

# Identifying LGBTQ-Friendly Schools

Your educational experience is much more than just the classes you take, so it's important to thoroughly research every potential college you may consider attending. Variables such as the presence of campus advocacy groups, professional conduct and proximity to LGBTQ-friendly communities are essential from an LGBTQ perspective. Any reputable school will have an admissions office that is eager to discuss LGBTQ options. Fortunately, many universities are adopting a culture of awareness and respect for the LGBTQ community and offer specific LGBTQ studies, housing and have active LGBTQ advocacy programs on campus. The following guide will help you find the perfect school environment for your individual needs.

*Information in this guide is from <http://www.collegerank.net/lgbtq-college-student-guide/>.*

**Methodology Breakdown:** Aspiring LGBTQ students seek universities that provide safe, supportive and enriching environments that foster learning, growth and participation on their campus and in their community. Each university has been ranked based on the school's offerings, such as LGBTQ Resource Centers, LGBTQ and gender-identified housing placements, Safe Spaces, student and ally organizations, training on gender identity, the presence of gender-neutral restrooms, campus police training, LGBTQ social events and counseling options. The eight criteria for ranking are:

## Methodology Factor 1: School Policies of Inclusion

- Non-discrimination statement inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.
- Students have the option to self-identify their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression on the application for admission and post enrollment forms.
- Simple, easily-accessible process for students to change their name and gender identity on university documents and records.
- Health insurance coverage for employees' same sex partners.

## Methodology Factor 2: Institutional Support and Commitment

- Safe Space/ Safe Zone or ally program
- Standing advisory committee that deals with LGBTQ issues
- Resource center or office and paid staff with responsibilities of support to LGBTQ students
- Actively seeks to employ a diverse faculty and staff including visibly out LGBTQ people
- LGBTQ alumni group

## Methodology Factor 3: Academic Life

- Faculty and staff training opportunities on sexual orientation issues
- LGBTQ-specific course offerings and studies program
- Actively recruits faculty for LGBTQ-related academic scholarships
- New faculty/staff training opportunities regarding gender identity issues
- LGBTQ staff/faculty organization

## Methodology Factor 4: Student Life

- LGBTQ & Ally student and graduate student organizations
- LGBTQ social fraternity and sorority
- Regularly hosts educational events on transgender issues and intersectionality of identities
- LGBTQ-inclusive career services

## Methodology Factor 5: Housing and Residence Life

- LGBTQ Roommate matching
- LGBTQ living space and community
- Gender-inclusive housing
- Gender-inclusive single-occupancy showing and restroom facilities in campus housing
- Trained housing staff about LGBTQ issues and concerns

## Methodology Factor 6: Campus Safety

- Active LGBTQ students and student organization outreach
- Active ongoing training for hate crime prevention
- Procedures for reporting LGBTQ-related incidents of bias and hate crimes
- Supports victims of LGBTQ sexual and partner violence
- Campus police trained on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression issues

## Methodology Factor 7: Counseling and Healthcare Options

- LGBTQ-specific counseling and support groups
- Free, anonymous and easily-accessible HIV and STD testing
- LGBTQ-specific health and safer sex information available
- Trans-inclusive trained counseling staff, health insurance policy that covers counseling and hormone replacement therapy

## Methodology Factor 8: Recruitment and Retention

- Participates annually LGBTQ-specific admission fairs

- Offers LGBTQ student scholarships
- Provides an LGBTQ mentoring program and assistance for LGBTQ students to transition to academic and college life
- LGBTQ-inclusive graduation ceremony for LGBTQ students and allies
- LGBTQ-inclusive training for admissions counselors