MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 16, 2015

TO: Jean Dueling, NALP President
    Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director
    Andrew Chapin, NALP Board Liaison, SOGIE Section

FROM: Melanie Rowen, SOGIE Section Chair

RE: Quarterly LGBT Section Board Report, October 2015

SECTION CONFERENCE CALLS

We held a quarterly conference call on September 10, 2015 to discuss: (1) LGBT data collection from schools and law firms, (2) the Lavender Law Conference in August went, (3) RFPs accepted to the Annual Education Conference, (4) webinar ideas, and (5) the future of the Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Section.

WORK GROUP REPORTS

ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE/BULLETIN ARTICLE PLANNING/HOT TOPICS:
The RFP submitted by the SOGIE Section for the Annual Education Conference (“Leading on Trans Inclusion in Your Workplace or School”) was accepted.

LAVENDER LAW CONFERENCE:
Please also see the Second Quarter Board Report from the Liaison to the LGBT Bar Association, Lori Lorenzo. On our quarterly conference call, Lori and the LGBT Bar Association were congratulated on another very successful conference. It was also noted that the SOGIE Section should update our video for students preparing to attend Lavender Law, and Lori will move forward with spearheading that project.

DATA REPORTING:
As reported in our July report, Andrew Chapin will be contributing an article in the NALP Bulletin on data reporting. In our September conference call, Andrew noted that the number of law schools gathering this data seems to be increasing slightly, but we don’t have stats on how many schools have added it as an item this year. The discussion gave rise to a program idea that the section may pursue, either as an RFP for 2017 or as a webinar/video: a presentation for all career services staff about the steps they can take to gather LGBT data at their schools, and what their responsibilities are.

GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION ISSUES:
As reported in July, the SOGIE section’s RFP for the 2016 Annual Conference addresses gender identity and expression issues, as do two proposed Bulletin articles.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

This has continued to be a high-profile year for LGBT issues in the national media. Over the last three months, there has been particular attention to the relationship between religious freedoms and legal requirements that LGBT people be treated equally under the law. Most prominently, a county clerk in Kentucky refused, allegedly on religious grounds, to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, in direct contravention of the U.S. Supreme Court’s June ruling in Obergefell v. Hodges that the recognition
and provision of marriages between same-sex couples is a fundamental right guaranteed by the
Fourteenth Amendment. The arguments made by the clerk and her supporters, including conservative
legal groups, fit in with the broader campaign to establish so-called “religious freedom” laws allowing
discrimination against LGBT people in employment and public accommodations. This campaign to
establish religious exceptions to anti-discrimination protections is occurring at the same time that LGBT
advocates continue their work to establish such protections nationwide.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

FUTURE OF SOGIE SECTION:
We discussed again in our second quarter conference call the issue that volunteer energy within the
SOGIE Section has not been as high in the last few years as it has been historically. Burnout may be an
issue. It was also noted that the section should explore working more closely with the Diversity &
Inclusion Section.

We plan to have this topic on the agenda at the SOGIE Section Meeting at the 2016 Annual Education
Conference. Recognizing that a successful discussion will require some pre-planning, we agreed to form a
volunteer group to begin that pre-planning work, and have a few volunteers lined up already.