



2019 Assessment Institute

# ***Analyzing Data and Reporting on LGBTQ+ Communities: Strategies to Assist Data Driven Decisions***

Andrew J. Young, Robbie Janik, & Caleb J. Keith

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## **Introduction of Presenters & Intended Learning Objectives**

## INTENDED LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:**

1. Recognize challenges associated with collecting data about LGBTQ+ populations
2. Generate potential strategies to address challenges associated with collecting data about LGBTQ+ populations
3. Summarize challenges associated with “cleaning” data about LGBTQ+ populations
4. Describe methods to analyze and interpret data about LGBTQ+ populations
5. Determine potential sources for data related to LGBTQ+ populations, even if not explicitly asked or systematically collected by their respective institutions
6. Recognize implications of choices made during the analysis of data for use in decision support at their respective institutions



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# Introducing the Topics

## Challenges with Collecting Data

1. Complex Identities that are often misunderstood
2. We collect large amounts of demographic data on students/faculty/staff, but often lack institutional (and national) data on SOGIE
3. Most universities do not track pronouns, trans identity, or sexual orientation in the Student Information System or HR systems
4. Respecting privacy is a valid concern
5. We can allow people to self-identify, but ultimately may have to make decisions for/about them



## Compelling Reasons to Collect Data

1. Help identify and monitor progress toward reducing disparities
2. Better know (and serve) student, faculty, and staff populations
3. Allow for sexual orientation to be controlled for (or isolated) in analysis
4. Lack of data can undermine creation of policies
5. Because sexual orientation and gender identity/expression are often combined, they can confound results or hide nuance



## Strategies to Address Challenges

1. Collect SOGIE information on admission applications
2. Identify necessary partnerships
3. Consider the degree of nuance needed in collection/analysis
4. Don't combine gender identity and sexual orientation into a single question; they are distinct identities
5. Prior to collection:
  - Consider if the information is essential/useful/actionable
  - Determine how information will be kept secure
  - Consider use of metadata



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## Strategies to Address Challenges

1. Provide framing/explanatory language, to assist in answering questions
2. Provide reasons for imperfect options
3. Provide information on why the data is important/necessary and how it will be used
4. Avoid "assigned sex at birth language"
  - Unless providing healthcare
5. Provide "Prefer not to answer" option
6. Provide "Identity not listed" option, with fill-in form
7. Ensure marital status/cohabitation questions include response options are inclusive



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# Ethical Considerations

## To collect or not to collect?

1. Ethical imperative to collect data on LGBTQ+ People
2. Concerns around collecting SOGI data:
  - Confidentiality of LGBTQ+ student records
  - Possible ill-intent toward LGBTQ+
  - Irrelevance of LGBTQ+ identity to use cases
  - Lawfulness of LGBTQ+ identity in use cases (e.g. admissions policies)
3. Balancing needs of individuals' rights to participation and privacy with right to be protected



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# How are Data Being Collected?

1. Use of institutional data or creation of new questions
2. To what end are data needed? Healthcare vs. other uses
3. Collection of gender identity and appropriate pronoun(s)
4. Frequency of data collection



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## Using and Storing Already Collected Data

1. Who will have access to the data?

Concerns about “outing” or reducing the individuals’ ability to determine who knows about their SOGIE

2. Will data remain linked to individuals or be aggregated/anonymous?

In order to track information like graduation and retention rates and avg GPAs, must be linked to individual records

Will individually linked data be used internally only or will information be used for marketing/solicitation purposes?



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## Challenges Associated with “Cleaning” Data about LGBTQ+ Populations

1. Will usually have 3 questions regarding LGBTQ+ identities: Gender, Sexual Orientation, and Transgender status
2. Time consuming (especially if you have an ‘other (specify)’ response option
3. Cannot be done in a clean/straightforward manner, so need to read through every open-end response
4. Can also be subjective so need to have multiple coders to increase inter-rater reliability



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INTRODUCING THE TOPICS

## Potential Methods to Analyze Data about LGBTQ+ Populations

1. Many different approaches/methods one can take for analysis
2. Need to be careful with too much dissection since numbers will most likely be low, especially at a smaller institution
3. Consider how identity groups are “lumped” or “split”
4. What is needed on your campus?

Counts of individuals?

Opinions/Attitudes of varying populations?



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## Potential Sources for Data Related to LGBTQ+ Populations

1. Federal collection of LGBT data research has used proxies for LGBT identification, each of which have their inevitable shortcomings
2. Pre-existing separate sex and gender questions may allow inference of transgender people but will likely not capture entire population
3. Admissions or scholarship applications may include space to list extracurricular involvement
4. Diversity/climate surveys
5. Aggregating data from smaller surveys or data pockets around campus
6. Campus “Out List”



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## Reporting on LGBTQ+ Populations

1. Report back to respondents in ways they understand
2. Find ways to check qualitative analysis and interpretation
3. Make results accessible
4. Determine audiences and tailor reporting



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## Workshop & Discussion

## Activity

1. Identify potential sources of data about LGBTQ+ populations at your respective institutions
2. Determine potential uses for data about LGBTQ+ populations at your respective institutions
3. Determine possible implications of choices made during the analysis of data for use in decision support at your respective institutions



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## Questions & Discussion

What questions do you have?

What points would you like to make?



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# References & Resources

## REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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**AJ Young**

Director, LGBTQ+ Center  
ajyoun@iupui.edu

**Robbie Janik**

Associate Director, Institutional Effectiveness and Survey Research  
rjanikii@iupui

**Caleb J. Keith**

Director, Institutional Effectiveness and Survey Research  
cakeith@iupui.edu

