

Dean of Gender & Sexuality position created

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Gene Kelly is Lafayette's new Associate Dean of Intercultural Development and Director of Gender and Sexuality Programs, a position that was added this summer as a result of the recent campus climate survey.

According to Lafayette students interviewed by outside consultants, there was not "enough being done surrounding issues related to women and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students."

Lafayette created the position to offer support to these students. Specific positions that provide support for LGBTQ (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning) students are becoming more common across the nation. "This is a specific subset of the population that doesn't really have visible support," Kelly said. "Schools are recognizing that."

Lehigh University has a Rainbow Room for LGBTQ outreach and a Women's Center, each staffed with three faculty members and student workers. Similar positions exist at Bucknell University and American University.

Kelly says these new positions may stem from a wave of support for the LGBTQ community.

Since coming out when he was an undergraduate at Lebanon Valley College, Kelly has worked at a number of colleges, spending most of his time trying to enhance the lives of female and LGBTQ students.

Kelly is currently getting his Ph.D. at Marywood University in Scranton and is studying issues of masculinity. He hopes to start a dialogue at Lafayette about the pressures on male students to conform to a standard of masculinity.

Kelly has several plans for his first year at Lafayette. One of his first interactive programs was helping the sexual assault follow-up discussion with the class of 2016 after orientation. His office also plans to restore the Bias Response Team to tackle prejudice issues.

The office is reconstructing the College's "Safe Zone" program to train students to accept and embrace diversity.



Gene Kelly is Lafayette's first Dean of Gender and Sexuality.