

Thinking About Gender Sex and Sexuality Think Tank

Investigation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Campus Climate

Preliminary Report

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Introduction

The project for the 2014 – 2015 academic year of the Thinking About Gender Sex and Sexuality (TAGSS) Think Tank at Elizabethtown College is to assess the campus climate for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Ally (LGBTQA) community members, provide programming on issues pertinent to these students, and then re-assess at the end of the academic year to see if there has been any change in climate.

The following report summarizes the findings of the initial assessment of campus climate. With IRB approval, the LGBTQA campus community was surveyed between September 8, 2014 and October 14, 2014. An internet survey and a tailored design (Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2009) method were used in order to maximize participation. As an additional means to increase participation, respondents were given the option to register for a drawing of one of two \$50 gift cards.

Part One: Informed Consent and Screening

Participants were asked to endorse the following statements as a means for both screening them into the study and obtaining informed consent. As the purpose of this study was to find out what the LGBTQA community (including straight allies) thought about the climate at Elizabethtown College, participants were asked to include themselves.

I am a member of the Elizabethtown College LGBTQA community. LGBTQA community is defined as anyone with a meaningful connection, past or present, to the college (e.g. students, faculty, staff, alums, trustees) who also identifies as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, or as an Ally.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I am	75.9%	245
I am not	24.1%	78
	<i>answered question</i>	323
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

At the time of data collection, a few community members provided feedback that the definition of LGBTQA community provided by the researchers was problematic. Several straight allies either had difficulty answering questions about their sexual orientation or expressed uncertainty about the appropriateness of their participation. Members of the LGBTQ student body also provided feedback that the categories used to define community were too restrictive and not inclusive of their experiences. In all cases, community members were encouraged to participate.

By checking "I agree" below you are indicating that you have read and understand the information above. You are also indicating that you are at least 18 years of age, that you have been provided the opportunity to ask questions about your rights and participation in the study, and that you agree to participate voluntarily in the study.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I agree	100.0%	235
I do not give consent to participate in this study	0.0%	0
	<i>answered question</i>	235
	<i>skipped question</i>	88

Two hundred, thirty-five participants were included in the study. Respondents were then sorted by affiliation to the college. The breakdown of these groups is presented in the following table.

What's your connection to Elizabethtown College? If you have more than one connection to Elizabethtown, please pick the one that is most important or recent. Please do not complete the survey more than once.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I'm a current student	56.7%	132
I'm a staff member	9.4%	22
I'm a member of the faculty	9.4%	22
I'm an alum	21.9%	51
Other (please specify)	2.6%	5
	<i>answered question</i>	232
	<i>skipped question</i>	91

Part II Demographic Data

In the following section, data is presented in four parts: All Students; Alumni; Faculty/Staff/Other; and LGBTQ Students (a subset of All Students). They are presented as descriptive statistics only, with no significant differences or correlations investigated.

Student Demographics

One hundred thirty two current Elizabethtown students screened themselves into the study by identifying themselves as members of the LGBTQA community and gave consent to participate. Ages and academic years of the participants are presented here:

How old are you?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18	31.7%	39
19	24.4%	30
20	20.3%	25
21	18.7%	23
22	2.4%	3
23	0.8%	1
24	0.8%	1
25 – 35	0.8%	1
	<i>answered question</i>	123
	<i>skipped question</i>	9

By credits, what year are you at Elizabethtown?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
First Year Student	34.4%	42
Sophomore	22.1%	27
Junior	19.7%	24
Senior	23.8%	29
Continuing Education Student	0.0%	0
	<i>answered question</i>	122
	<i>skipped question</i>	10

In general, younger students and first year students are over-represented in the sample; however, roughly 43.5% of the sample is made up of juniors and seniors. The majors and minors of the participants are detailed in the following tables. While a broad representation from diverse majors was found, Social Work, Psychology, and Education are the most frequent majors reported by participants. Women and Gender Studies represents the most often reported minor.

What is your major? First Major Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Accounting/Actuarial Sciences	2.4%	3
Biology (all)	4.9%	6
Business/International Business	5.7%	7
Chemistry	2.4%	3
Communications	5.7%	7
Computer Science	1.6%	2
Education (all)	8.9%	11
Engineering	1.6%	2
English (all)	7.3%	9
Fine Arts	4.1%	5
History	3.3%	4
Information Systems	0.8%	1
Modern Languages	2.4%	3
Music Therapy	1.6%	2
Occupational Therapy	6.5%	8
Philosophy	0.8%	1
Political Science	2.4%	3
Psychology	12.2%	15
Social Work	11.4%	14
Sociology/Anthropology/Crim. Jus.	4.1%	5
Other	1.6%	2
Undecided	8.1%	10
	<i>answered question</i>	123
	<i>skipped question</i>	10

What is your major? Second Major Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Communications	7.7%	1
Economics	7.7%	1
English	15.4%	2
Legal Studies	7.7%	1
Modern Languages	7.7%	1
Philosophy	7.7%	1
Political Science	15.4%	2
Religious Studies	23.1%	3
Legal Studies	7.7%	1
Sociology/Anthropology	7.7%	1
	<i>answered question</i>	13
	<i>skipped question</i>	119

What, if any, minor(s) are you pursuing? First Minor Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Accounting	1.30%	1
Anthropology	1.30%	1
Architectural Studies	1.30%	1
Art History	1.30%	1
Asian Studies	1.30%	1
Biology	2.60%	2
Business Administration	5.19%	4
Cognitive Science	2.60%	2
Communications	1.30%	1
Creative Writing	5.19%	4
Criminology	1.30%	1
Fine Arts	9.09%	7
Graphic Design	2.60%	2
Human Services	3.90%	3
International Studies	1.30%	1
Modern Languages	9.09%	7
Music	1.30%	1
Political Science	1.30%	1
Psychology	6.49%	5
Religion	1.30%	1
Sociology	1.30%	1
Women and Gender Studies	19.48%	15
None	10.39%	8
Undecided	7.79%	6
	<i>answered question</i>	77
	<i>skipped question</i>	55

What, if any, minor(s) are you pursuing? Second Minor Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Cognitive Science	18.18%	2
Economics	9.09%	1
Film Studies	9.09%	1
International Studies	9.09%	1
Peace and Conflict Studies	27.27%	3
Political Science	9.09%	1
Psychology	9.09%	1
Religious Studies	9.09%	1
	<i>answered question</i>	11
	<i>skipped question</i>	121

By far, women were overrepresented in the sample. Of note, nine current students do not identify as cisgender (traditionally gendered).

What labels(s) do you use to describe your gender?		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Agender	1.64%	2
Cisgender Female	74.59%	91
Cisgender Male	18.03%	22
Gender Fluid, Transgender, and Other	5.09%	7
	<i>answered question</i>	122
	<i>skipped question</i>	10

Roughly half of the student participants who identified themselves as members of the LGBTQA community identified as straight. Sixty four current students (who participated in the survey) do not identify as straight or heterosexual.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your sexual orientation?		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Asexual	.083%	1
Bisexual, Demisexual or Pansexual	46.67%	37
Gay, Lesbian or Queer	15.00%	18
Questioning or Unsure	3.33%	4
Straight or Heterosexual	46.67%	56
Multiple Responses and Other	3.33%	4
	<i>answered question</i>	120
	<i>skipped question</i>	12

Six student participants identified themselves as a member of the transgender community.

Are you a member of the transgender community?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	4.9%	6
no	92.6%	113
prefer not to answer	2.5%	3
	<i>answered question</i>	122
	<i>skipped question</i>	10

Participants were asked to identify their race and ethnicity using an open-ended question. Responses were then sorted in to the following categories. As is the case for the student body in general, participants who identified themselves as White/Caucasian are over-represented in the sample.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your race and ethnicity?		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
African American and Black	5.79%	7
Asian	1.65%	2
Bi-racial and Mixed	6.61%	8
Caucasian and White	75.21%	91
Table Continued		

Hispanic	5.79%	7
Pacific Islander	1.66%	2
Other Unique Responses	3.31%	4
	<i>answered question</i>	121
	<i>skipped question</i>	11

Beyond basic demographic identifiers, participants were asked to identify how publicly *out* they are on campus related to their sexual orientation and gender identify. One hope for this survey was to elicit participation from community members who are not routinely identified as members of the LGBTQ community. This survey may be one of the few ways that these voices are heard. Based on the responses (summarized below), we feel that we have met this goal.

Of note, some cisgender and straight/heterosexual participants expressed some confusion around this set of questions at the time of data collection. As such, this confusion could have skewed responses. In order to clarify the situation, the results of all student participants are presented along with responses from LGBTQ students (i.e. those who did not identify as exclusively straight/heterosexual or cisgender).

Regarding your sexual orientation: How out are you on campus? All Students						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	10	5	12	43	43	113
					<i>answered question</i>	113
					<i>skipped question</i>	19

Regarding your gender identity: How out are you on campus? All Students						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	2	4	2	13	92	113
					<i>answered question</i>	113
					<i>skipped question</i>	19

Responses of LGBTQ Students follow:

Regarding your sexual orientation: How out are you on campus? LGBTQ Students						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	10	5	10	28	7	60
	<i>answered question</i>					60
	<i>skipped question or screened out</i>					72

Regarding your gender identity: How out are you on campus? LGBTQ Students						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	2	4	2	8	44	60
	<i>answered question</i>					60
	<i>skipped question</i>					72

Finally students were asked to comment on the level of support that they feel from Elizabethtown College relative to the high school that they went to. Generally, about half of all the student respondents felt that there was about the same or more support at Elizabethtown College than at their high school. About half of the respondents found themselves coming to a college that provided less support than their high school.

Compared to Elizabethtown College, there was _____ support for LGBTQ people at my high school.				
Answer Options	less	about the same amount of	more	
	55	38	20	
			113	
	<i>answered question</i>			113
	<i>skipped question</i>			19

Faculty, Staff, and Other Demographics

Forty-nine participants identified themselves as faculty, staff, or other members of the LGBTQA community at Elizabethtown College. The basic demographics of these groups are presented in the following tables.

What is your age?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18 to 24	6.4%	3
25 to 34	21.3%	10
35 to 44	34.0%	16
45 to 54	19.1%	9
55 to 64	14.9%	7
65 to 74	0.0%	0
75 or older	4.3%	2
<i>answered question</i>		47
<i>skipped question</i>		2

What labels(s) do you use to describe your gender?		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Female	65.96%	31
Male	31.91%	15
Straight	2.13%	1
<i>answered question</i>		47
<i>skipped question</i>		2

As in with the student data, straight/heterosexual allies, and cisgender people are overrepresented in this subsample.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your sexual orientation?			
Open Ended Response		Response Percent	Response Count
Bisexual		12.77%	6
Gay, Lesbian or Queer		10.64%	5
Straight or Heterosexual		70.21%	33
Other		6.38%	3
<i>answered question</i>			47
<i>skipped question</i>			2

Are you a member of the transgender community?			
Answer Options		Response Percent	Response Count
yes		2.13%	1
no		95.74%	45
prefer not to answer		2.13%	1
<i>answered question</i>			47
<i>skipped question</i>			2

Similar to the student respondents, those who identify as White/Caucasian represent the majority (93%) of respondents.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your race and ethnicity?			
Open Ended Response		Response Percent	Response Count
African American and Black		2.22%	1
Caucasian and White		93.33%	42
Hispanic		2.22%	1
Native American		2.22%	1
<i>answered question</i>			45
<i>skipped question</i>			4

Finally, as with students, respondents in this category were asked to comment about how *out* they are on campus. Similar challenges exist with this question as discussed in the previous section. However, because of the smaller size of this sub-sample, comparisons between LGBTQ and A are not possible. However, these data points suggest that a handful of faculty/staff/other

members of the LGBTQA community have not revealed their sexual orientation or gender identity to other sectors of the campus community.

Regarding your sexual orientation: How out are you on campus?						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	2	3	0	20	18	43
<i>answered question</i>						43
<i>skipped question</i>						6

Regarding your gender identity: How out are you on campus?						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	1	0	0	10	32	43
<i>answered question</i>						43
<i>skipped question</i>						6

Alumni Demographics

In an attempt to capture some historical data about the climate for LGBTQ people at Elizabethtown College, we invited alumni to participate in the survey. Questions asked of alumni were parallel to questions asked of other groups, but couched in the past tense. As such, direct comparisons are not always available, but historical ones are. Fifty-one alumni screened themselves into the study and consented to participate.

As with other groups, we asked alumni to identify their age, basic demographics, and academic affiliations. This information is summarized in the following tables.

What is your age?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18 to 24	42.9%	21
25 to 34	55.1%	27
35 to 44	2.0%	1
45 to 54	0.0%	0
55 to 64	0.0%	0
65 to 74	0.0%	0
75 or older	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		49
<i>skipped question</i>		2

No alumni who graduated prior to 2002 participated in this study. Generally speaking, more recent and younger graduates are over-represented in this sample.

What year did you graduate from Elizabethtown College?

	Response Percent	Response Count
2002	2.08%	1
2003	4.17%	2
2004	6.25%	3
2005	4.17%	2
2006	4.17%	2
2007	4.17%	2
2008	8.33%	4
2009	2.08%	1
2010	8.33%	4
2011	8.33%	4
2012	14.58%	7
2013	8.33%	4
2014	18.75%	9
Did not Complete and Other	6.25%	3
<i>answered question</i>		48
<i>skipped question</i>		3

As in all other parts of this sample, people who identify as White/Caucasian make up the majority (94%) of this subsample.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your race and ethnicity?

Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Mixed	4.08%	2
Caucasian and White	93.88%	46
None	2.04%	1
<i>answered question</i>		49
<i>skipped question</i>		2

A variety of majors are represented in the alumni subsample. Social Work and Sociology/Anthropology/Criminal Justice are the most reported majors. The most often reported minors are in the Fine Arts and Psychology.

What was your major? (First Response)

Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Business/International Business	6.3%	3
Communications	6.3%	3
Education (all)	4.2%	2
English (all)	8.3%	4
Fine Arts	8.3%	4
Health and Occupation	2.1%	1
Modern Languages	2.1%	1
Music Therapy	2.1%	1
Occupational Therapy	6.3%	3
Political Science	2.1%	1
Psychology	8.3%	4
Religious Studies	6.3%	3
Social Work	18.8%	9
Sociology/Anthropology/Criminal Justice	14.6%	7
Other	4.2%	2
<i>answered question</i>		48
<i>skipped question</i>		3

What was your major? (Second Response)

Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Fine Arts	25.0%	1
Modern Languages	25.0%	1
Political Science	50.0%	2
	<i>answered question</i>	4
	<i>skipped question</i>	47

What, if any, was your minor(s)? First Minor Listed

Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Biology	8.11%	3
Business	2.70%	1
Fine Arts	16.22%	6
History	5.41%	2
Human Services	5.41%	2
Modern Languages	8.11%	3
Peace and Conflict Studies	2.70%	1
Philosophy	2.70%	1
Psychology	13.51%	5
Religion	2.70%	1
Women and Gender Studies	5.41%	2
None	27.03%	10
	<i>answered question</i>	37
	<i>skipped question</i>	14

What, if any, was your minor(s)? Second Minor Listed

Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Modern Languages	75.00%	3
Women and Gender Studies	25.00%	1
	<i>answered question</i>	4
	<i>skipped question</i>	47

As in other subsamples, cisgender women are more strongly represented than other groups.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your gender?

Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Female	67.35%	33
Male	30.61%	15
Trans	2.04%	1
<i>answered question</i>		49
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Unlike other subsamples in the study, alumni who identify as straight/heterosexual are the minority of respondents. Similar to other subsamples, transgender alumni make up a minority of respondents. Given these factors, responses of the alumni group might be viewed to best represent sexual orientation minorities.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your sexual orientation?

Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Bisexual and Pansexual	16.67%	8
Gay, Lesbian or Queer	41.67%	20
Straight or Heterosexual	35.42%	17
Other	6.25%	3
<i>answered question</i>		48
<i>skipped question</i>		3

Are you a member of the transgender community?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	4.1%	2
no	91.8%	45
prefer not to answer	4.1%	2
<i>answered question</i>		49
<i>skipped question</i>		2

As with all other groups, we asked how *out* alumni had been while they were on campus. Responses indicate a handful of alumni who largely kept their sexual orientation and/or gender identity to themselves while they were students.

Regarding your sexual orientation: When you were a student, how out are you on campus?

Answer Options	No one knew.	I told one or two trusted people.	People close to me knew.	If people knew, they knew; it wasn't a secret.	Everyone knew.	
	2	7	4	19	15	47
<i>answered question</i>						47
<i>skipped question</i>						4

Regarding your gender identity: When you were a student, how out are you on campus?

Answer Options	No one knew.	I told one or two trusted people.	People close to me knew.	If people knew, they knew; it wasn't a secret.	Everyone knew.	
	0	1	1	1	44	47
<i>answered question</i>						47
<i>skipped question</i>						4

LGBTQ Students Demographics

Finally, demographics of current LGBTQ students (all student respondents who did not identify as straight) are presented here. This is a subset of All Student respondents presented at the beginning of this section. Sixty-four students fall in to this category, providing a large enough subsample to allow for separate presentation.

As in the overall student subsample, younger students, first year students, and sophomores are more strongly represented in this group.

How old are you?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18	37.5%	24
19	25.0%	16
20	23.44%	15
21	10.94%	7
22	1.56%	1
23	0.0%	0
24	1.56%	1
25 - 35	0.0%	0
36 - 45	0.0%	0
46 - 55	0.0%	0
56 - 65	0.0%	0
66+	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		0

By credits, what year are you at Elizabethtown?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
First Year Student	40.6%	26
Sophomore	23.44%	15
Junior	18.75%	12
Senior	17.19%	11
Continuing Education Student	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Psychology, Social Work, and undecided are the most frequently reported majors. In general, a wide variety of majors is reported in this subsample. Women and Gender Studies is the most reported minor in this subsample.

What is your major? First Major Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Accounting	3.1%	2
Biology	3.1%	2
Business/International Business	7.8%	5
Chemistry	4.7%	3
Communications	4.7%	4
Computer Science	1.6%	1
Education (all)	3.1%	2
English (all)	6.3%	4
Fine Arts	3.1%	2
History	4.7%	3
Modern Languages	3.1%	2
Music Therapy	3.1%	2
Occupational Therapy	4.7%	3
Philosophy	1.6%	1
Political Science	4.7%	3
Psychology	12.5%	8
Social Work	10.9%	7
Sociology/Anthropology/Crim. Justice	3.1%	2
Other	1.6%	2
Undecided	10.9%	7
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		0

What is your major? Second Major Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
English	28.6%	2
Modern Languages	14.3%	1
Philosophy	14.3%	1
Political Science	28.6%	2
Sociology/Anthropology	14.3%	1
<i>answered question</i>		7
<i>skipped question</i>		57

What, if any, minor(s) are you pursuing? First Minor Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Art History	2.8%	1
Creative Writing	5.6%	2
Criminology	2.8%	1
Fine Arts	11.1%	4
Graphic Design	2.8%	1
Human Services	2.8%	1
Modern Languages	2.8%	1
Psychology	13.9%	5
Women and Gender Studies	30.6%	11
None	11.1%	4
Undecided	13.9%	5
answered question		36
skipped question		28

What, if any, minor(s) are you pursuing? Second Minor Listed		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Economics	14.3%	1
Film Studies	14.3%	1
International Studies	14.3%	1
Peace and Conflict Studies	14.3%	1
Political Science	14.3%	1
Religious Studies	14.3%	1
answered question		6
skipped question		58

As in other subsamples, cisgender female is the most commonly reported gender in the LGBTQ student subsample.

What label(s) do you use to describe your gender?		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Agender	3.2%	2
Cisgender Female	65.1%	41
Cisgender Male	20.6%	13
Gender Fluid, Transgender, and Other	11.1%	7
answered question		63
skipped question		1

The most common sexual orientations reported in the subsample of LGBTQ students are related to bisexuality, demisexuality, and pansexuality. These sexual orientations have been found to be more prevalent in the general population as well (Gates, 2011). This suggests that this sample of LGBTQ students may be representative of the LGBTQ population on campus.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your sexual orientation?		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Asexual	1.6%	1
Bisexual, Demisexual, or Pansexual	57.8%	37
Gay, Lesbian, or Queer	28.1%	18
Questioning or Unsure	6.3%	4
Multiple Responses and Other	6.3%	4
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Six current students identified themselves as members of the transgender community.

Are you a member of the transgender community?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	9.4%	6
no	85.9%	55
prefer not to answer	4.7%	3
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		0

As in other parts of the study sample, White/Caucasian is by far the most reported race and ethnicity.

What labels(s) do you use to describe your race and ethnicity?		
Open Ended Response	Response Percent	Response Count
African American and Black	7.8%	5
Bi-racial and Mixed	12.7%	8
Caucasian and White	71.5%	45
Hispanic	4.8%	3
Other Unique Responses	3.2%	2
answered question		64
skipped question		0

As previously reported in the larger student sample, a number of LGBTQ students are not *out* on campus. This means that they have not identified themselves to important supports that might be able to help them feel more welcomed and connected to campus. Additionally, research suggests that these isolated LGBTQ people are some of the more at risk for developing psychological and social troubles (Saewyc, 2011), increasing the importance of awareness of existence of this population.

Regarding your sexual orientation: How out are you on campus?						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	10	5	10	28	7	60
answered question						4
skipped question						19

Regarding your gender identity: How out are you on campus?						
Answer Options	No one knows.	I've told one or two trusted people.	People close to me are in the know.	If people know, they know; it's not a secret.	Everyone knows.	
	2	4	2	8	44	60
answered question						60
skipped question						4

Finally, when asked about support available at Elizabethtown College compared to their high school, LGBTQ students responded in roughly the same proportions as the larger sample of

students. About half reported more support at Elizabethtown and about half reported more at their high school.

Compared to Elizabethtown College, there was _____ support for LGBTQ people at my high school.				
Answer Options	less	about the same amount of	more	
	31	18	11	60
<i>answered question</i>				60
<i>skipped question</i>				4

Part 3: Perceived Campus Support

After completing questions designed to establish the demographics of the sample, respondents were asked to comment on the amount of support that they personally perceived from various constituencies on campus for LGBTQ people. These responses are presented here as descriptive statistics. These findings are reported by constituency for ease of face comparison.

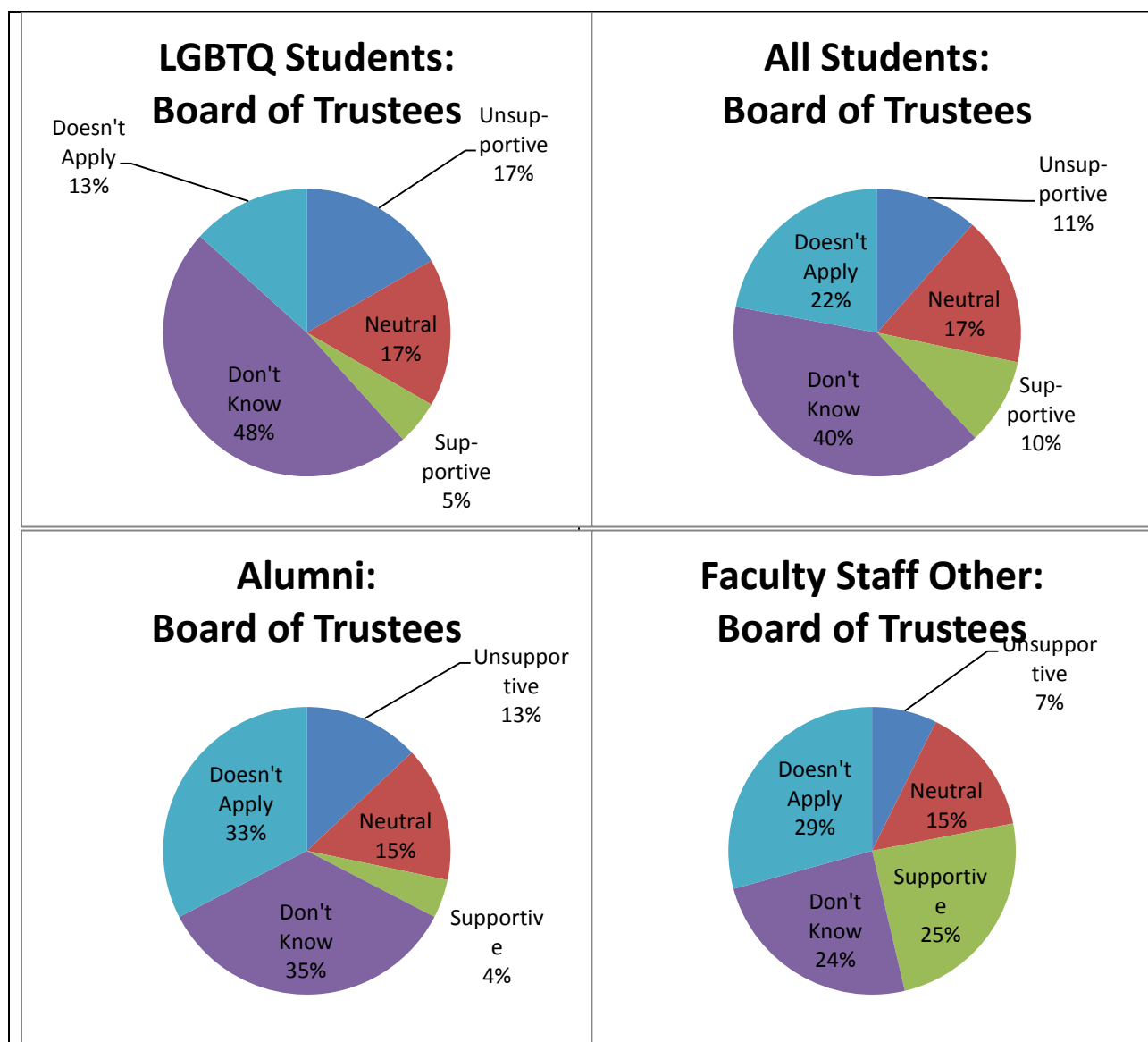
For purposes of graphic presentation, the categories of very unsupportive and unsupportive have been collapsed. Similarly, the categories of supportive and very supportive have been combined. The original data is also supplied.

It should also be noted that of the various constituencies identified, only three (Faculty, Friends on Campus, and Student Groups) are perceived by over 50% of respondents as being supportive of LGBTQ people. Generally speaking, less than half of respondents found most of the identified areas to be supportive. Also, in many cases, a number of respondents had no idea what amount of support was offered.

Finally, the reader is reminded that these numbers represent the perception of these offices and individuals in the early fall of 2014 when this survey was administered.

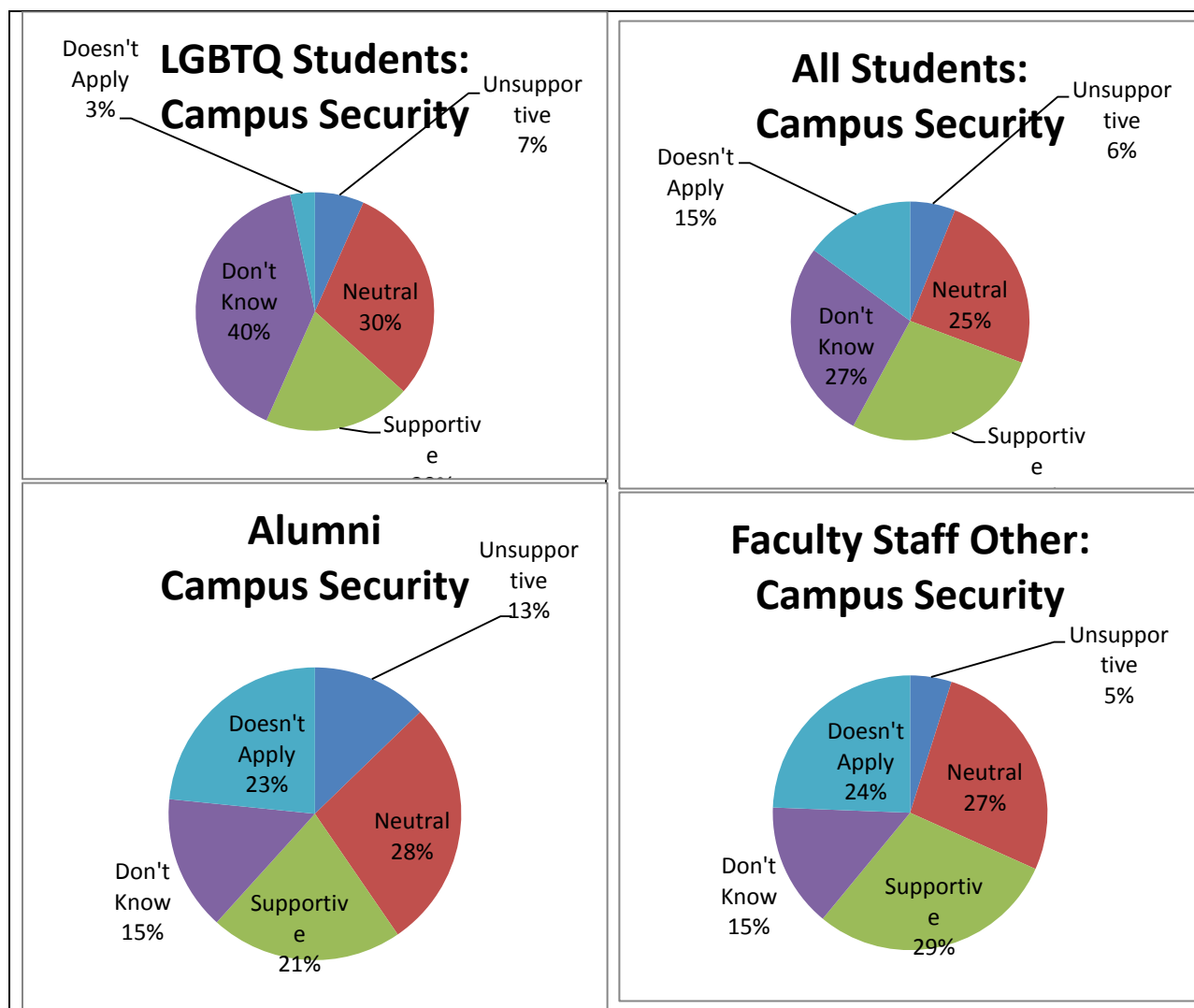
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from the Board of Trustees

	very unsupportive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	3	7	10	2	1	29	8	60
All Students	4	9	19	3	8	45	25	113
Alumni	2	4	7	1	1	16	15	46
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	1	6	3	7	10	12	41



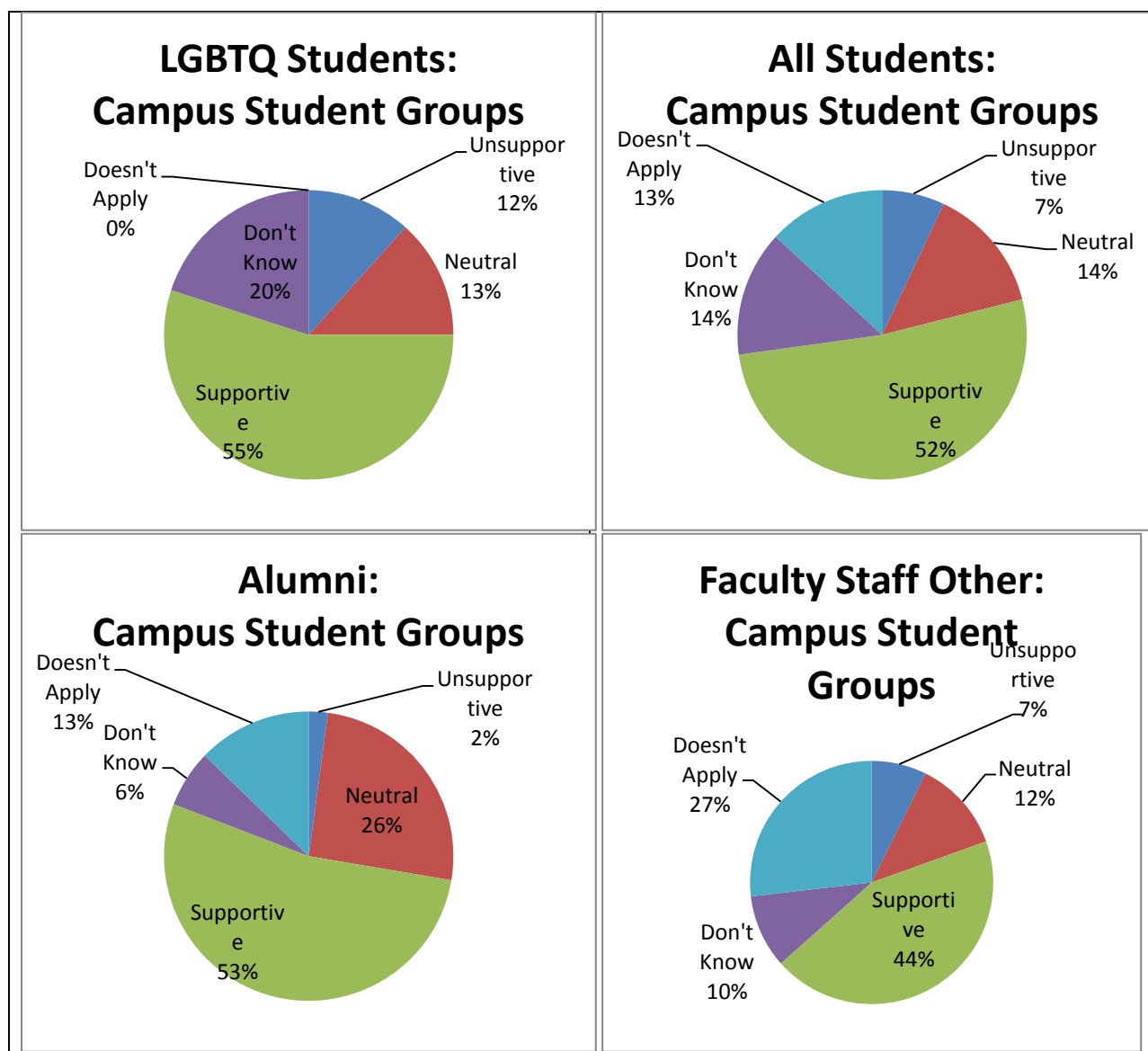
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Campus Security

	very unresponsive	not responsive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	1	3	18	9	3	24	2	60
All Students	2	5	28	15	16	31	17	114
Alumni	2	4	13	4	6	7	11	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	0	11	7	5	6	10	41



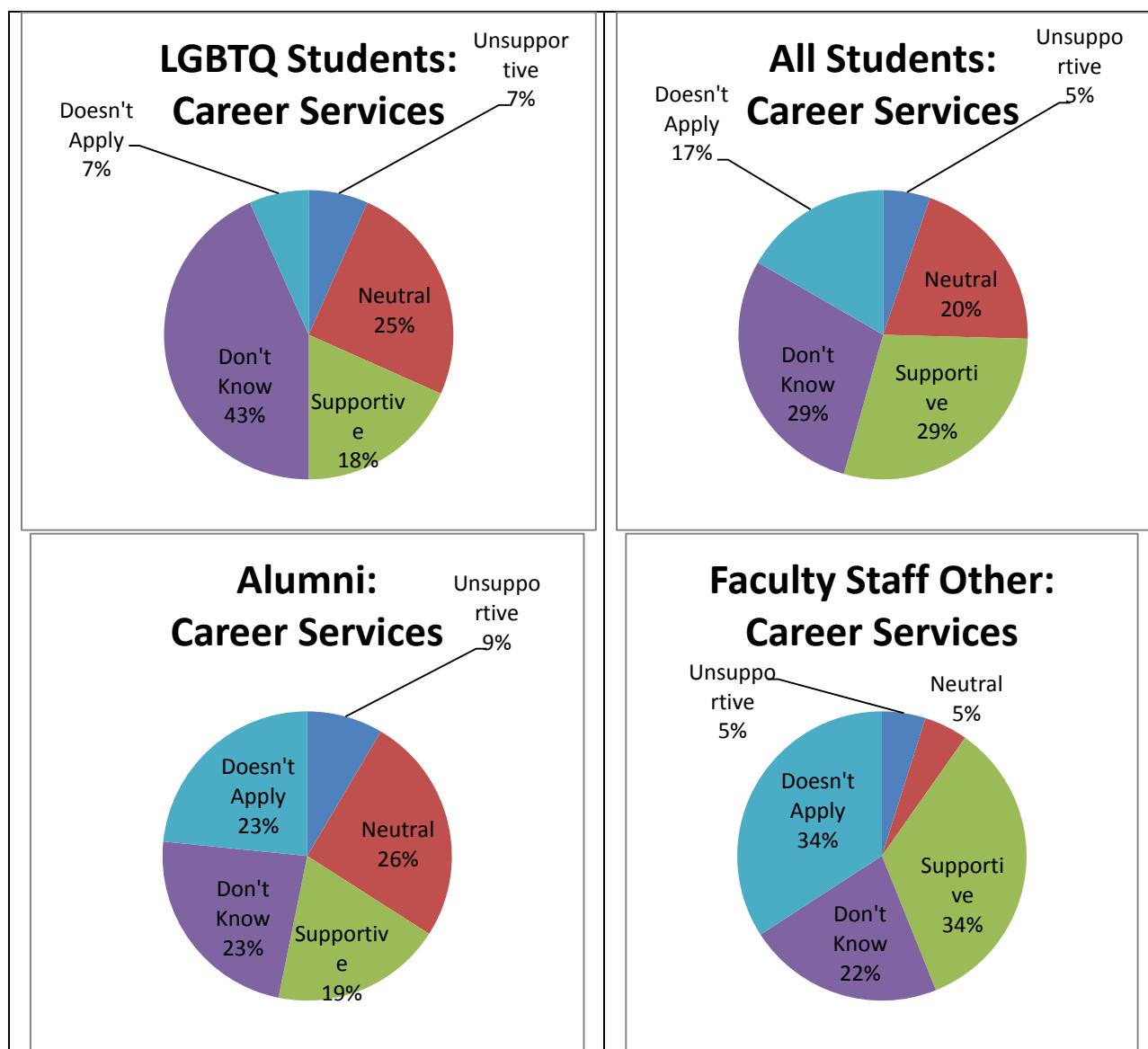
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Campus Student Groups

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	2	5	8	18	15	12	0	60
All Students	3	5	16	26	33	16	15	114
Alumni	0	1	12	12	13	3	6	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	1	5	10	8	4	11	41



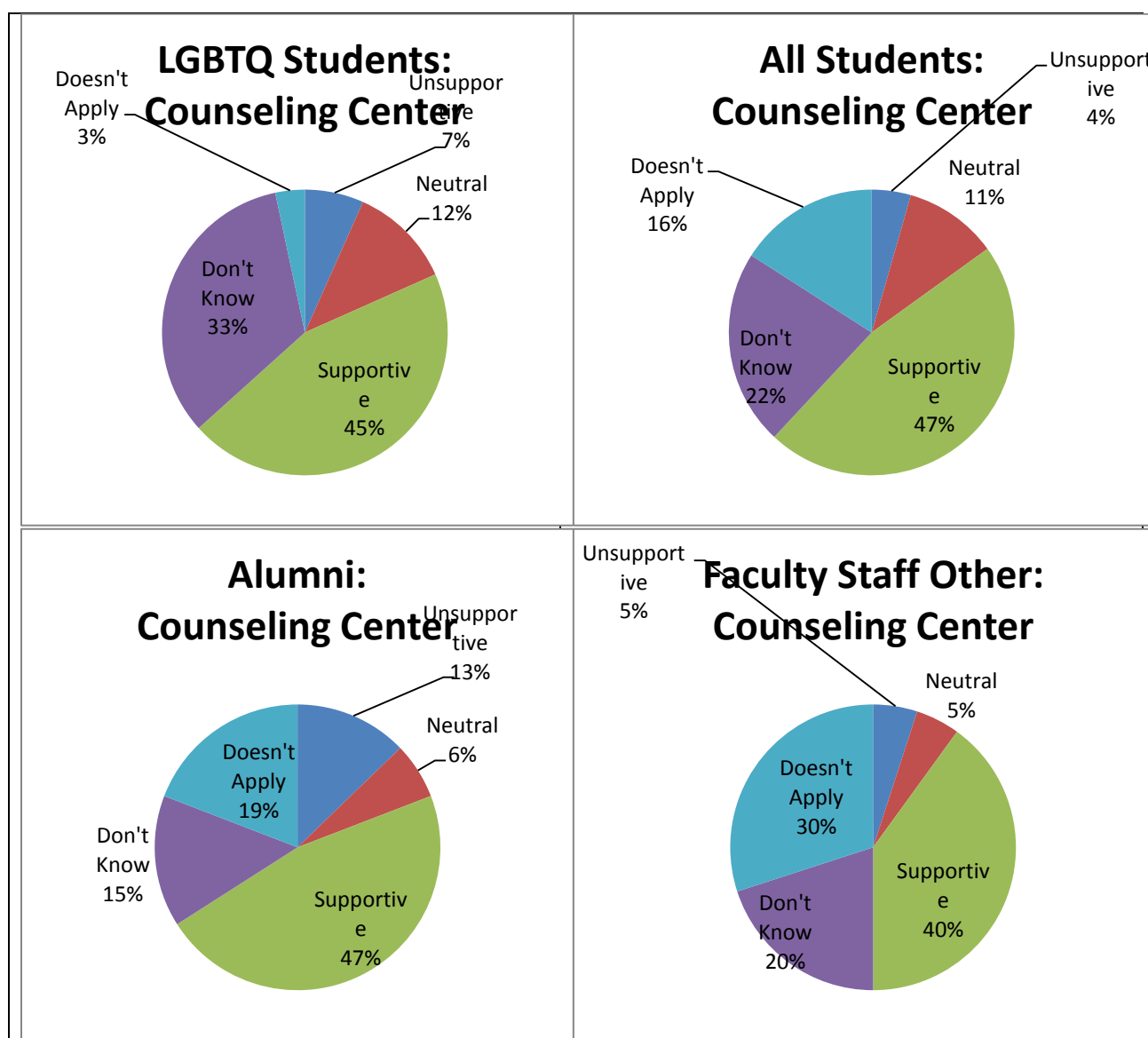
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Career Services

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	3	1	15	7	4	26	4	60
All Students	4	2	23	17	16	33	19	114
Alumni	1	3	12	5	4	11	11	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	0	2	10	4	9	14	41



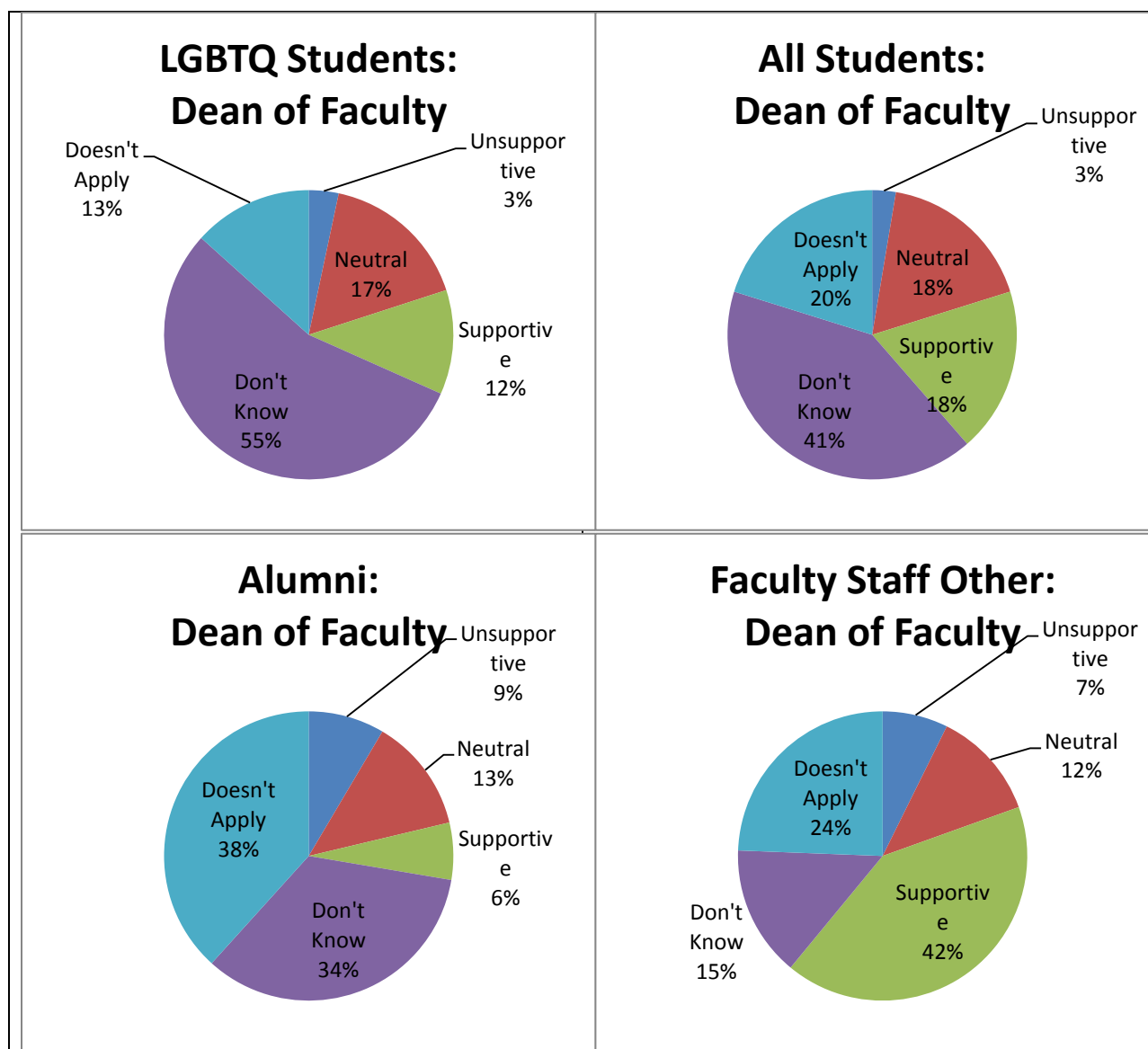
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from the Counseling Center

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	3	1	7	12	15	20	2	60
All Students	4	1	12	20	33	25	18	113
Alumni	1	5	3	9	13	7	9	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	0	2	6	10	8	12	40



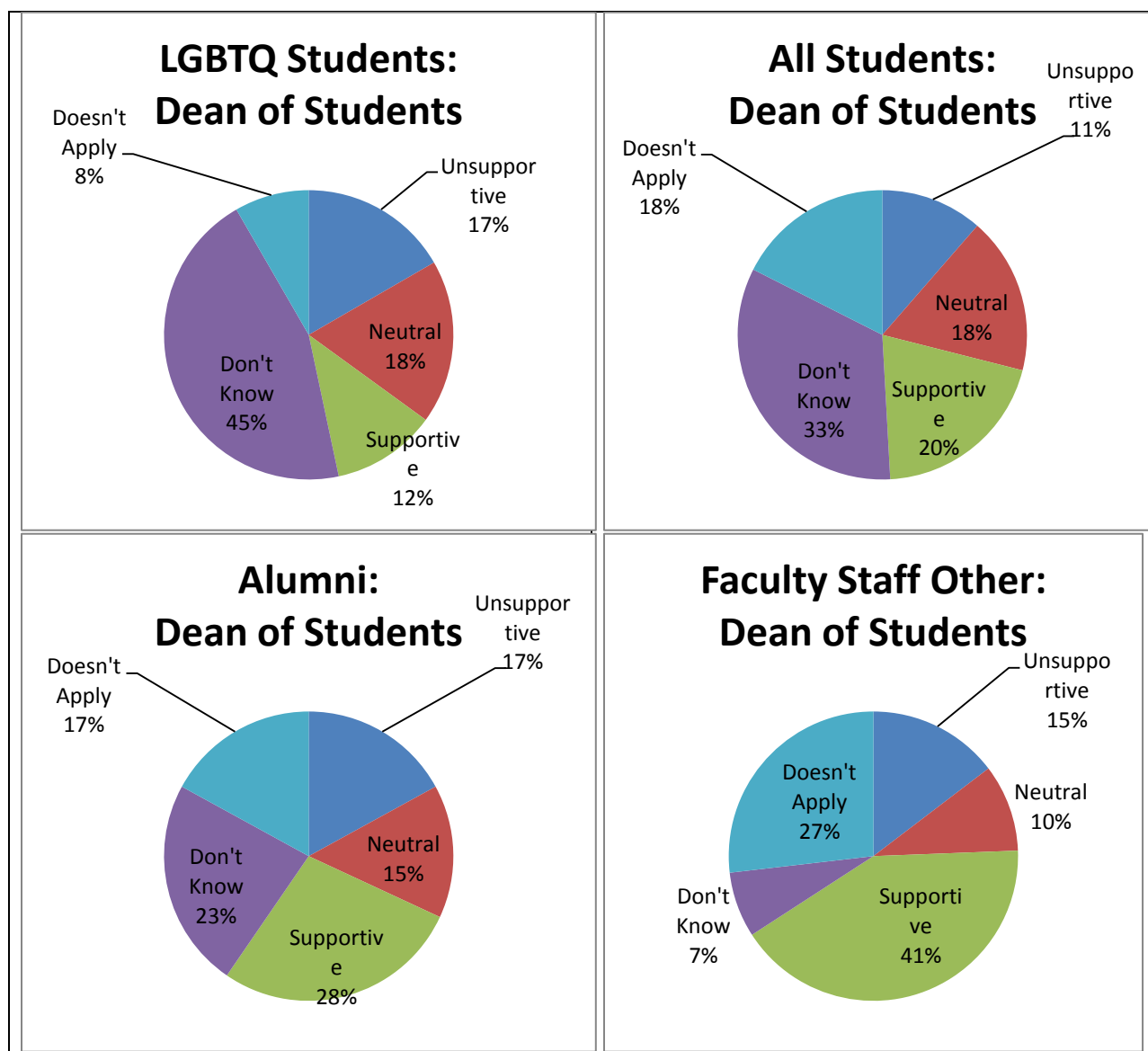
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from the Dean of the Faculty

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	2	0	10	5	2	33	8	60
All Students	3	0	20	9	12	47	23	114
Alumni	1	3	6	2	1	16	18	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	1	2	5	7	10	6	10	41



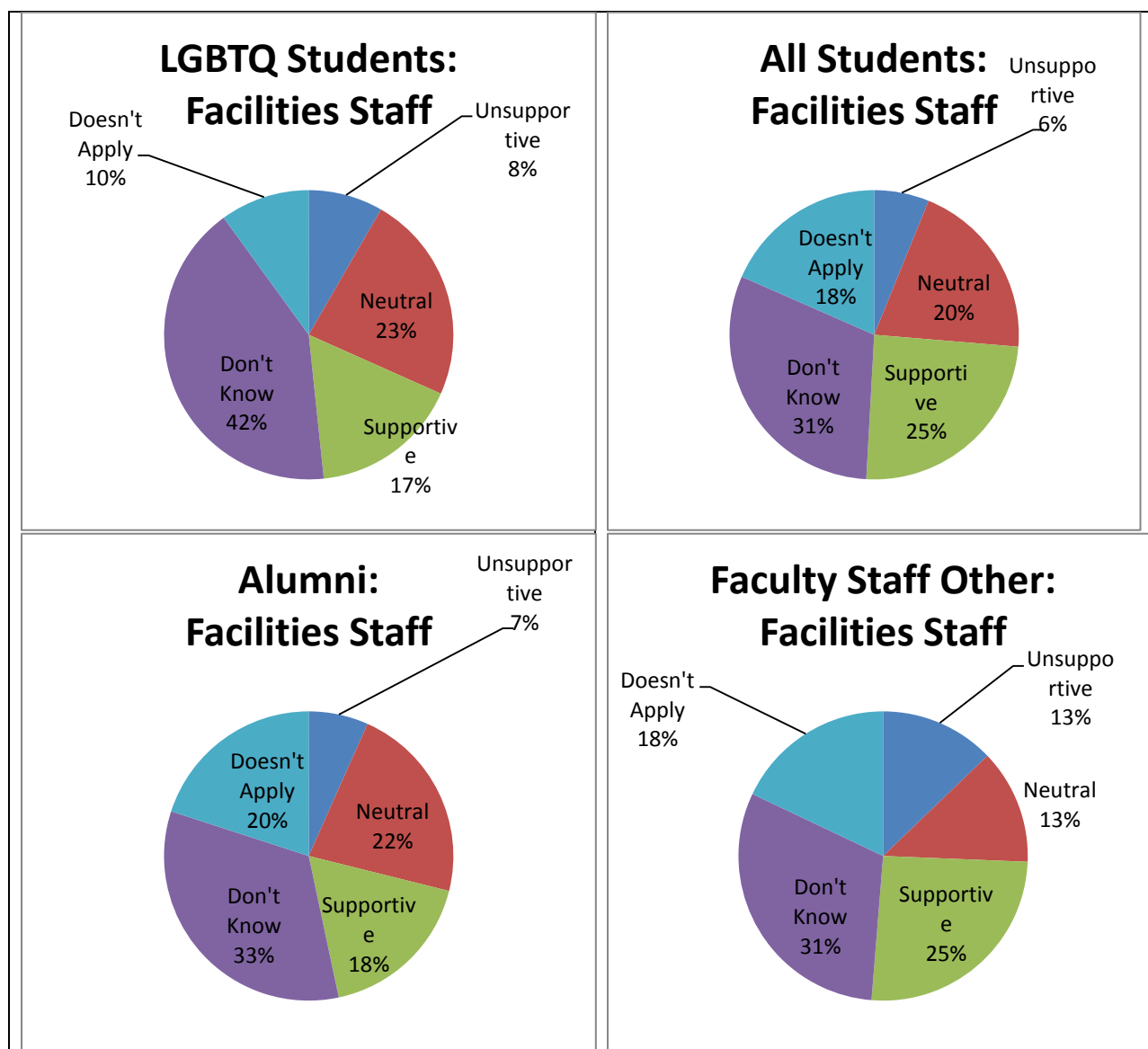
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from the Dean of Students

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	5	5	11	3	4	27	5	60
All Students	8	5	20	8	15	38	20	114
Alumni	6	2	7	5	8	11	8	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	3	3	4	6	11	3	11	41



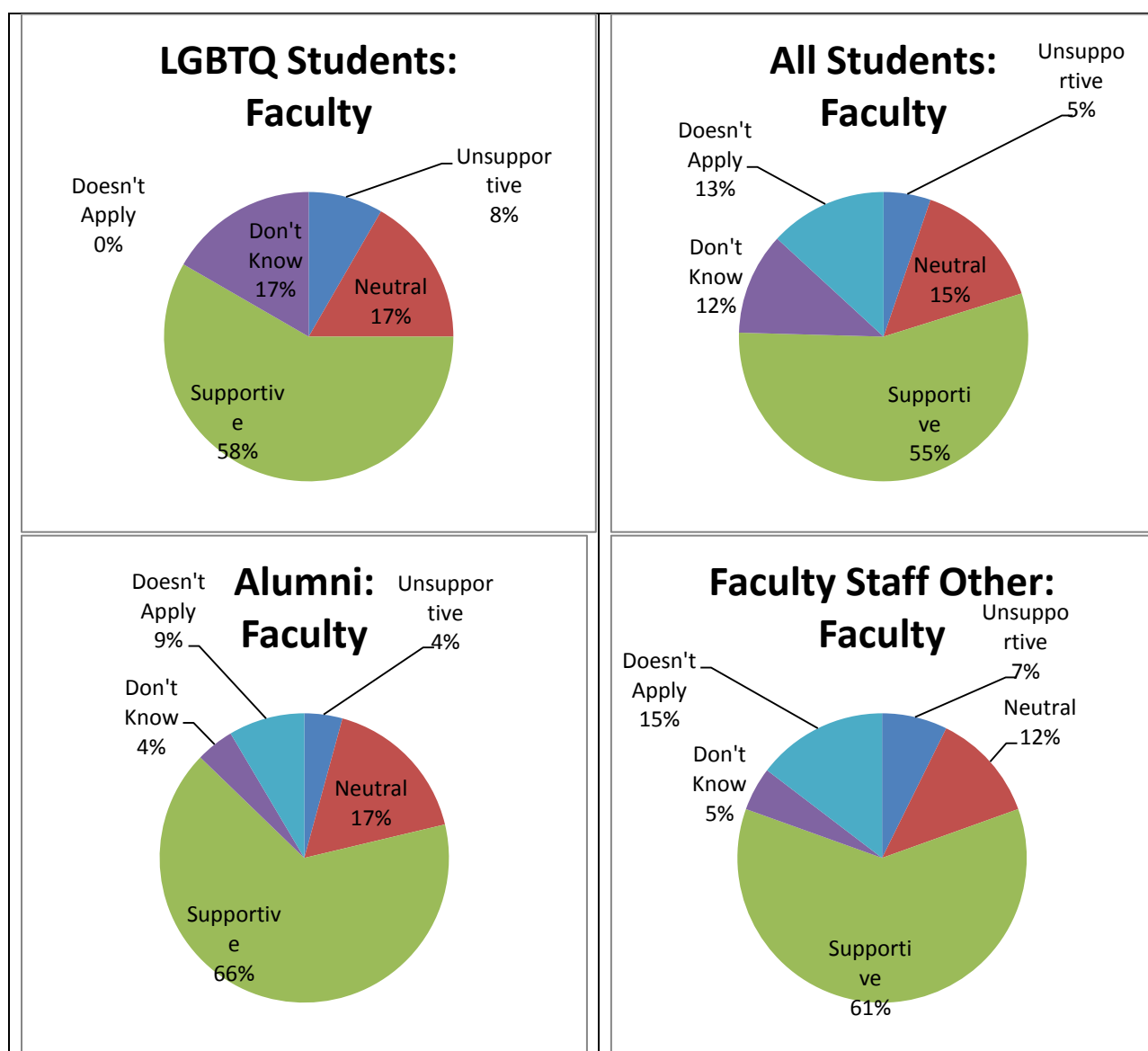
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Facilities Staff

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	2	3	14	6	4	25	6	60
All Students	3	4	23	10	18	35	21	114
Alumni	1	2	10	3	5	15	9	45
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	3	5	5	5	12	7	39



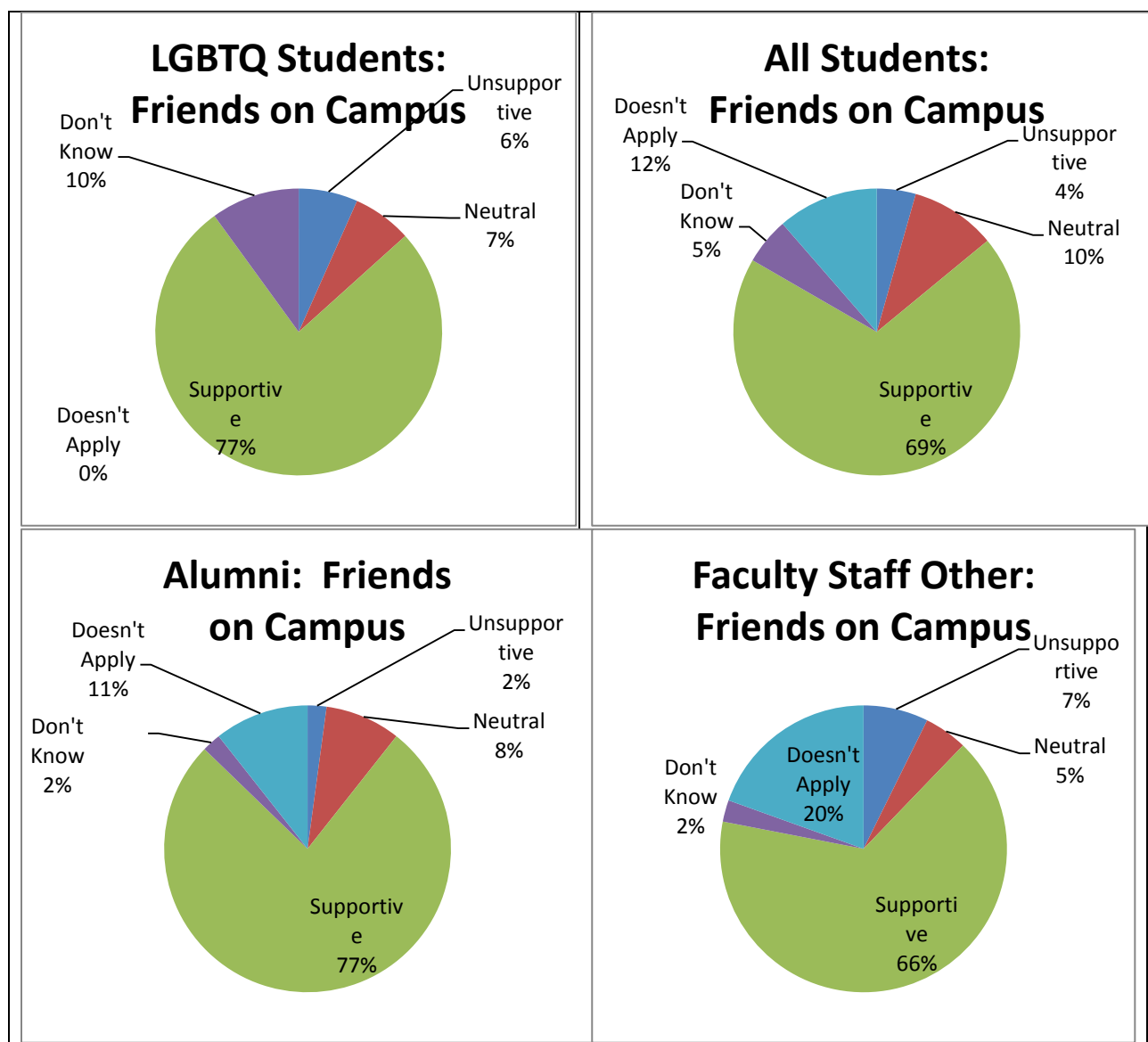
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Faculty

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	2	3	10	20	15	10	0	60
All Students	3	3	17	29	34	13	15	114
Alumni	1	1	8	11	20	2	4	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	1	5	12	13	2	6	41



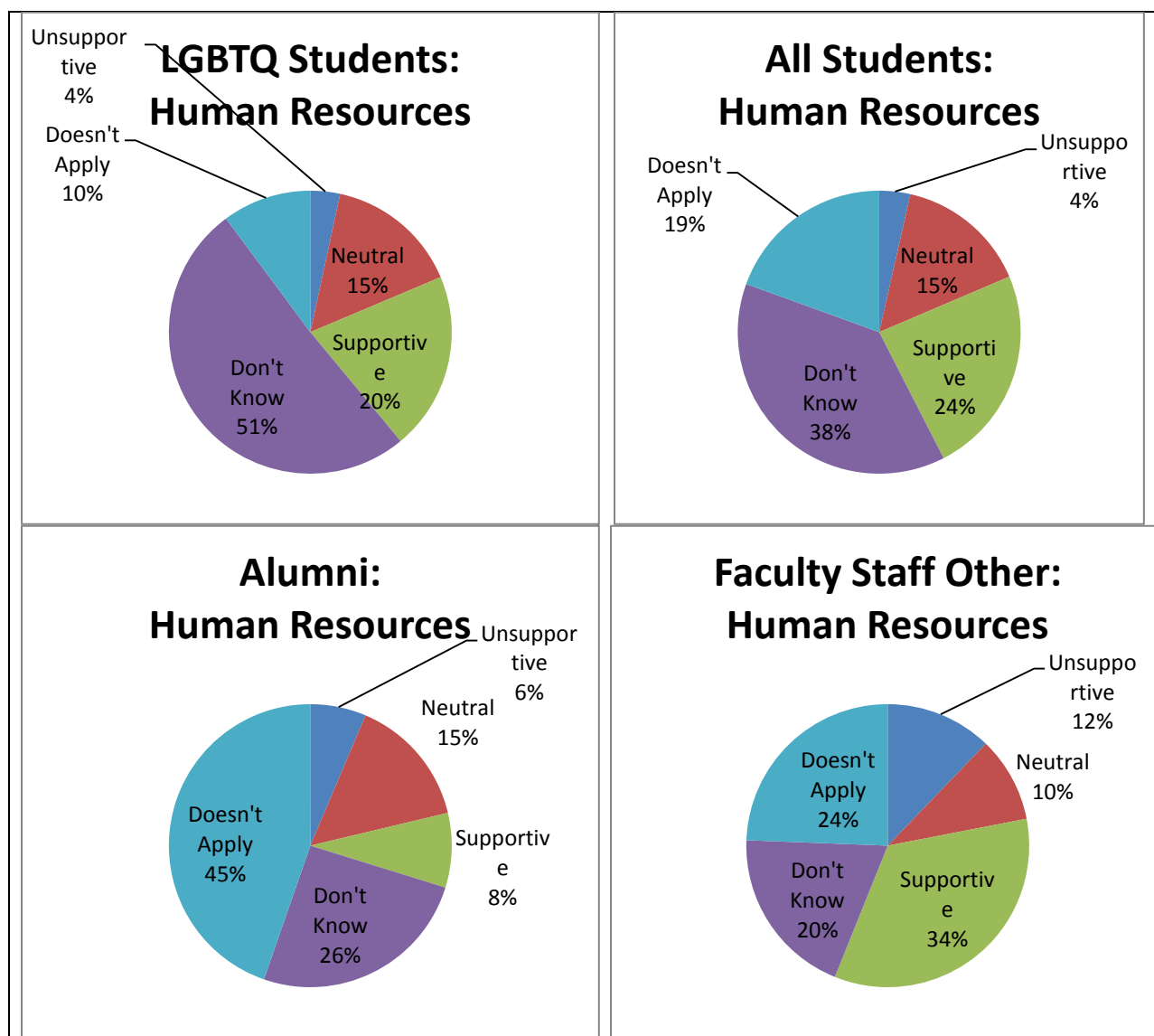
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Friends on Campus

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	3	1	4	12	34	6	0	60
All Students	4	1	11	21	58	6	13	114
Alumni	0	1	4	8	28	1	5	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	1	2	6	21	1	8	41



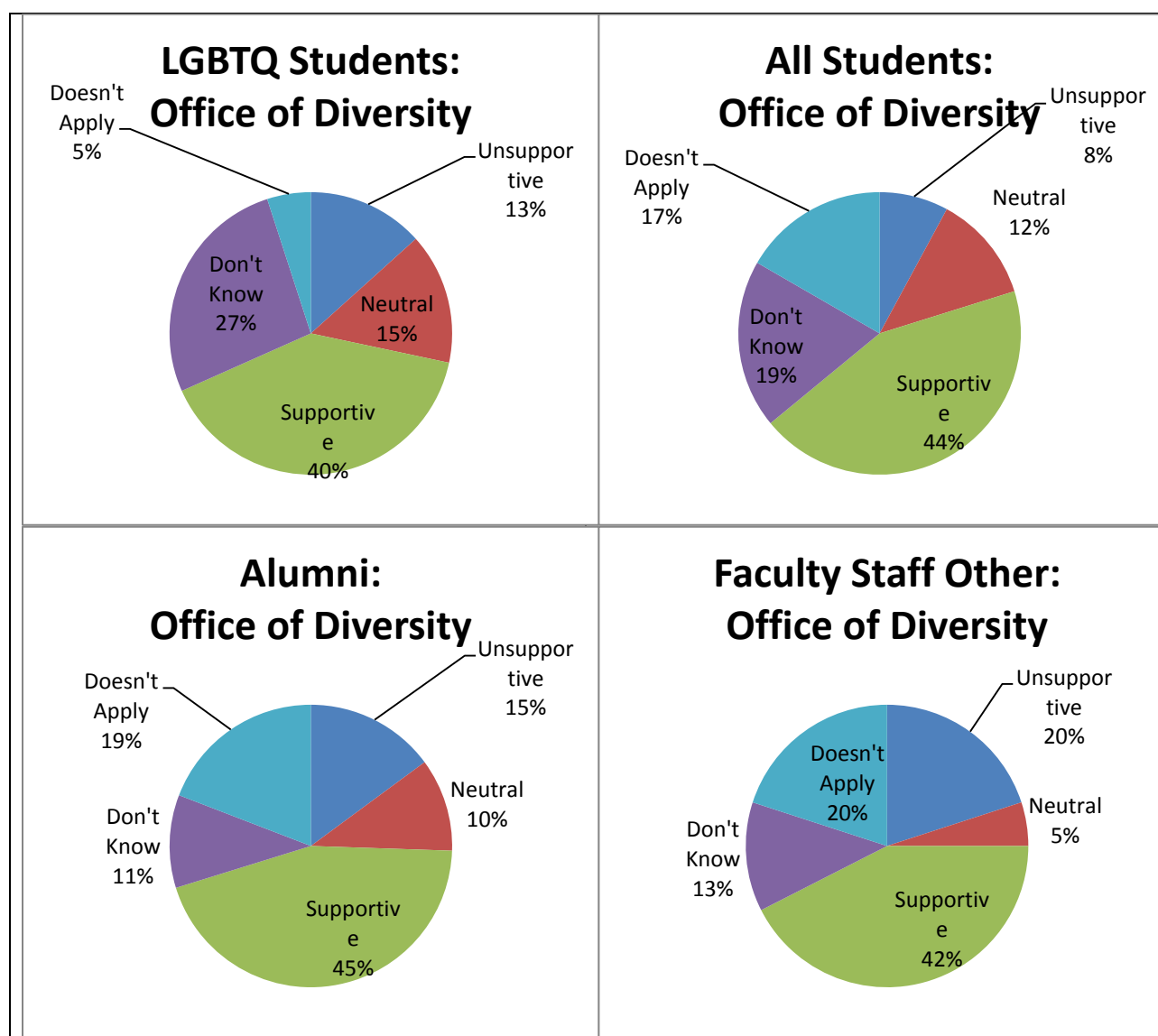
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from the Office of Human Resources

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	1	1	9	8	4	30	6	59
All Students	2	2	17	11	16	43	22	113
Alumni	2	1	7	2	2	12	21	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	3	2	4	8	6	8	10	41



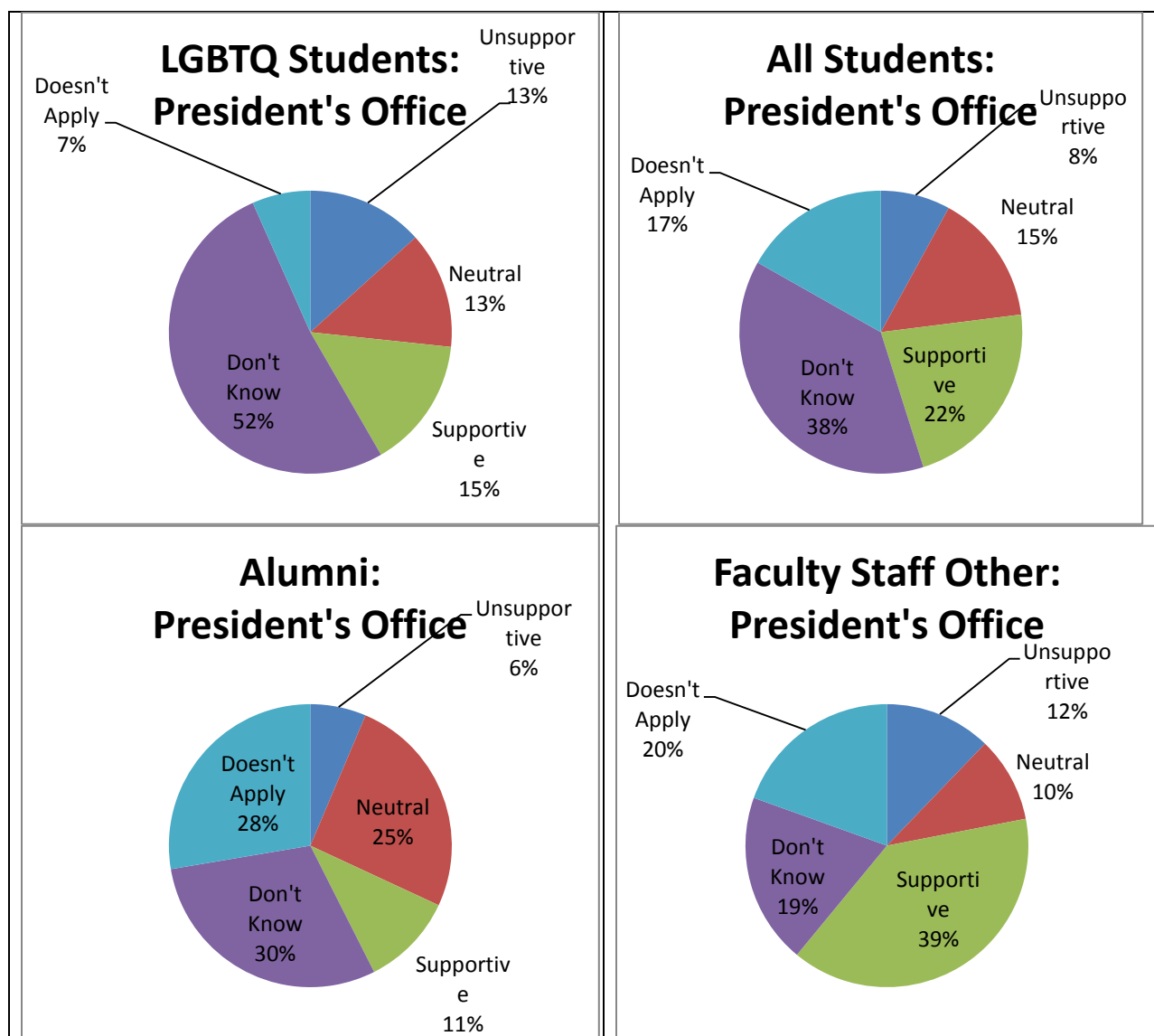
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from the Office of Diversity

	very unsupportive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	3	5	9	9	15	16	3	60
All Students	4	5	14	16	34	22	19	114
Alumni	2	5	5	12	9	5	9	47
Faculty/Staff/ Other	6	2	2	7	10	5	8	40



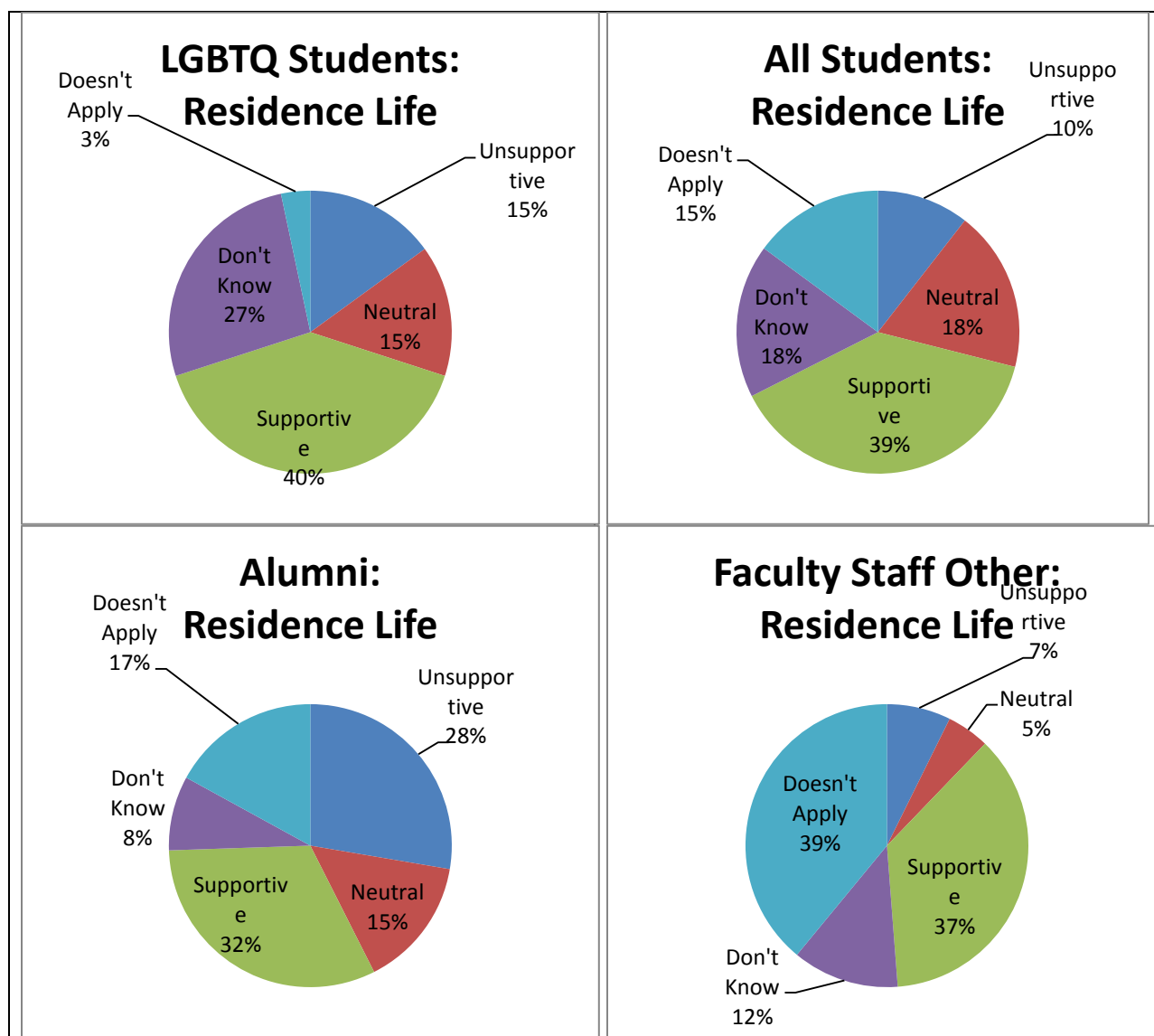
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from the Office of the President

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	2	6	8	7	2	31	4	60
All Students	3	6	17	11	14	43	19	113
Alumni	1	2	12	3	2	14	13	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	2	3	4	7	9	8	8	41



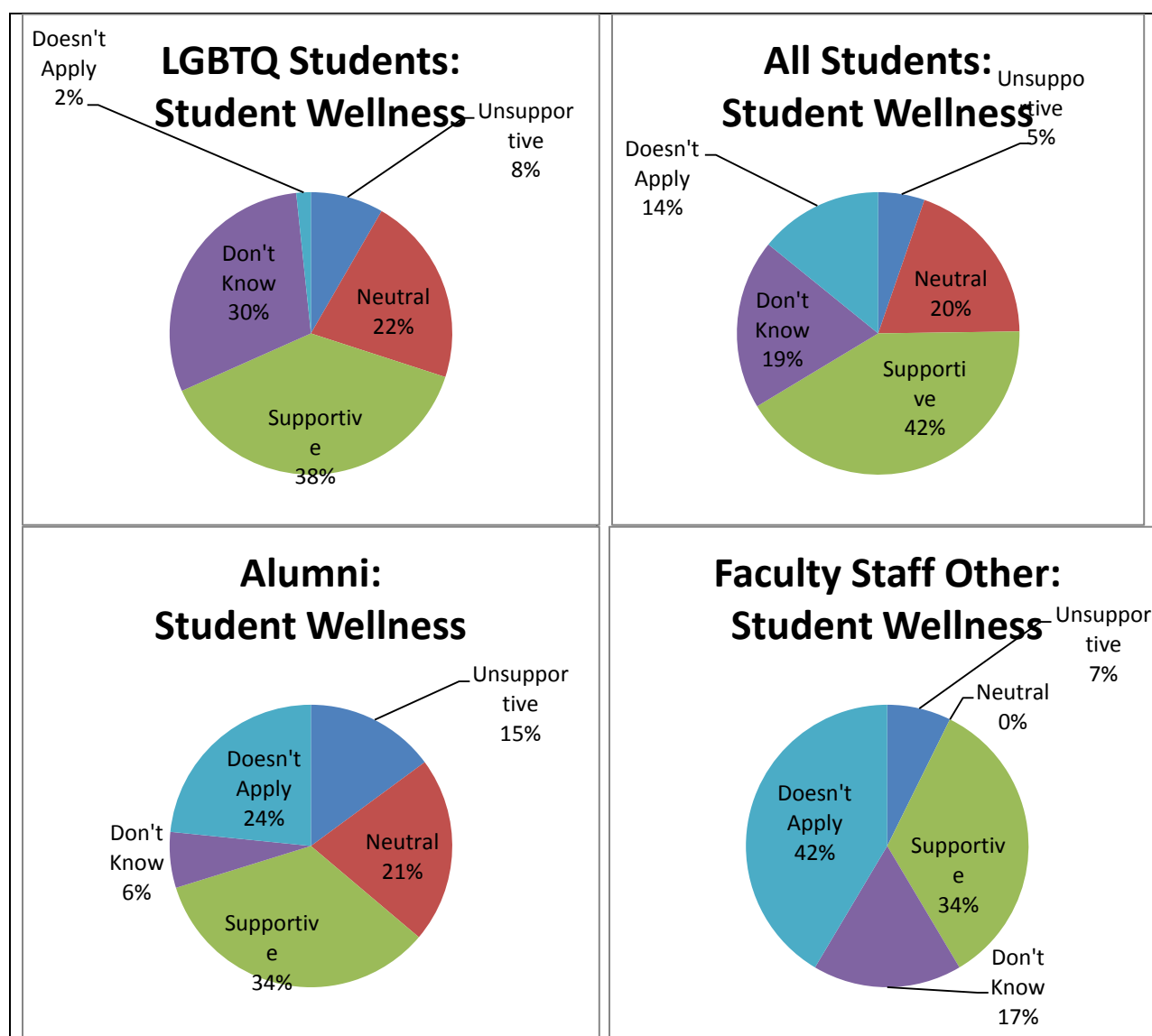
Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Residence Life

	very unresponsive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	6	3	9	13	11	16	2	60
All Students	8	4	21	19	25	20	17	114
Alumni	4	9	7	7	8	4	8	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	3	0	2	5	10	5	16	41



Regarding your sexual and gender identities, please rate the amount of support you personally feel (or felt) from Student Wellness

	very unsupportive	not supportive	neutral	supportive	very supportive	I don't know	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	3	2	13	11	12	18	1	60
All Students	4	2	22	23	24	22	16	113
Alumni	1	6	10	6	10	3	11	47
Faculty/Staff/ Other	2	1	0	7	7	7	17	41

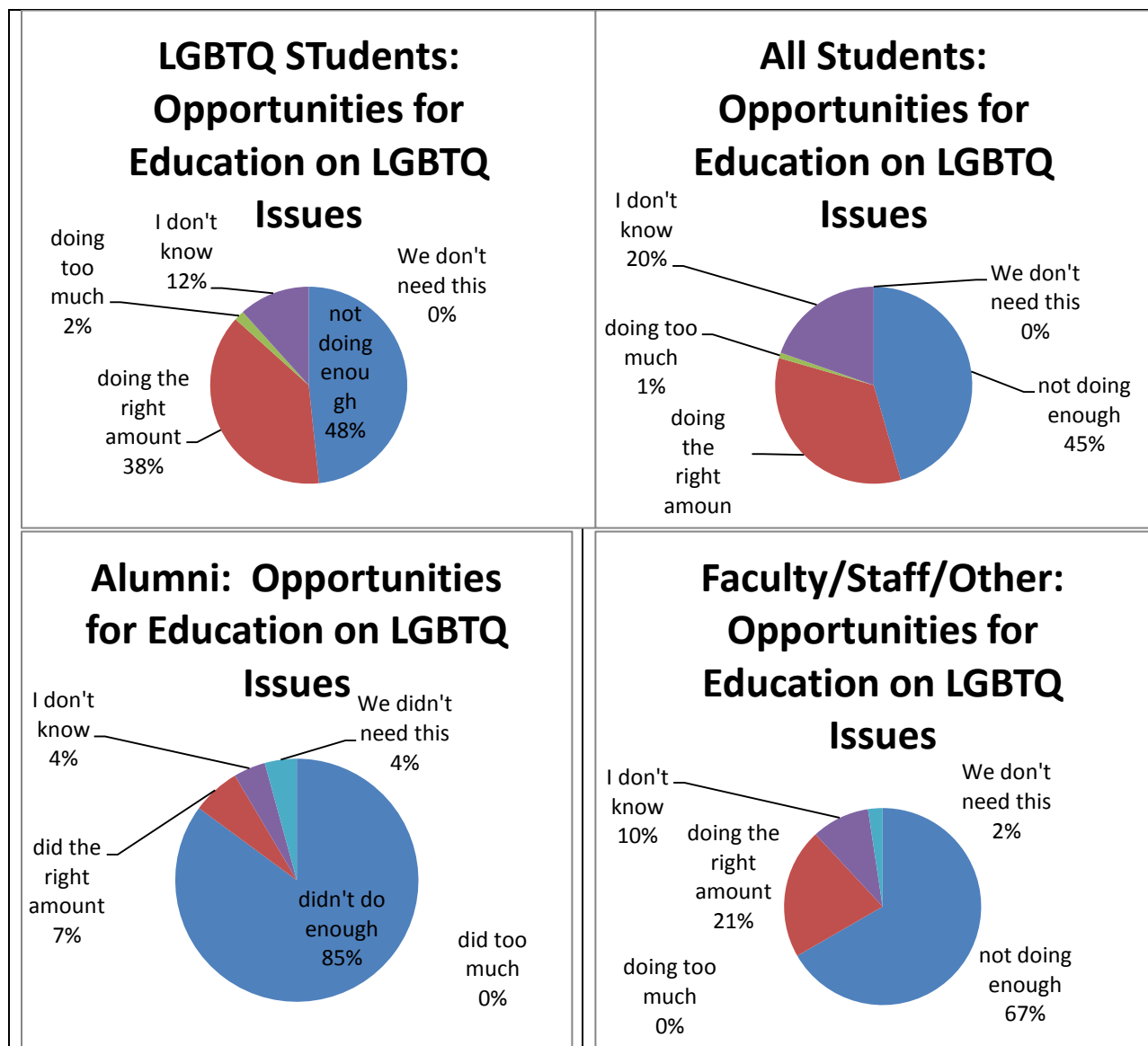


Part Four: Providing Education and Services

Respondents were asked to comment on the amount of work being done on campus regarding gender neutral bathrooms, gender neutral housing, and educational opportunities related to LGBTQ issues. The responses are presented here in tabular form. In general, fewer alumni report that enough is being done in these areas than current students and faculty/staff/other. This suggests that progress has been made. About half of current community members indicate that enough is being done regarding educational opportunities, while the majority feels that more work needs to be done regarding gender neutral housing and bathrooms.

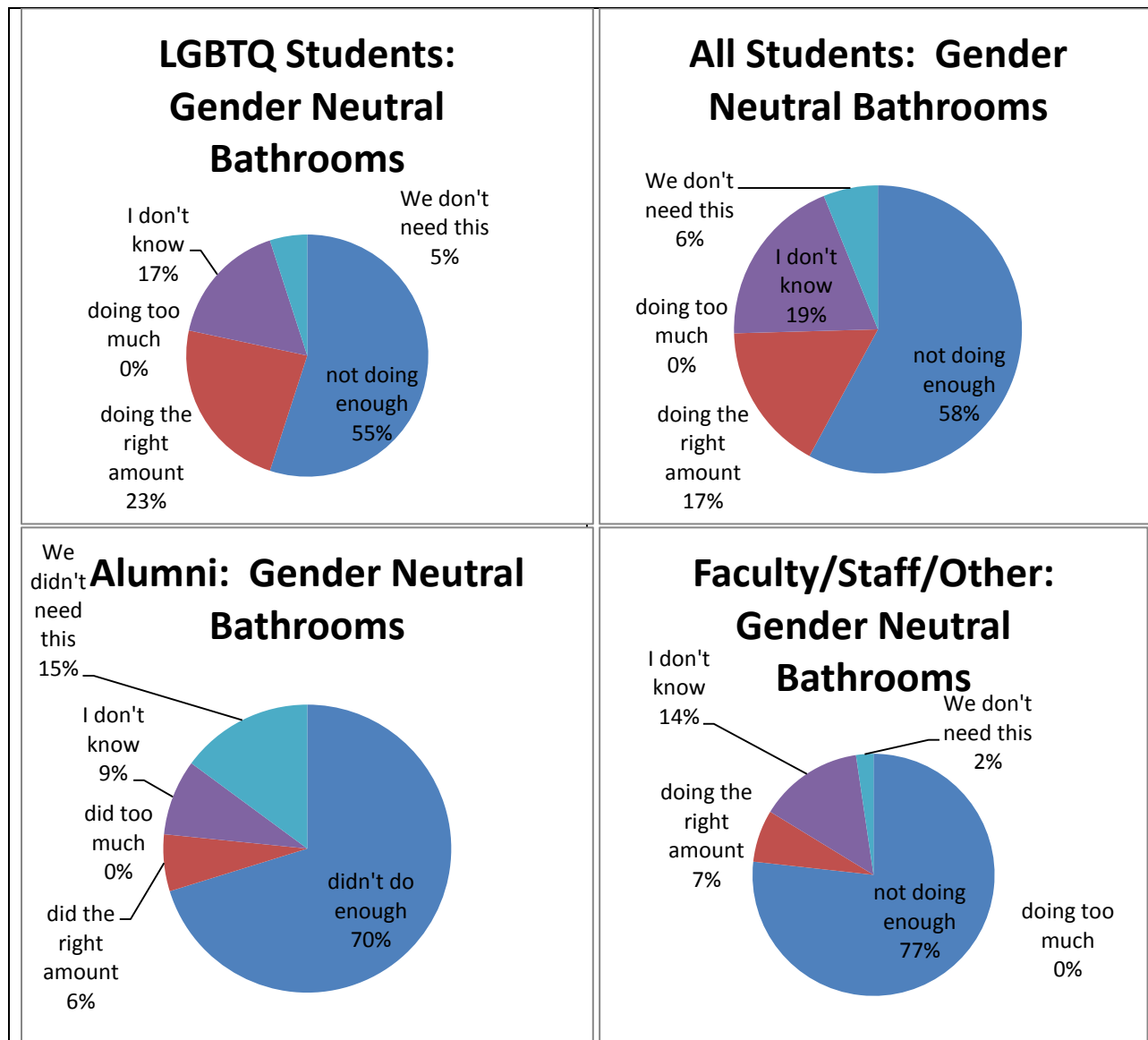
How is Elizabethtown Doing in Providing Opportunities for Education on LGBTQ Issues? (When you were a student, how did Elizabethtown do in providing . . .)

	not doing enough	doing the right amount	doing too much	I don't know	We don't need this	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	29	23	1	7	0	60
All Students	51	38	1	22	0	112
Alumni	40	3	0	2	2	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	28	9	0	4	1	42



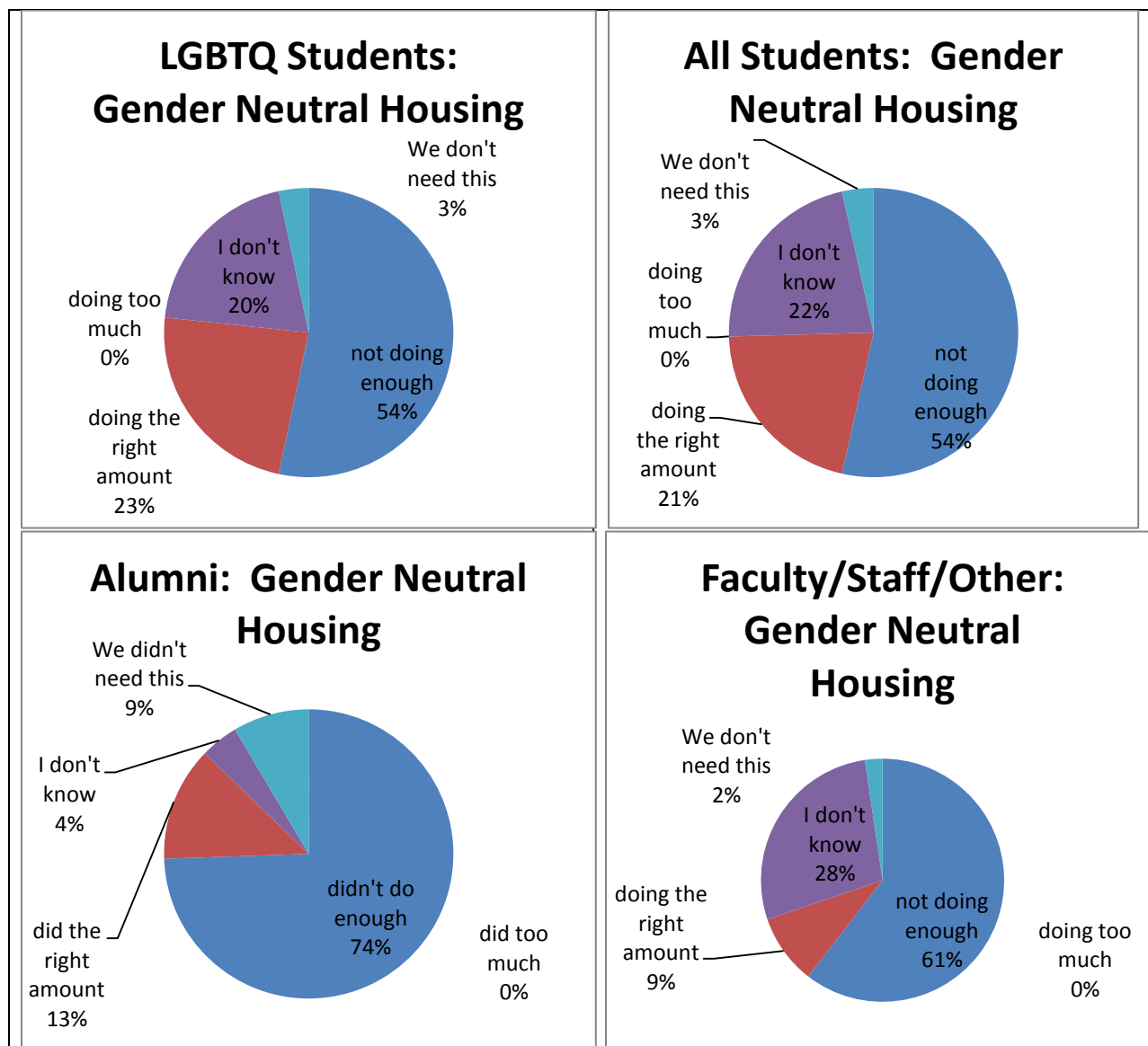
How is Elizabethtown Doing in Providing Gender Neutral Bathrooms? (for Alum: When you were a student, how did Elizabethtown do in providing . . .)

	not doing enough	doing the right amount	doing too much	I don't know	We don't need this	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	33	14	0	10	3	60
All Students	66	19	0	22	7	114
Alumni	33	3	0	4	7	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	26	4	0	12	1	43



How is Elizabethtown Doing in Providing Gender Neutral Housing? (for Alum: When you were a student, how did Elizabethtown do in providing . . .)

	not doing enough	doing the right amount	doing too much	I don't know	We don't need this	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	32	14	0	12	2	60
All Students	61	24	0	25	4	114
Alumni	35	6	0	2	4	47
Faculty/Staff/Other	26	4	0	12	1	43



Part Five: Microaggressions on Campus

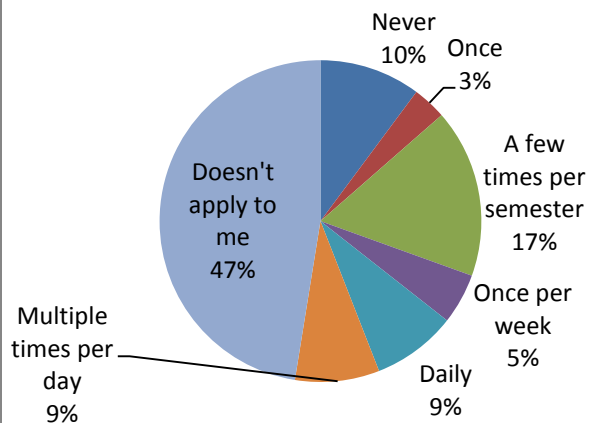
Microaggressions are often subtle, usually unintended, slights or insults that serve to keep members of minority groups in touch with the dynamics of oppression. Microaggressions were first identified in racist dynamics (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal & Esquilin, 2007), but are now understood to be at play in any dynamic of oppression. Respondents to the LGBTQ Climate survey were asked to comment on the frequency with which they experienced (or did not experience) homophobic or transphobic microaggressions in the following areas: athletics; classrooms (from teachers and students); college related meetings; public spaces; residence halls; and student clubs. The results are presented here in tabular form.

The following prompt was used for each question: “One type of microaggression is an (often) unintentional homo/bi/trans phobic comment or action. These subtle events can contribute to an unsupportive atmosphere for LGBTQ people. Some examples include the use of the term "gay" as a put down, jokes at the expense of LGBTQ people, or comments that assume that everyone is straight or cisgender (non-transgender). How often have you experienced or witnessed these kinds of microaggressions in:”

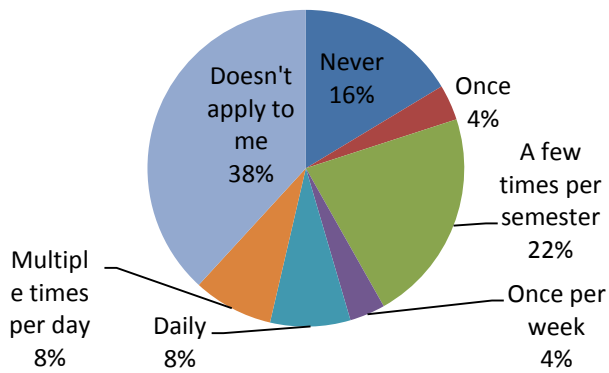
Athletic Events

	Never	Once	A few times per semester	Once per week	Daily	Multiple times per day	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	6	2	10	3	5	5	28	59
All Students	18	4	24	4	9	9	42	110
Alumni	6	1	10	4	4	7	14	46
Faculty/Staff/Other	7	2	5	0	0	1	27	42

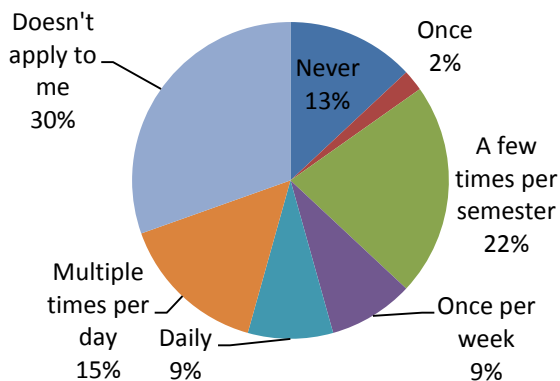
LGBTQ Students: at Athletic Events



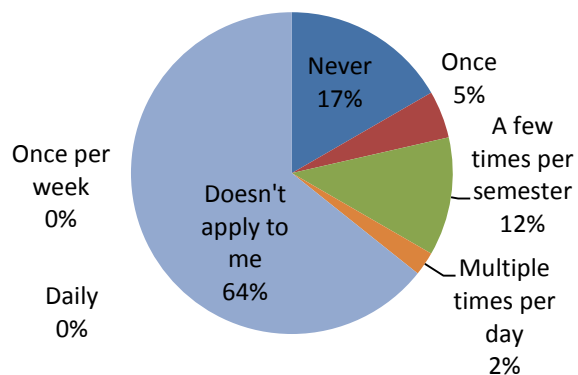
Students: at Athletic Events



Alumni: at Athletic Events

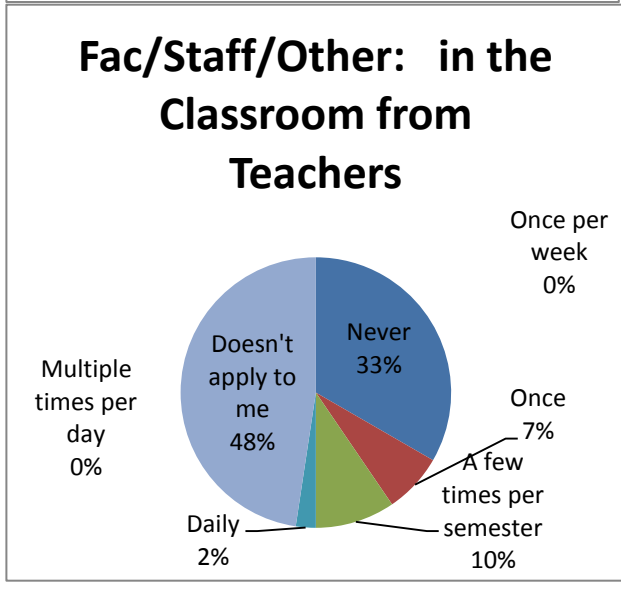
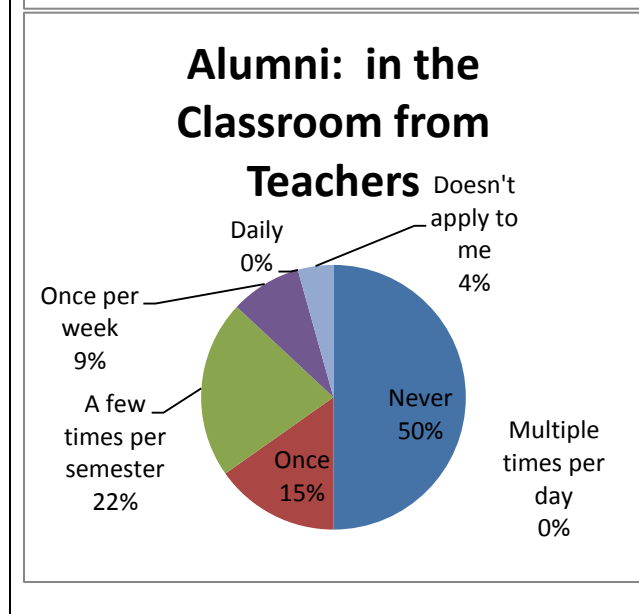
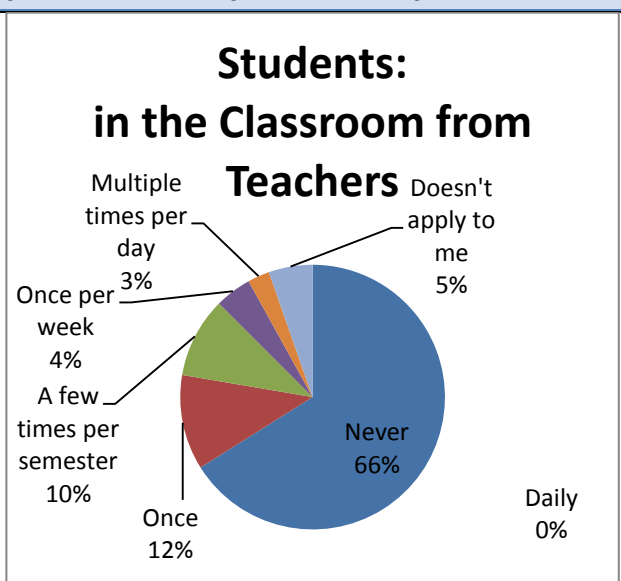
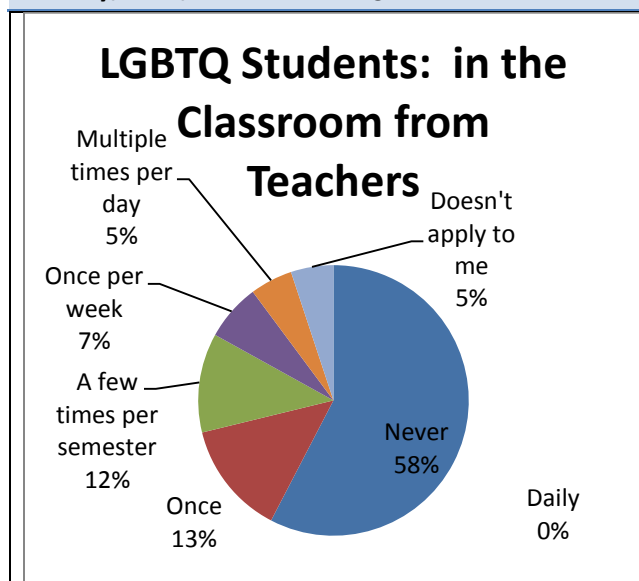


Fac/Staff/Other: at Athletic Events



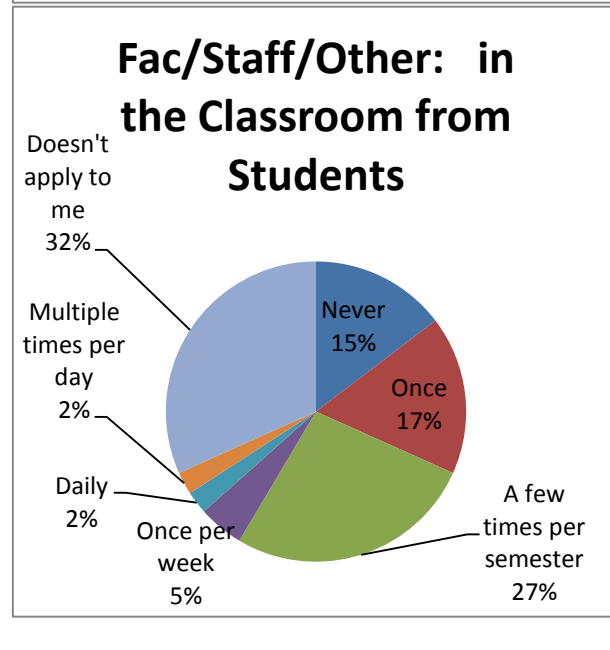
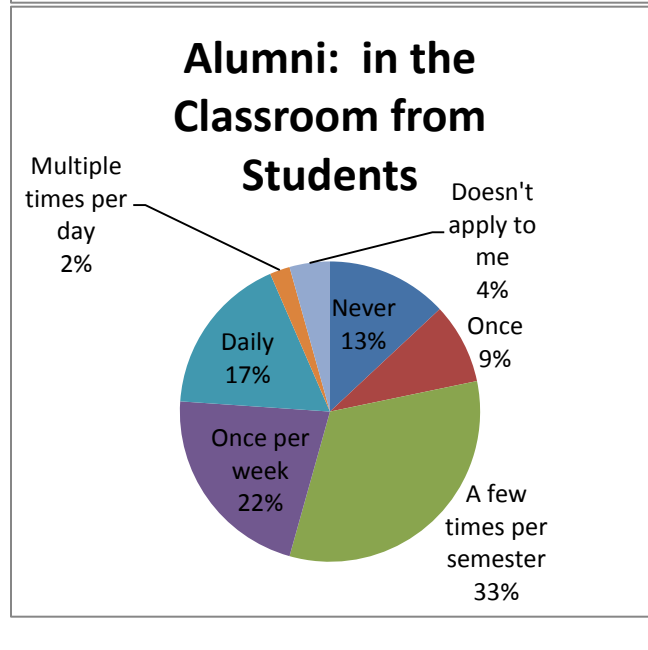
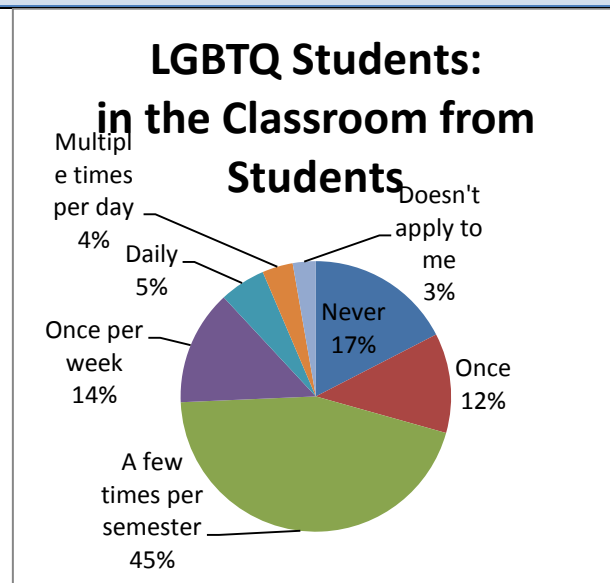
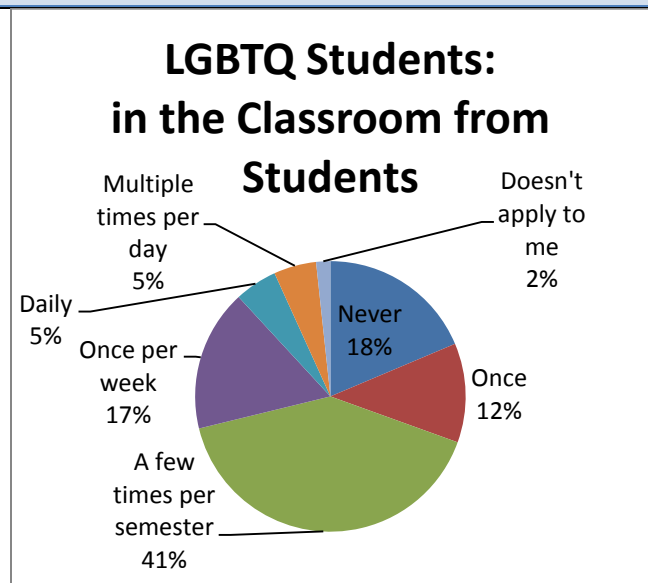
In the Classroom: From the Teacher

	Never	Once	A few times per semester	Once per week	Daily	Multiple times per day	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	34	8	7	4	0	3	3	59
All Students	74	13	11	5	0	3	6	112
Alumni	23	7	10	4	0	0	2	46
Faculty/Staff/Other	14	3	4	0	1	0	20	42



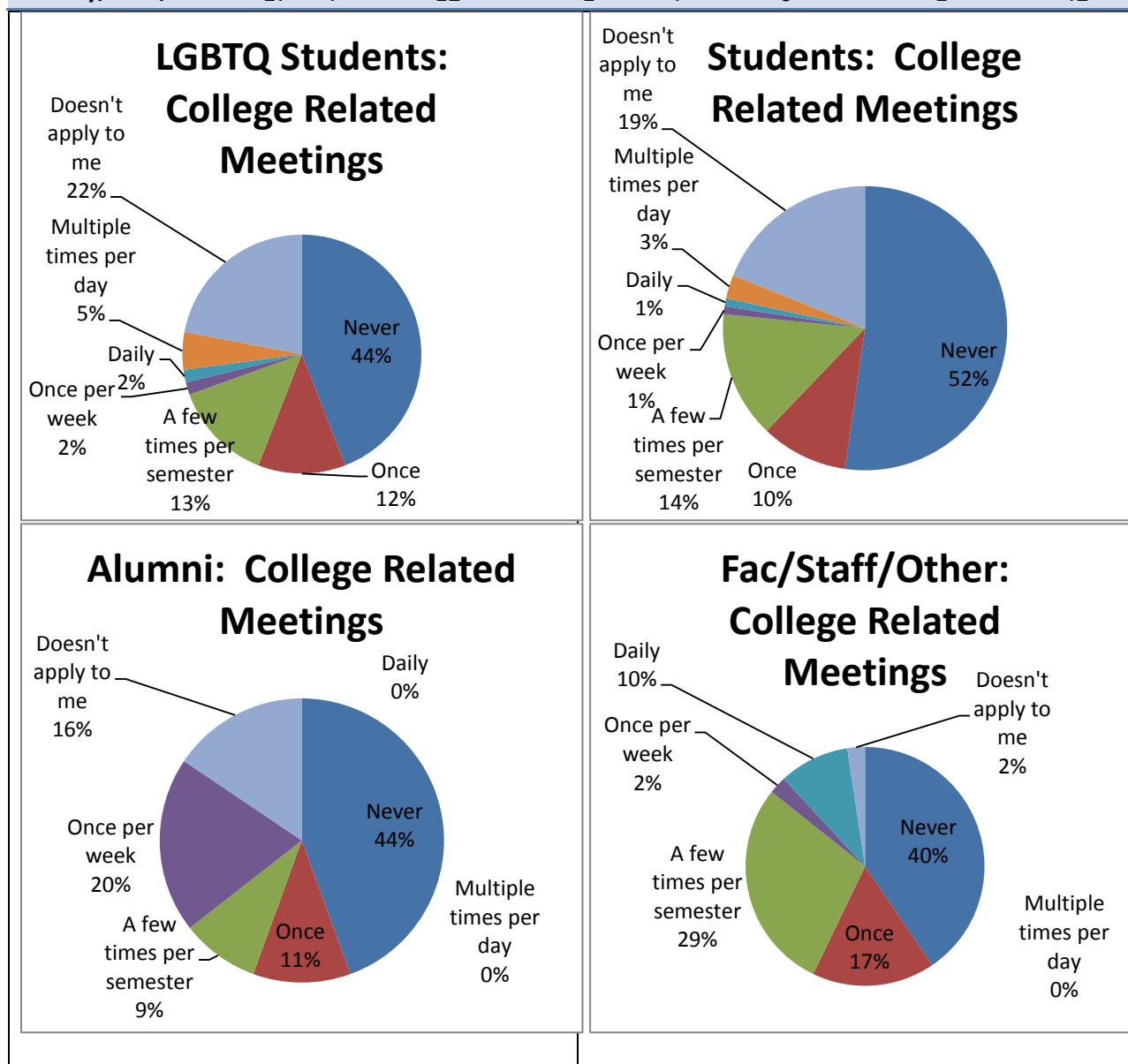
In the Classroom: From Students

	Never	Once	A few times per semester	Once per week	Daily	Multiple times per day	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	11	7	24	10	3	3	1	59
All Students	19	13	49	15	6	4	3	109
Alumni	6	4	15	10	8	1	2	46
Faculty/Staff/Other	6	7	11	2	1	1	13	41



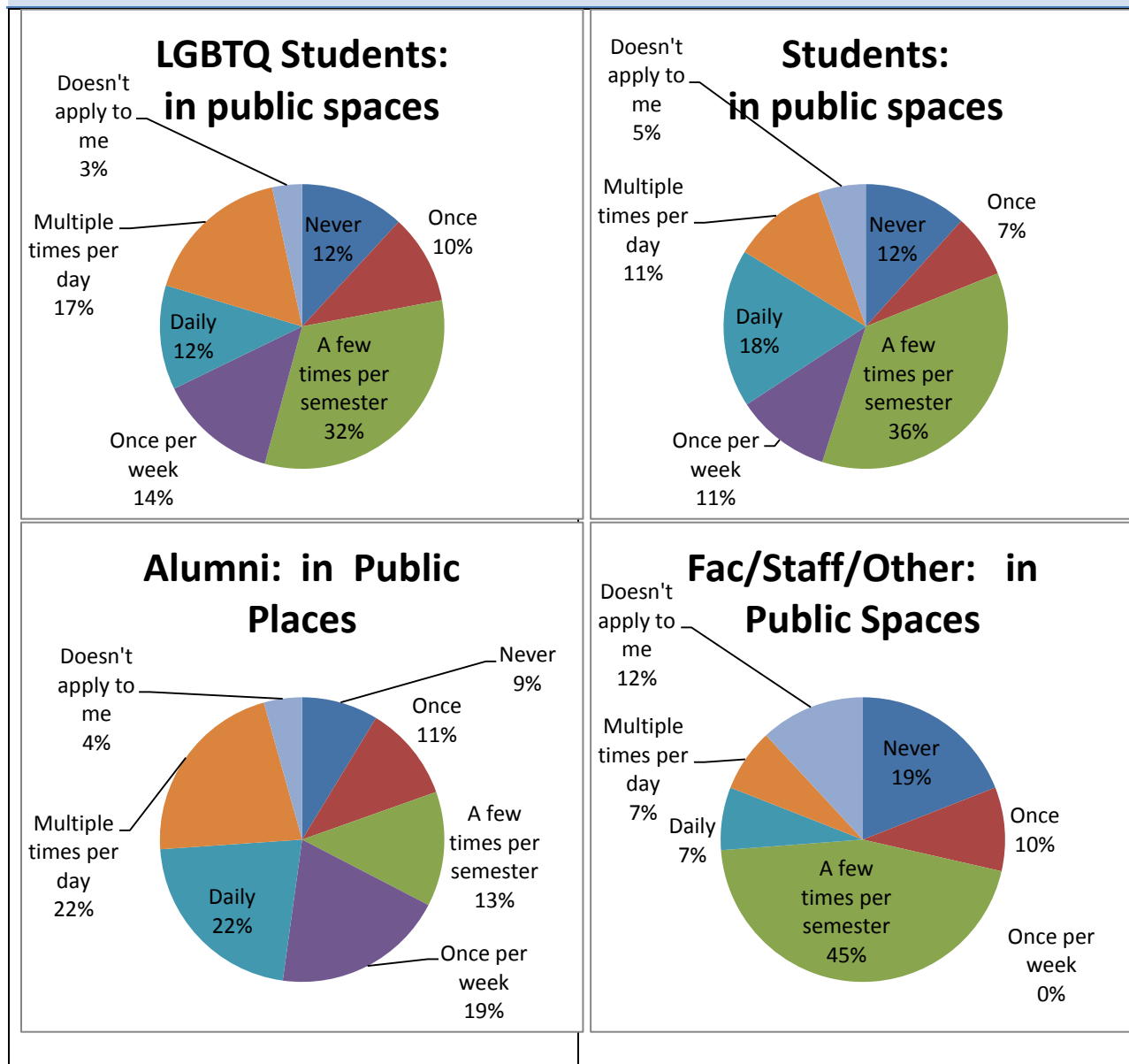
College Related Meetings

	Never	Once	A few times per semester	Once per week	Daily	Multiple times per day	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	26	7	8	1	1	3	13	59
All Students	58	11	16	1	1	3	21	111
Alumni	20	5	4	9	0	0	7	45
Faculty/Staff/Other	17	7	12	1	4	0	1	42



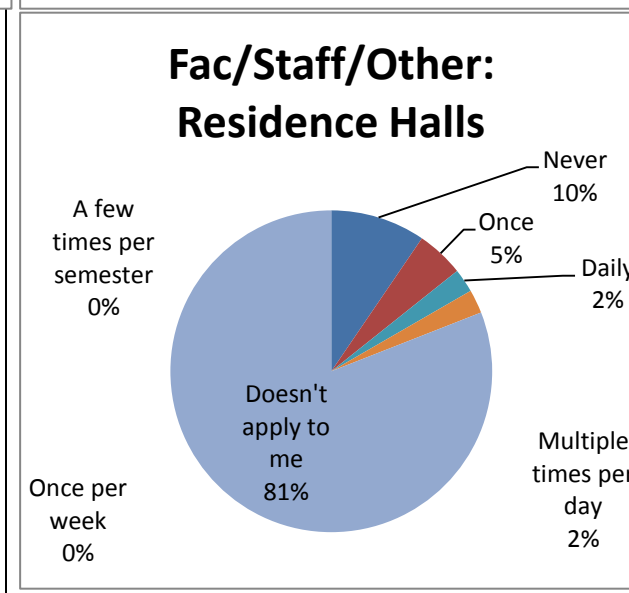
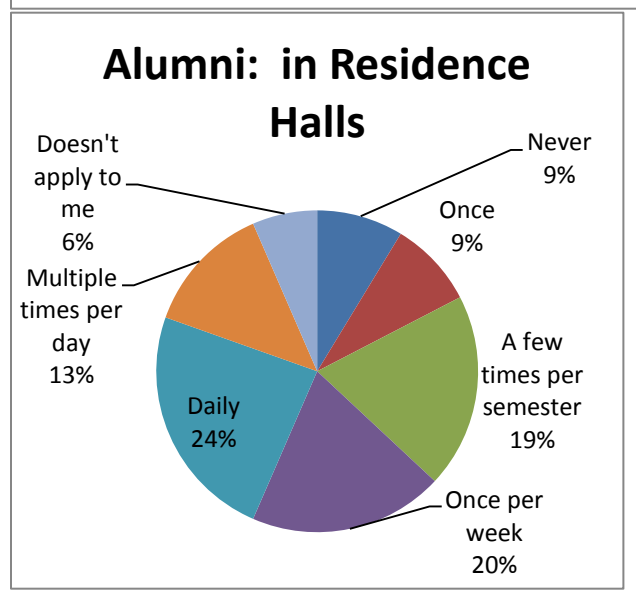
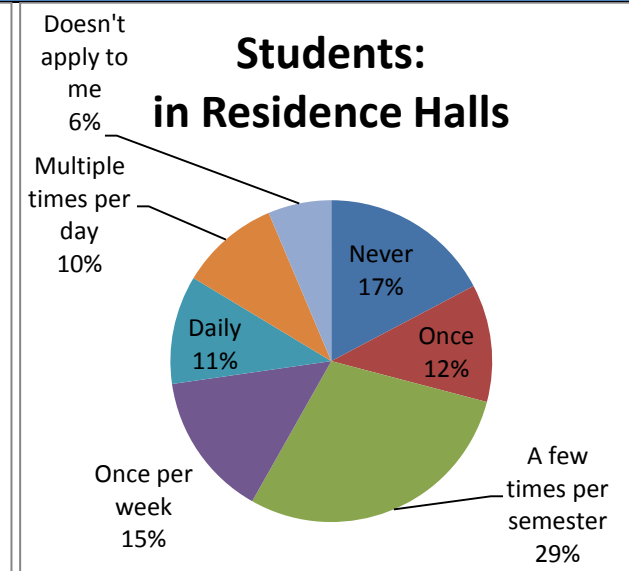
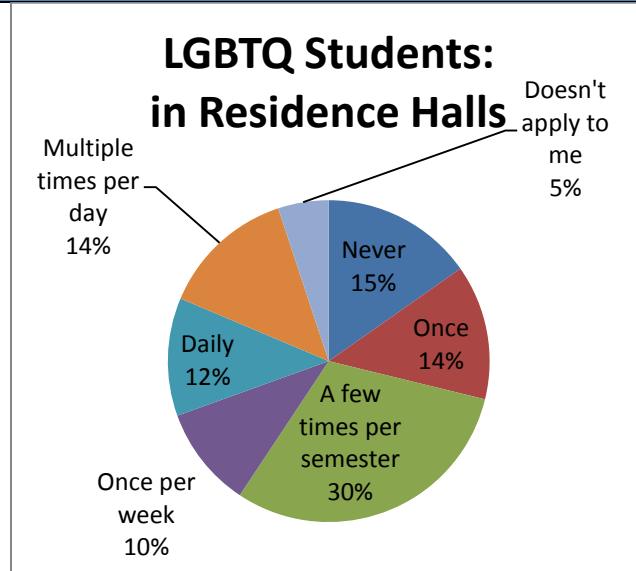
Public Spaces

	Never	Once	A few times per semester	Once per week	Daily	Multiple times per day	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	7	6	19	8	7	10	2	59
All Students	13	8	40	12	20	12	6	111
Alumni	4	5	6	9	10	10	2	46
Faculty/Staff/Other	8	4	19	0	3	3	5	42



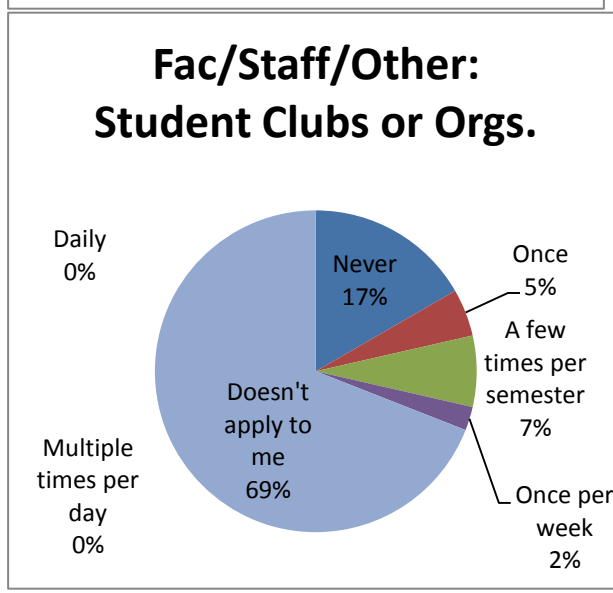
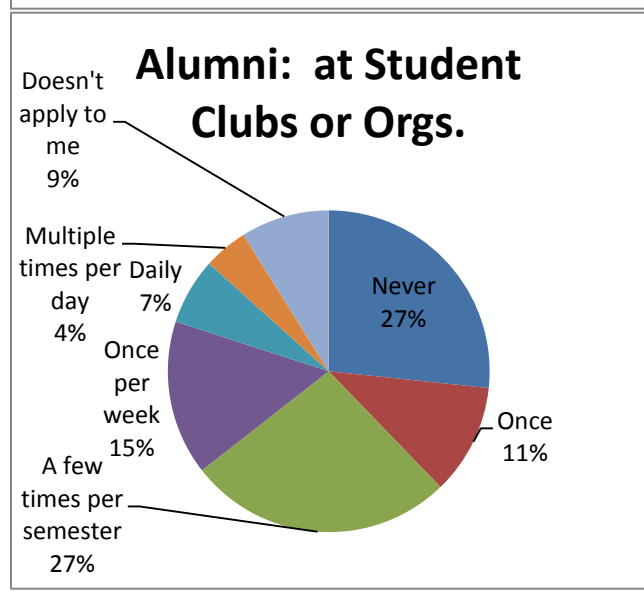
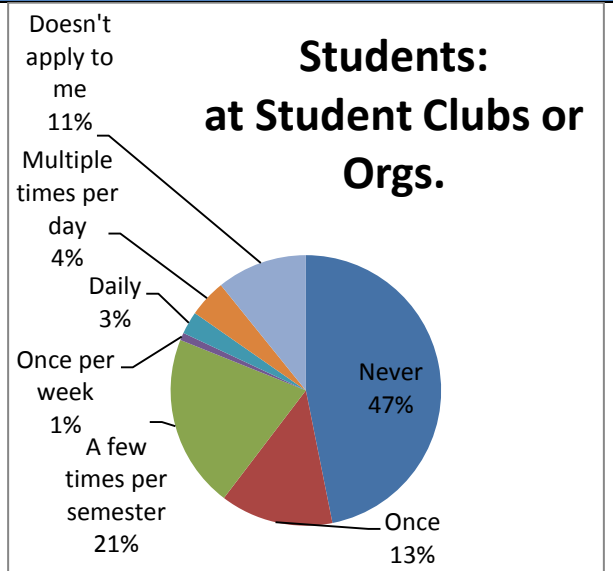
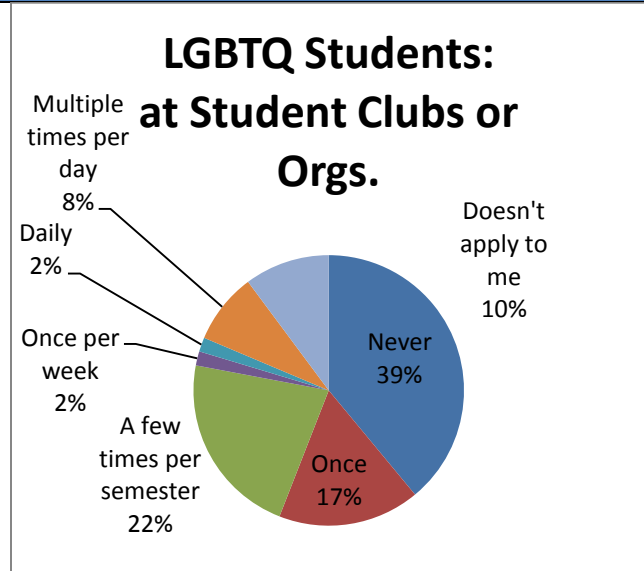
Residence Halls

	Never	Once	A few times per semester	Once per week	Daily	Multiple times per day	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	9	8	18	6	7	8	3	59
All Students	19	13	32	16	12	11	7	110
Alumni	4	4	9	9	11	6	3	46
Faculty/Staff/Other	4	2	0	0	1	1	34	42



Student Clubs or Organizations

	Never	Once	A few times per semester	Once per week	Daily	Multiple times per day	Doesn't apply to me	Response Count
LGBTQ Students	23	10	13	1	1	5	6	59
All Students	52	15	23	1	3	5	12	111
Alumni	12	5	12	7	3	2	4	45
Faculty/Staff/Other	7	2	3	1	0	0	29	42



Part Six: Narrative Responses

Methodology

In addition to quantitative research questions, three qualitative questions were included in the TAGSS survey. In building our data capturing system, we anticipated that survey respondents would be more likely to answer quantitative questions and less likely to write responses to qualitative prompts (Bryman, 2007). Therefore, we did not make these required questions, as it was important not to lose potential data due to survey apathy. In terms of methodological limitations, we recognize that this type of narrative data would be enriched by the use of focus groups and one-on-one interviews (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, and Silverman, 2007). Still, given the anonymous nature of the survey, some of the qualitative data that we received (for example, stories of fear) could also have been lost in interviews. Given these limitations, the depth and length of the answers in a survey tend to be shorter and less rich than when qualitative data is collected using traditional ethnographic methods (Wittel, 2000).

Three qualitative questions were included for all survey respondents:

1. What advice would you give a new LGBTQ student coming to Etown? Please be specific.
2. How would you describe the LGBTQ community at Elizabethtown College?
3. What could the college do to be more supportive for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff?

After our survey response window closed, the qualitative data was separated from the quantitative data for review. The data was then independently reviewed and coded by one of the TAGSS student assistants. Simultaneously, the same review and coding was completed by one of the TAGSS faculty mentors. The two coding mechanisms were then cross-evaluated and the overall data set was independently reevaluated by each (Guetzkow, 1950).

Coding Framework

The overall response rate for the qualitative questions exceeded our expectations. 93 students, 36 faculty and staff, and 40 alumni responded to the narrative prompts, netting an overall response of 169 qualitative data collection points.

The qualitative data was analyzed using the primary codes of:

1. Community size
2. Closeted or open LGBTQ community
3. Descriptors of LGBTQ community
4. Suggestions for improvement or LGBTQ support services
5. Advice for LGBTQ community
6. Resources available for LGBTQ community
7. Criticism or otherwise negative narrative about LGBTQ experiences

These areas were then analyzed using sub-codes, including:

1. Community size: large, small, unknown
2. Closeted or open LGBTQ community: closeted, open, unknown, depends on context

3. Descriptors of LGBTQ community: positive, negative, unknown, small, underground
4. Suggestions for improvement or LGBTQ support services: unknown, student life, residence life, office of diversity, faculty, programmatic
5. Advice for LGBTQ community: general advice, coming out, support systems, Elizabethtown, trans specific resources, faculty/staff support
6. Resources available for the LGBTQ community: local resources, campus resources, national resources, individual resources, faculty/staff support, student life, residence life, office of diversity, trans specific resources
7. Criticism or otherwise negative narrative about LGBTQ experiences: central Pennsylvania, Elizabethtown, trans specific, experiential, institutional

After coding and sub-coding our data set, the data was independently cross-checked by both coders to establish a basis for central themes and findings.

Summary of Key Findings

The following offers a summary of the key themes that emerged in the narrative qualitative data of the TAGSS report.

Community Size

The overarching understanding of the LGBTQ community size at Elizabethtown College was that it was small. Those who identified as LGBTQ sometimes commented with signifiers like “bigger than you would probably think” or “too small!!!!” Those outside of the community labeled it “small” and “present but marginalized.” Although we did not directly ask about the

size of the campus LGBTQ community, it emerged as one of the most commented on descriptors. Nearly everyone who wrote about it labeled it as small, often in conjunction with words like “marginalized,” “underground,” and “accepting [within the LGBTQ community].”

Closeted or Open LGBTQ Community

Attitudes about whether or not it is safe to be out as LGBTQ at Elizabethtown College varied between students, faculty/staff, and alumni. Likewise, those who are not LGBTQ seemed more confident that it was safe to be out than those who identify as LGBTQ.

LGBTQ students commented that if you are out, you should be “careful” because “people can be cruel, uneducated, and a bit ignorant.” Others described the climate as “don’t ask, don’t tell.” Students commented on microaggressions as being a large problem, saying, for example, “I know people don’t mean gay or faggot literally when they yell it down the hallway to their friends and it’s not directed at me personally, but it doesn’t mean that it doesn’t effect [sic] me.” Overall, students described a coping mechanism of being out in safe spaces and staying closeted in the bulk of daily life, describing, for example, “its [sic] best to just accept that you’ve got friends and a closet knit community that mostly understands your emotional needs.”

Faculty and staff describe the LGBTQ community largely as closeted, adding qualifiers like, “This is especially true for faculty and staff, although I also know it to be true of students.” One staff member shared that, “I fear what would happen if I were out on campus, so I don’t interact with others who are out,” going on to say, “It is a scary place to be out. I keep my relationship with my partner a secret. We even shop at a grocery store in the next town over so that we aren’t seen together on weekends. We try to keep our lives outside of Elizabethtown so that we have privacy and safety.” When speaking about the student experience, faculty and staff

exhibited general agreement that students were also largely closeted, some adding that “the community is much larger than any of us (beyond the mentors) know or see.” This closeting contributes to the overall sense that the LGBTQ community is “invisible” on campus or “hurting and fractured” and “fearful” and “scared.”

Descriptors of the LGBTQ Campus Community

Faculty and staff described the LGBTQ campus community as “supportive [of each other]” and “connected,” although many commented on their lack of specific knowledge of the community. Those who seemed more involved with or aware of the campus LGBTQ community labeled it “marginalized,” “scared and uncertain,” “largely underground,” and “disadvantaged.” The overall faculty and staff sentiment seemed to be a sense of disconnection and distance from LGBTQ students and LGBTQ faculty and staff.

Students, on the other hand, typically described the campus LGBTQ community as “misunderstood by the general population,” “not really spoken about,” and “accepting [of each other within the LGBTQ community].” Although few of the students who responded felt intimately connected with the LGBTQ campus community, many commented about how the group was diverse and open-minded. They recognized that the LGBTQ campus community was “supportive of each other” and familial.

Alumni offered a unique perspective, as they offered a hybrid response where they recognized both feelings of marginalization and openness and support. They identified the campus LGBTQ community as “small but accepting” and “tight knit.” Their comments indicated an identification of the LGBTQ campus community as a family and a source of strength and protection in an otherwise “hostile environment.”

Suggestions for improvement or LGBTQ support services

Overall survey respondents had the most concrete and specific responses to the question of what the college could do to be more supportive for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff. Alumni suggested additional programming during LGBTQ History month, gender neutral housing and bathroom options, a women's and/or LGBTQ center, and creative and open opportunities for discussing LGBTQ issues, events, and history. Many suggested hiring a full time coordinator of LGBTQ services, implementing gender neutral bathrooms across campus, and recognition that LGBTQ students should not be responsible for educating the campus community about their needs and concerns.

Faculty and staff suggested expanding Women and Gender Studies course offerings, hiring a coordinator of LGBTQ services or developing a women's and sexuality center, implementing gender neutral bathrooms and housing, and raising increased awareness, particularly through education initiatives and increased opportunities for specialized training. Their comments indicated a desire to have a consistent point of contact to go to for questions regarding how to handle LGBTQ concerns and questions both in the classroom and on campus.

Student suggestions included gender neutral bathrooms across campus, gender neutral housing options, the ability to change gender signifiers more easily and without having to consistently out oneself in the process, the appointment of an LGBTQ campus life coordinator and/or women's and sexuality center, and increased campus wide programming on sensitivity, inclusion, and diversity. Overall, the student responses indicated that they do not believe LGBTQ issues are being represented on campus as part of the campus wide diversity initiatives.

Advice for LGBTQ Community

When asked about what advice they would give to a new LGBTQ student coming to Elizabethtown College, responses varied based on whether or not the respondent identified as LGBTQ. Those who did not identify as LGBTQ had more positive advice, urging new students to locate support systems and to feel free to be out on campus. LGBTQ students urged others to “get support when you need it,” and to connect with specific professors who are trusted by the community. They advocated for joining Allies, locating trusted friends, and to “be aware that you will need to assert yourself in order to gain respect from the campus administration.” They warned others to be “straightforward with your roommate” and to “immerse yourself in the campus LGBTQ culture.” Overall, LGBTQ students were more critical, several warning that “if you consider your LGBTQ identity a large part of you, don’t come to Etown.”

Faculty and staff advised students to “seek out resources and people that are affirming to LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff;” although, many admitted that they were unsure of what these resources entailed, emphasizing that they had no idea where to direct LGBTQ students to access resources. Several commented on the fact that there is “a faction of the student body, faculty, and staff who are not “supportive of the LGBTQ community,” and one respondent added, “Etown is a Christian institution. Biblically LGBTQ is not supported. I do not feel this group appropriate for Etown,” echoing a student sentiment that “the college is catering too much to LGBT persons.” Overall, faculty and staff offered both a hopeful view (“be proud to be yourself”), as well as a critical view (“watch your back”). They recognized that the campus is a “difficult environment” and that it is critical for student success to “seek support early on.”

Alumni offered words of encouragement to students, including “be comfortable with who you are,” “be open to new opportunities,” and “don’t be afraid to be yourself.” Some admitted

that, “I would honestly advise them not to come to Etown,” “Don’t [come to Etown]. Your time is better spent elsewhere... If you want to live your life and live quietly without much of a voice, it’s a great place,” and “Go to a different college.” Much of their advice centered on identifying a trusted faculty member or mentor in order to help navigate both college life and the LGBTQ greater community. They emphasized the importance of connection, support, and that students should understand that “you are not alone.”

Resources Available for the Campus LGBTQ Community

Respondents were consistent in identifying the same resources available to the LGBTQ community. They regularly identified individuals by name, in particular one faculty member, who were seen as campus supports. Those outside of the LGBTQ community offered suggestions for areas that could serve as supports (student life, office of diversity, women and gender studies faculty); LGBTQ community members identified open-mindedness in counseling services, women and gender studies, and from particular faculty mentors. They were critical of other offices, which they felt could better serve their needs. Across the board, survey respondents mentioned that we should “be doing more to make the resources known to students” and that the “resources available are scarce but wonderful.”

Criticism or Otherwise Negative Narrative About LGBTQ Experiences

By in large, the narrative data from non-LGBTQ survey respondents was more positive. Those who identified as LGBTQ were more critical in addressing issues that they perceived on campus. Critique offered included that the campus community can be an “oppressive place.” Others

counseled, “Keep your guard up, but don’t be scared to be yourself.” Several students mentioned that they believe that diversity at Elizabethtown College only includes racial diversity.

Trans identifying student responses were critical of their perceived lack of support. They wrote, “being trans at Etown means dealing with allot [sic] of crap.” They spoke of just trying to “survive” and about their struggles in having “nowhere to pee all day” and being “afraid to walk alone as a transwoman at night.” Others warned against trusting administration, that the “closest place you can go pee is Folklore [Coffee Company],” and that “trans* invisibility is very real on campus.”

Faculty were, by in large, more reflective in their criticism. Many identified their own lack of knowledge or awareness of LGBTQ campus resources. Others spoke about the college “trying to figure it out,” but generally seemed unconvinced that the campus community had concrete plans for supporting LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff. Likewise, they identified feeling that diversity at Elizabethtown only includes race and ethnicity. Those who identify as LGBTQ spoke about their perceived tokenization on campus committees, feelings of invisibility, and fear in being out on campus.

Alumni echoed similar sentiments, also adding that some did not feel safe enough to come out while they were at Elizabethtown College. All three groups, students, faculty/staff, and alumni, mentioned issues of LGBTQ student homelessness, a lack of understanding for the conflicts faced by the LGBTQ community (including parental support and in locating LGBTQ role models), and the presences and impact of microaggressions.

Part Seven: Conclusion and Recommendations

The sample that was collected over several weeks in the early part of the fall 2014 semester represents a portion of the campus LGBTQ community. The size of the sample and the demographic makeup of the sample suggest that a sufficient amount of participants were recruited to develop a reasonable assay of the campus climate as perceived by members of the LGBTQ community.

While the quantitative data was collected with the purpose of establishing a baseline for future evaluation of LGBTQ climate on campus, some surface observations are possible based on the these responses.

Only three areas of the campus were reported by over halve of respondents to be perceived as supportive (Friends on Campus, Student Groups, and Faculty). In other cases, respondents were often unsure of the amount of support or viewed them as unsupportive. One measure of a supportive climate for LGBTQ students is the presence of multiple areas from where students might receive support. A positive tone on college campuses is set by leadership and multiple areas of the campus making their support for LGBTQ students clear. If an office or areas is supportive and this is not publicly known, it undermines the climate for LGBTQ community members. One recommendation for improving campus climate for LGBTQ community members is that areas on campus make clearer their support for LGBTQ community members.

While there is variability between groups regarding the amount of microaggressions perceived over the course of the semester, some observations are available from this report. Microaggressions seem to originate from teachers in the classroom with less frequency than in other areas. Public Spaces and Residence Halls seem to be places were community members

(students especially) report experiencing microaggressions more often. This suggests that peers are more often the source of microaggressions; however, more research is needed to determine if this is the case. One recommendation from this report is that public spaces and residence halls be a target for educational programs designed to improve the campus climate for LGBTQ community members.

When respondents were asked if the college was doing enough to provide educational opportunities about LGBTQ issues, 45% of current students in this sample felt that the college was not doing enough. In all areas of the sample, a majority of respondents felt that the college was not doing enough to provide gender neutral housing and gender neutral bathrooms on campus. Another recommendation from this study would be that the college redouble its efforts in providing these basic human services in a non-heterosexist and transphobic manner.

The qualitative narrative data paints two pictures of Elizabethtown College's LGBTQ community. On the one hand, those who identify as Allies (supporters of the LGBTQ community but not queer identified) offered supportive messages of hope. In agreeing to take the survey, they already self-selected into the study, showing that they had an interest in supporting the LGBTQ campus community. Their messages were positive, hopeful, and supportive. They demonstrated that there is a nucleus of support on campus for those who identify as LGBTQ.

In contrast, LGBTQ students, faculty, staff, and alumni were more critical of the campus climate. Although they were generally positive about the support they received from Allies (the campus LGBTQ student group) and key LGBTQ faculty members, their voices asked for support, discussed dissatisfaction with the status quo, and told a story of closeting, distrust, and fear. The familial nature of the campus LGBTQ community emerged as a key theme to their narrative, as well as their trust for select named individuals in the campus community.

The key action items that were requested included gender neutral housing options, gender neutral bathrooms across campus, easier ways for trans identified students to navigate the system, and the appointment of an LGBTQ campus coordinator and/or establishment of a Women's and LGBTQ Center. It also is critical to facilitate ways to bridge the gap between closeted students and support services, so that students can connect easily with key campus advocates.

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