MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 17, 2014

TO: Stacey Kielbasa, NALP President  
    Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director  
    Cybele Smith, NALP Board Liaison, LGBT (SOGIE) Section

FROM: Mark Goldfarb, LGBT (SOGIE) Section Chair

RE: Quarterly LGBT (SOGIE) Section Board Report, January

SECTION CONFERENCE CALLS

We held a quarterly conference call on December, 18, 2013 to discuss: (1) upcoming NALP Bulletin Articles, (2) LGBT Data Reporting, (3) the new ERSS Survey categories for gender and sexual orientation, and (4) the adopted name change of the LGBT Section to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression Section (SOGIE).

BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS

This past quarter, our section has had articles in the November, December, and January NALP Bulletins, and has submitted another article for February.

1. **Supporting LGBT Students Best Practice Series: Nondiscrimination Policies**
   Creating and enforcing a comprehensive nondiscrimination policy is one of the first steps toward making a law campus supportive for LGBT students and helping to ensure that all students have the best career prospects possible.
   **Morgan Lynn, Erin M. Wright, November Bulletin**

2. **Why Your School Should Track and Report LGBT Enrollment and Best Practices for Doing So!**
   Why should your school report on LGBT enrollment in the NALP Directory of Law Schools and how can you get started? Here are some tips from the schools already reporting that information.
   **Gary McGinnis, December Bulletin.**

3. **Supporting LGBT Students Best Practice Series: Counseling Students During the Application Process**
   Listening closely to students' preferences and concerns and helping them realistically assess the pros and cons of being out when applying for internships or jobs is central to effective counseling of LGBT students.
   **Erin M. Wright, Morgan Lynn, January Bulletin**

4. **The New ERSS Survey - Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Additions**
   This November, NALP announced changes to the ERSS survey to be used for the coming 2014 cycle, adding categories for gender identity and sexual orientation. As chair of the LGBT Section, I want to take a moment to discuss the reasons for changes, the meaning of the categories, tips for collecting this information from your students and recent graduates, and the LGBT Section’s corresponding name change – the Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity & Expression Section (SOGIE).
   **Mark Goldfarb, February Bulletin.**
VICE CHAIR REPORTS

ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE/BULLETIN ARTICLE PLANNING/HOT TOPICS:
In addition to the above NALP Articles, Karl Riehl and Erin Wright are working on the below programs for the Annual Education Conference.

1. Going Above and Beyond with Inclusion & Retention: Taking It to the Next Level
   Karl Riehl, Organizer
2. Trans Matters: Working with Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students and Attorneys
   Erin Wright, Organizer

The other preparations for the conference are as follows: (1) developing a branding strategy for the Section’s name change, (2) staffing for the welcome table, and (3) determining leadership for the section.

WEBSITE & NALP CONNECT RESOURCES:
The hot topic right now relates to the changes in the ERSS Survey. I expect that the sexual orientation and gender identity additions to the ERSS Survey may create uneasiness for some career advisors and students as evidenced by a friendly back and forth over NALPConnect. In response, I wrote an article for the February Bulletin explaining the reasons behind the changes as well as suggestions for collecting this information.

In addition, the section is exploring a webinar to discuss all the changes to the survey. This program will really only be useful if we organize it by mid-February.

LAVENDER LAW CONFERENCE:
Jennifer Dekker, NALP LGBT Section’s Vice-Chair, and Lori Lorenzo, NALP National LGBT Bar Association Liaison, recently submitted feedback re: the Lavender Law Conference:

   Change in Timing of Conference – Lori Lorenzo

The LGBT Bar Association met with a focus group of diversity and recruiting personnel from longtime sponsors, and the organization plans to move Lavender Law earlier in the year to a date in late July or early-mid August, beginning with the 2015 Annual Lavender Law Conference & Career Fair. Changing the dates will better accommodate students as well as recruiters and faculty. Further, a date in mid-summer will allow the organization to connect recruiters and law students before the traditional interview period has ended and will not interfere with school obligations.

   Counseling Project Recap – Jennifer Dekker

We saw roughly 84 students and had 17 volunteer counselors. For 2013, we hosted a Wednesday evening sign-up table near registration with four counselors to assist students. We only had one student take advantage of the counseling Wednesday evening – there does not seem to be a benefit to this going forward. However, it was helpful to have a sign-up sheet the evening prior at registration with a counselor or two present to speak with students who sign-up. For 2013, we did sign-ups by time blocks only, instead of by counselor, and it worked very well. It was VERY helpful to have an extra counselor to run the counseling room and speak to students that dropped-in or had to wait a few minutes until a counselor was available.

Here’s some potential suggestions for the 2014 conference:
1) Add to the conference app:
   a. Dos and Don’ts for Career Fair/Conference (do research employers ahead of time, don’t assume you’re not being evaluated in quasi-social situations, etc…)
   b. Sign-up for Counseling – maybe just 5-7 slots available ahead of time and the rest can be drop-ins (since we won’t know how many counselors will be there too far in advance). Make sure the app sends the student a reminder of their counseling time.

2) Have different colored lanyards for students and attorneys so students can easily know to whom they are speaking.

3) Organize the career fair room by geographic location.

4) Don’t organize room/seating chart by sponsor level but instead denote by color or stars or something. Too confusing for employers and students.

DATA REPORTING:
The LGBT Section is approaching data reporting from two fronts: information for the NALP Law School Directory and the ERSS Survey. As part of a NALP Task Force, Erin Wright, successfully lobbied to have sexual orientation and gender identity added to the ERSS survey. In addition, Vice-Chair, Gary McGinnis, published his article on why and how schools should track LGBT statistics in the December Bulletin. These two undertakings both relate to increasing inclusiveness at law schools and gathering statistics to gain a greater understanding of diversity in the legal profession.

Both the Data Collection efforts and the survey work in tandem. In particular, in response to the perception that asking questions on sexual orientation and gender identity may engender awkwardness, I recommended in the February Article that career advisors take the proactive approach to data collection espoused by Gary McGinnis. Going forward, both of these efforts should complement one another.

TRANSGENDER ISSUES:
Erin Wright is continuing to devise outreach efforts to schools to ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity are covered under schools’ non-discrimination policies.

NAME CHANGE:
The NALP Board approved the recommendation of the name change to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression Section (SOGIE) Section. The next item is to discuss how to best rollout the name change.