

Carleton College Gender and Sexuality Center External Review Executive Summary

The primary purpose of this review is to provide an assessment of the GSC's programs, services, and staff and to identify strengths as well as areas of improvement. The process included a campus visit by a reviewer with a background and expertise in gender and sexuality theory and multicultural student affairs, a post-visit anonymous electronic survey and follow-up conversation with the GSC Director, and a thorough review of GSC documents. The report situates the GSC within the context of Carleton College and the Division of Student Life, as well as in comparison to peer institutions, where appropriate.

An underlying theme throughout this review is that the GSC is experiencing what many constituents called an "identity crisis." It is a center that is well-resourced and maintains a robust set of programs and services. It has a large student staff and a diverse array of affiliate student organizations. The current staff have achieved noteworthy successes in laying the groundwork for the Green Dot program, advancing access and inclusion for trans and non-binary students, and creating an environment that empowers and supports queer students of color. In the last few years, however, the GSC has undergone significant changes: a restructuring and staff turnover; a relocation from a shared space on the center of campus to a stand-alone house on the edge of campus; an expansion of oversight beyond LGBTQ student support to also include sex education and sexual violence prevention programs; and, the staffs' integration of anti-racist and anti-oppression practices into both operations and programs. What the GSC prioritizes, who it serves, and how it effectively achieves its mission are all in a state of evolution.

The review culminated in several recommendations for the GSC, organized by Divisional and Center-specific opportunities. The Campus Life Division can support the GSC by addressing Clader House's facilities needs and clarifying the role and expectations of the GSC and its staff. In the interest of resolving its "identity crisis," the reviewer encourages the GSC to update its mission statement and goals in alignment with the Division of Student Life and partner offices and investigate opportunities for student leadership and ally development with Divisional colleagues.

In summary, the review found that the GSC is a programmatic-rich office that provides a diverse and developmentally-appropriate range of opportunities for student engagement and growth. The GSC has opportunities for increasing its impact on students by clarifying its role and responsibilities, integrating formal leadership development in GSC programs and trainings, and working with colleagues to expand ally development.