



University of Pittsburgh Staff Council Statement in Support of LGBTQIA+ Community

The Staff Council of the University of Pittsburgh is an inclusive and representative collection of employees from across all demographics, disciplines, departments, and programs. The [mission](#) of Staff Council is to represent the interests of and advocate for all staff at the University of Pittsburgh and provide opportunities for comprehensive professional development.

[Staff Council](#) commits to addressing inequity and marginalization within our campus environment. It is our intent to expand the diversity of our campus community by challenging the systemic racism, sexism, and transphobia that persists in the city and University we love. We, as Staff Council, pledge to use our platform to amplify voices and to advocate for the entire University community including staff, students, and faculty. We will devote ourselves to ensuring equity of opportunity, acknowledgment, and respect of basic rights, and safety for every community member. We commit to cultivating an environment where all members of the University of Pittsburgh community feel safe, feel heard, are respected, and are included.

Creating an inclusive and supportive environment for the LGBTQIA+ community on university campuses is crucial for fostering diversity, equity, and a sense of belonging. Embracing and celebrating the unique identities within the LGBTQIA+ spectrum contributes to the overall well-being of the campus community.

Staff Council as an organization recognizes the intersecting identities of its members and the greater Pitt community. Currently we are called to stand strongly in support of the LGBTQIA+ community as the attacks on our friends and colleagues who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, intersex, asexual, and especially transexual and transgender find themselves under attack and in danger. We commit to protecting and championing inalienable human rights, especially during these times of targeted persecution. We respect the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and recognize that opinions and perspectives can be complex. We appreciate good faith dialogue; however, we are concerned that holding certain events on campus may promote exclusion and hate. Free speech is a fundamental right that allows individuals to express their thoughts, opinions, and ideas without government censorship or restraint. It is a cornerstone of democratic societies and is protected by many legal frameworks, including the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. Hate speech, on the other hand, is intended to demean, marginalize, or incite violence or discrimination against the targeted group. The challenge lies in finding the right balance between protecting free speech and preventing harm caused by hate speech. We aim to foster an environment where free expression is respected, but at the same time, harmful speech that poses a threat to individuals or communities is addressed.

We understand these events are not representative of the University's point of view; however, the events held on the University campus are in absolute opposition to the [Pitt Promise](#):

. . . cultivating an environment of Mutual Respect, Diversity, Concern for Others, Academic Integrity, Inclusion, Civility.

As well as the [Plan for Pitt](#), our people, our programs, our purpose, to which we aspire:

- "Broadening our academic opportunities to include more nontraditional students and settings."
- "[Improving] lives and communities—at every scale—by creating knowledge and leveraging our expertise to tackle some of society's greatest and most pressing challenges."

- “Creating an inclusive and equitable campus environment—one that welcomes, values and embraces the diverse perspectives of every member of our community.”

These values represent what it means to be a member of Staff Council and what it means to be a member of the University of Pittsburgh Community. We affirm our commitment to creating a campus environment that values and celebrates the diversity of all individuals, including those who identify as LGBTQIA+. We believe in fostering a culture of inclusivity, respect, and understanding where every member feels welcomed, accepted, and supported. We recognize the importance of providing a safe space for individuals to express their authentic selves, free from discrimination or prejudice. We acknowledge the unique challenges faced by the LGBTQIA+ community and are dedicated to be advocates for University policies and initiatives that promote equality across institutional intersections of staff, faculty, and students. By actively supporting the LGBTQIA+ community at the University, we aim to create an atmosphere that encourages open dialogue, understanding, and allyship. We celebrate the rich tapestry of identities within our university and believe that diversity enhances the educational experience for everyone.

We commit to ongoing education, awareness, and advocacy to challenge stereotypes, eliminate bias, and cultivate an environment where all individuals can thrive. As we move forward, we welcome opportunities to collaborate with student groups, faculty, and staff to create programming, resources, and support systems that reflect the diverse needs and experiences of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Together, we strive to build a university community that stands for inclusivity, embraces diversity, and fosters a culture of acceptance for all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. Our commitment to these principles is an integral part of our mission to provide a transformative and empowering educational experience for every member of our university community.


We, the members of Staff Council, renew our commitment to civility. We pledge allegiance and vow to remain resolute to our promise “to accept a moral obligation to behave in ways that contribute to a civil campus environment and resolve to support this behavior in others. This commitment to civility is [our] promise to the University of Pittsburgh and its community of scholars.”

We will help plan, promote, and support parallel activities that are in keeping with the Pitt Promise and encourage caring and inclusivity, creating safe spaces for our community during the derisive scheduled events.

We aim to extend solace and safe spaces to all who are minoritized particular emphasis on those who identify beyond the gender binary and those who identify as transgender people. We are here for you, hear you, we see you, celebrate you and stand with you in solidarity.

Passed by vote of general membership on March 1, 2024

Signature of Staff Council President:

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Lindsay Rodzowicz, President

Support Resources <https://www.lgbtq.pitt.edu/> <https://pghequalitycenter.org/> <https://www.glsen.org/>
<https://hughlane.org/> <https://www.persadcenter.org/> <https://pflag.org/> <https://www.sisterspgh.org/>
<https://www.transyounitingpgh.org/>

Policy Procedure Resources

[Demonstration and Protest Guidelines.pdf \(pitt.edu\)](#) [Information Related to Guest Speakers on Campus | Student Affairs](#)

[Pitt Promise | Student Affairs](#)

[University of Pittsburgh The Pitt Promise: A Commitment to Civility](#)

[University Policy on Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#)

[Notice of Nondiscrimination](#)

If you're aware of discrimination against anyone based on their gender identity or expression or sexual orientation, please report such incidents to the Pitt Concern Connection by texting 412-903-3456, calling 800-468-5768, or completing [this online form](#).

You also can reach out to the Office for Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion at 412-648-7860 or diversity@pitt.edu.

If you are in need of resources that support the LGBTQIA+ community, lgbtq.pitt.edu has a list of organizations and programs that provide support and networking.

If you have concerns about your own mental health, resources are available for students through the [University Counseling Center](#) at 412-648-7930; staff and faculty are encouraged to contact Life Solutions at 1-866-647-3432, which provides 24/7 crisis counseling and support.