

Public Abstract

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Title:QUEER LEADERSHIP: AN EXPLORATION OF LGBTQ LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

This study explored the experiences of staff members at two distinct college campuses who advocated for the advancement of LGBTQ equity through change in campus policy and practice. In this project I conceptualized a queer leadership framework based on grassroots leadership in higher education (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Findings from the multi-site case study identified two unique approaches higher education professionals engaged queer leadership through: a) Queer Activist Leadership and b) LGBTQ Advocacy Leadership. Participants were responsible for creating meaningful change on each campus, relying on campus partnerships with students, faculty, and staff members. These successes establish important considerations for student affairs practitioners, particularly those who work for institutions who do not have designated support programs for LGBTQ equity and inclusion. Findings from this study identified gaps and successes in staff leadership advocacy, demonstrating multiple ways LGBTQ advocates and queer activists may engage in in queer leadership work in higher education student affairs.