

New Student Organization

Date: September 22, 2009

Organization Name: Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA)

Background Information: At schools of higher education across the world, you can find supportive students, faculty and alumni groups that advocate for academic and social equality based on sexual orientation. Many of these organizations have existed for decades, educating, helping and uniting gay and straight citizens.

Historically, LGBT students have suffered from external discrimination and internalized homophobia. Students who have been discriminated against benefit from a supportive environment. Those who have not suffered direct discrimination can benefit from an educational environment in which all can grow stronger academically, socially, and personally to better compete and participate in the diverse global civilization that fuels the world economy.

Purpose: A Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) is a student-run club, typically in higher education, which provides a safe place for students to meet, support each other, talk about issues related to sexual orientation, and work to end discrimination. Many GSAs function as support groups and provide confidentiality to students who are struggling with their identity as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning people. In addition to support, some GSAs work on educating themselves and the broader school community about sexual orientation and gender identity issues.

Many local higher educational institutions have GSA organizations.

State Institutions: University of Missouri St. Louis, Mizzou, Harris Stow State University, Central Missouri State, Southeast Missouri State, and Missouri State.

Private Christian Institutions: St. Louis University, Washington University, and Maryville University

Committed to LU: GSA understands the importance of education and its commitment to higher learning. We believe strongly in Lindenwood's commitment to its Judeo-Christian heritage and will continue to show our support for the school's values-based traditions by respecting all and by working to enhance community understanding while simultaneously working to end homophobia and discrimination against LGBT members of our community. We would hold formal elections in compliance with Lindenwood Student Government Association (LSGA). As well as provide a LSGA representative to every meeting. We would hold monthly GSA meetings to discuss issues that concern both the LGBT and straight communities.

Evidence of Need:

Lindenwood students, faculty/staff, and alumni have shown an overwhelming support for a GSA on campus. Forty students have indicated they would join a GSA if it were to be offered. Four full-time faculty members have offered their services as faculty advisors. We estimate an initial membership of over 80 people.

Events and Involvement: Our goal of the GSA would be to provide educational events for all students and community members. We would work with the speakers' series committee to provide LGBT friendly speakers, and entertainers; for example, Kelly Anderson, John & Michael Galluccio, and Tami Gold. Also; Awareness Events and offer a series of educational workshops, panels, and sensitivity training. Some GSAs organize a "Teach the Teachers" staff development day which focuses on teaching school staff how to be better allies for LGBT students. For example, GSA members would present scenarios about discrimination or harassment and get teachers to brainstorm how to respond to those situations.

After LU: GSA organizations help better prepare students for the future. Many educators in today's society focus on a well rounded student with a reality based education. GSA will help both the Gay and the straight communities by introducing each other practices in an educational environment. This helps prepare students for with world in which we live. Many students that have not been exposed to LGBT community members can feel socially inadequate in some situations. A GSA on campus would show LU's commitment to diversity and would better prepare her graduates for the diverse and multicultural world they can expect to enter after graduation.

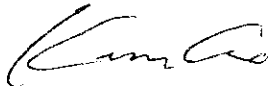
LINDENWOOD

February 5, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

After careful consideration Lindenwood University has decided that the Gay Straight Alliance will not be granted recognized organization status. The rationale for organizing the club does not meet either our educational or our social service criterion for approval. Rather, its principal purpose appears to be the support and promotion of a particular lifestyle. It was also determined that the GSA does not coincide with the traditional values of Lindenwood University. The University would ask that the GSA remove any type of Lindenwood branding from its Facebook, MySpace, flyers and all other forms of advertisement. This would include Lindenwood logos or the University name itself. Full and expeditious compliance will be appreciated. Thank you for your interest in recognized organization status, but such status cannot be granted, for the reasons stated herein.

Thank you,



Kerry Cox

Director of Student Activities