

For social media, weekly posts can be produced, talking about staff of the office or students that are frequently involved! After finding a picture, all you have to do to make one is talk about the person's role at the office, and include a few fun facts about them to make the office seem more human and welcoming. Don't forget to caption photos and give credit, as well as invite people to visit the office!

Sample text: We all know that Josh Kinchen, the Assistant Director of LGBTQ+ Resources, constantly strives to give queer youth and faculty the resources they need to succeed. But did you know he's also an avid comics collector? He's like a real-life superhero! Come in to meet Josh and the rest of our staff, and find out more about what we do! Photo credit: LGBTQ+ Resources

To: Potential Outlets (GMU listservs, 4th estate, LGBTQ+ organizations, etc)

From: Josh Feldhousen

Dear Potential Outlets,

George Mason University is committed in its ongoing mission to spread diversity and inclusiveness on campus. One of the ways the college tries to achieve that goal is with the recent introduction of the LGBTQ Studies minor, which began in the fall semester of this year. George Mason is the only public university in Virginia to offer this minor, providing students the opportunity to study the history and current issues of LGBT activism and theory.

Would you be interested in publishing a story about the minor, focusing on the history of why it was created, why students should consider choosing it, and how it can impact their future careers?

This story would be invaluable to your audience of students, both as a potential base for knowledge and to allow them to succeed in future workplace settings.

Let me know what you think about this idea, and have an excellent week.

Josh Feldhousen

Communication major, minoring in Public Relations and Journalism

George Mason University, Class of 2020

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This is very simple to use in relation to the press releases. Simply use this template, while obviously swapping out things like name or information about the release. Using this pitch, and sending it to the media list or other organizations you're aware of, will grow awareness immensely.

The George (Mason news for faculty and media) <https://www2.gmu.edu/news>

Loudoun Times-Mirror (Local news outlets would be interested in local stories) 703-777-1111, LTMEditor@loudountimes.com, <https://www.loudountimes.com/>

Local DC LGBTQ+ Centers (Could provide other resources and tactics, such as Capital Pride) +1 (202) 719-5304

Washington Blade (LGBT- specific news) Editor Kevin Naff, knaff@washblade.com, (202) 747-2077

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Josh Feldhousen

703-801-1159

jfeldhou@gmu.edu


George Mason University Encourages Students to minor in LGBTQ+ studies

The new minor, added in Fall 2019, seeks to educate students on LGBTQ+ history

Fairfax, Virginia – November 13, 2019 – George Mason University has recently added a LGBTQ+ Studies minor to its Women and Gender Studies Program. Starting in the Fall 2019 semester, students may take a variety of courses relating to LGBTQ+ topics, including “LGBTQ Health”, “LGBTQ Issues in Education”, “Gender, Sexuality, and Disability,” and more to accompany their major. This minor is also the first of its kind in Virginia, offering a unique experience for George Mason University students.

Any student from any major is welcome to register, if, for instance, they wish to know more about LGBTQ+ topics, and have already taken advantage of LGBTQ+ Resources in Sub I. According to David Corwin, the advisor for the minor, 10 students have already signed up, and more will be expected in upcoming semesters. Corwin says that the students who go through this program will “make change in our world... Our faculty and students are excited about where we are headed next.”

In addition, the minor opens a variety of post-graduation opportunities. Corwin also mentions that students will “use what they learn to be activists in a variety of organizations. Even in organizations that do not seem to [have] missions that are rooted in social justice, our alumni can be advocates for LGBTQ inclusive policies and allies for their LGBTQ identified colleagues.”




According to GLSEN, an organization working to promote LGBTQ+ inclusiveness in K-12 schools, students who receive LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum and resources report a better, more inclusive climate on-campus.

Additionally, August Tenney, a psychology major, mentioned excitement for the project, saying that it was a good idea to create the major. Tenney also added that the minor was “a valuable resource that will greatly benefit students.”

For more information about the minor, visit <https://wmst.gmu.edu/programs/la-minor-wgst-lgbt>, or email them at wmst@gmu.edu. Interested students can also visit the Women and Gender Studies office in the Johnson Center, in room 240K.

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To: Josh Kinchen
From: Josh Feldhousen
Subject: COMM 391 Six-week Client Project
Date: October 20, 2019

Hi Josh,

I'm currently taking COMM 391, Writing for Public Relations, where students work with real clients to generate visibility and earned media that generate traffic and volunteers. This is not marketing. Some examples of helpful public relations tactics include a social-media campaign, creating new website content, writing news stories and press releases for your business future, or crafting media leading to an event.

The primary audiences for your office is the LGBTQ+ community, as well as potential allies on campus. While outreach to the LGBTQ+ student population is good, another target group to reach could be new LGBTQ+ students and allies, as well as more faculty outreach in general. Although you have already had articles posted in IVth Estate, other resources exist to spread the message of LGBTQ+ Resources. In addition, improvements to social-media and the website will improve communication with others.

As we discussed previously, the project will consist of two press releases, profiles for LGBTQ+ Resources employees, and a template letter for partnering with other organizations. Most of the preliminary work should be completed before Thanksgiving. The tactics created for your team will be presented in class in Innovation Hall on Dec. 11, from 1:30 - 4:15 p.m. As a client, you're welcome to attend. In addition, a hard-copy portfolio will be provided on that day, consisting of background research, social-media campaign elements, and a schedule.

Thank you, and have a great rest of your week.

Josh Feldhousen
Class of 2020
Communication major, concentrations in Public Relations and Journalism.



Background:

- The office has been around since 2002, and was originally part of ODIME
- It now exists as its own entity, but has been slowly reincorporating with ODIME.
- It exists to “provide direct services to LGBTQ+ students; including advising, advocacy, counseling and referral, education and training, group and workshop facilitation, and leadership development.”
- They are currently located in an office on the second floor of SUB I.

Challenges:

- The office has a lack of visibility for newer students and those who aren't LGBTQ+ affiliated.
- Not a lot of things are known about what the office does.
- It's hard to find the office in SUB I.

Tactics:

- To raise awareness of the LGBTQ+ minor, created in coordination with the office, use a press release.
- In addition, a press release can be used to promote the LGBTQ+ Living Learning Community.
- These can be forwarded to local media organizations, both on and off campus, with a media list.
- For online awareness, a social media campaign about the office staff can humanize it.

Analysis:

- It's necessary to get the word out more about the office for non-LGBTQ+ people.
- Plenty of opportunities for sponsoring events/advertising safe zone events/highlighting in media/partnering with other orgs for inclusiveness.
- Could use a bit more marketing for specifically LGBTQ+ students who are already in the know, but could also focus on targeting new/unaware LGBTQ+ people, as well as potential allies who might be interested in safe zone training.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Josh Feldhousen

703-801-1159

jfeldhou@gmu.edu


George Mason Creates a Safe Living Space for LGBTQ+ Students

The university uses its Living Learning Communities program to help LGBTQ+ Students feel at home

Fairfax, Virginia – November 24, 2019 – George Mason University, in its ongoing push for diversity, is encouraging students to apply to the LGBTQ+ Living Learning Community, an inclusive place for LGBTQ+ affiliated residents. Mason is home to a large number of these communities, or LLCs for short, which focus on bringing together students with common interests to reside on-campus in the dorms system.

The program coordinator, LuLu Géza Kelemen, mentioned that the LLC “has both an upper division and a first-year community that each get to build their own floor traditions and participate in LGBTQ+ focused community learning and service programs.” Throughout the year, residents attend events both educational and recreational, such as Queer Movie Night, Transgender Day of Remembrance, and dedicated game nights.

In addition to these programs, community members must also attend a one-credit class together, focused on LGBTQ+ communities, environmental justice, and more. The teaching assistant for the class, Solomon Oyombo, considers it an exciting, engaging class with plenty of opportunities for learning and discussions about LGBTQ+ rights. Oyombo, who uses they/them pronouns, also mentioned how the class gave them valuable experience about grading and creating lesson plans, researching topics for class, and more.



Because students reside and engage with others who have similar interests, participants in the program gain strong bonds with one another. Henry Brass, a sophomore from Atlanta, Georgia, mentioned how he has gained “a lot of friends” as a result of the program. He also mentioned how important it was to him that he had a safe space to feel comfortable and “be himself,” knowing that no one would ridicule him for his sexuality.

For more information about the LGBTQ+ LLC, or the LLC program in general, visit <https://housing.gmu.edu/housing-options/living-learning-communities/masons-llcs>. Interested students may also visit LGBTQ+ Resources, located in SUB I, to learn more about the LLC.

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For these press releases, just send them to local news organizations to see if they are interested in coverage. See the PR pitch page for more information.