fear of judgement and retaliation are definitely factors behind why some teachers keep their sexuality private.

Representation is incredibly powerful for minority students and LGBTQ+ students as well. If students can see themselves in their teachers who they know and respect as human beings, then they start to normalize parts of themselves they may be in conflict with. To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can provide representation through curriculum, such as reading materials, open discussions of pressing topics, and by creating a safe classroom environment.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can address it. Teachers are extremely powerful in their classrooms. They have the power to teach students not only content, but also character. When we see something wrong in our school community, we can speak about it with our students. We can explain why this is wrong, we can listen to student voices, and we can create conversation, which is the first step in creating real change.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can post inclusive content and include diverse texts within my classroom library materials. I can be open to student questions and discussions without shutting down their ideas out of fear for propriety. For instance, a few years ago, in writing essays about characterization in *Beowulf* a student asked if they could argue that Unferth's devotion to the monster Grendel was because he was gay. Some students giggled, but I entertained the argument and when I said I thought it would make for an interesting topic if they could find substantial support from the text, the giggles stopped. I realized then that if we as teachers respond with shock or fear when students bring up topics they think are taboo, we continue to perpetuate the notion that gender, sexuality, and even race issues are not appropriate for school. But, school is the exact place where these topics should be discussed and addressed.

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>)

Nov 8, 2020



Hi Geronima, I liked how you mentioned that the students' giggles stopped when you entertained a "taboo" topic. I remember when I was a kid, I would learn what's "taboo" based on the reactions of the class. I also picked up on how the teacher responded. To this day, I still believe that these experiences contribute to feelings of discomfort in bringing up a subject that's considered taboo. That's why I'm pretty blunt and have no filter: I resent censorship in schools and how students are allowed to just laugh at everything instead of diving in. Thanks for sharing!

← [Reply](#)



[Caitlin Flynn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934)

Nov 8, 2020

Hi Geronima,

I know this isn't really the point, but your student's proposed paper on Beowulf sounds like a really interesting take, did they end up writing it?

(I think you handled that question very well and your right making those discussions part of out school and refusing let them be taboo is an important step in making LGBTQ more acceptable in the world)

← [Reply](#)



[Geronima Garcia \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244)

Nov 8, 2020

Hi Caitlyn,

No, unfortunately that paper was never actually written, but it was more on account of the fact that Unferth is only in a small portion of the text, so the student felt like it was a disadvantage to pick a character who had less quotable text. Since I teach middle school, I get a quite a few student responses a year which I suspect are meant to shock me, but I always try to take the approach of "If you are comfortable with the topic and can approach it from an academic lens, then you are free to proceed." My online students are currently working on articles regarding "everyday monsters." Some students have picked topics like plastic pollution or mosquitoes, but others have chosen transgender rights, systemic racism, and the treatment of Uighur Muslims in China. The way I see it, I would rather my students research, read, and form their own

opinions while they are truly interested in a topic rather than restrict their curiosity because of my own discomfort.

← [Reply](#)

○



[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686)

Silver Park (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686>)

⋮

Nov 7, 2020

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero -sexism, I can:

I think this all depends on how your school would take it and also the students. If the school is willing to protect me and respect my identity first, I would be open to reveal my true identity. Because some might think that being gay or lesbians are against human virtues and morality (I know this is sensitive but I'm just saying what other people think. I'm stating a fact.), parents of the students might feel uncomfortable and that's why some teachers might hesitate to hide who they are. But for me to promote an inclusive classroom, I would have my students have my back like the video said, the students only care if you are really giving them a best or not. As long as my heart is fully for the students, I can be truly who I am.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can:

If I hear evidence of victimization, I can first report the problem around me and fully support the ones who are the victims. I do not think it's right to judge others when you yourselves can have many other defects(not that I consider LGBTQ have defects). I care about the persons not what they are or who they are. So I would always encourage to see through a person beyond what they identify themselves with.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can:

Like I have mentioned above, I would like them to know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge them as persons. They are just individuals human beings who are the same as me and everyone has different academic, teaching, or personal skills regardless if they are female, male, gay, lesbian, transgenders, or bisexual.

← [Reply](#)

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[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566)

Grace Shin (She/Her/Hers) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/137566>)

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Nov 8, 2020

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hetero-sexism, I can: read texts by authors from the LGBTQ community or read novels, short stories that reference or have characters in the LGBTQ community.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can: confront them and talk about how I feel uncomfortable as an educator that believes in an inclusive education for all people in school. I can also be a supporter and comfort those who are being victimized and offer ways to support them emotionally. There are many ways to let staff members know of students who are being victimized and keeping them accountable through school or academic counselors could help as well.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching or personal skills, I can: explicitly state this in my syllabus. I have thought about including this sort of statement in my syllabus and have hesitated because I have never seen it anywhere before. However, when I see district contracts or district statements, I do see their statement of inclusivity and I hope to model this sort of statement somewhere as well. I also want to have a unit created upon "identity" and address my view upon this as well.

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Silver Park (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686>)

Nov 8, 2020

I like your idea of stating in your syllabus. That makes students aware of your class is not gender exclusive. I agree people don't usually include it in their syllabus to support the LGBTQ community.

← [Reply](#)



Shuo Niu (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757>)

Nov 8, 2020

Hello Grace:

Thank you for your response!!

I think it is a great idea to read more texts by authors from the LGBTQ community or read works with LGBTQ characters in them. I would definitely note it down and use this method in my further class education.

← [Reply](#)



[Shuo Niu \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757)

Nov 8, 2020



I think there is no definite answer should a teacher be coming out of the closet at work. It is really their own preference to be open or not. Some prefer to give people a clear image of their identity while others decide to keep a low profile.

To promote an inclusive classroom and challenge hereto-sexism, I can ask my students to come and talk to me if they have any problems or questions regarding the LGBTQ community that I can help. Ask my students what would they like to be called and what is their identity that they would like to associate with.

If I hear or see evidence of victimization of LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community, I can ask about their questions and concerns. I will contact the school and find the department that is responsible for their issue. If the problem is too big, I can definitely write and report to the department or school and stand with my students.

To help LGBTQ students/staff/faculty/members of my community know that their sexual orientation identity is not how I judge their academic, teaching, or personal skills, I can encourage them to talk in class and have the same encouraging and interesting reaction when other students talk. I think the key is to treat with equality. Given particular attention will only embarrass them and cause more attention to their differences.

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