



Film and Video Studies Program
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Date: May 25, 2025

Subject: George Mason University's LGBTQ+ Resources Center Faculty Fellow
Report: August 2023 – May 2025

FACULTY FELLOWSHIP MISSION

Expanding George Mason University's LGBTQIA+ Student & Faculty Support, Visibility, and Resources: This collaboration between the LGBTQIA+ Resources Center and Lisa Thrasher (Associate Professor, Film and Video Studies, with the support and collaboration of McKinley Green, Assistant Professor, English) was designed to expand support for queer students and faculty at George Mason University through a multi-pronged approach that included visibility campaigns, event planning, inclusive data advocacy, archival resource development, and support for research and pedagogy within queer communities. Spanning from August 2023 to May 2025, the fellowship has focused on elevating LGBTQIA+ representation, improving systems that support identity inclusion, and creating interdepartmental bridges for queer initiatives.

Summary of Projects: This fellowship focused on elevating queer visibility and resources across multiple touchpoints on campus, beginning with listening sessions, collaborative meetings, and needs assessments that informed the scope of programming and structural goals. Core areas of focus included:

- Expansion of the PatriotWeb database to reflect a broader spectrum of pronouns and chosen names, with the goal of increasing institutional inclusivity.
- Development of digital and physical archives of LGBTQIA+ faculty and student work through MARS (Mason Archival Repository Service), supporting visibility and recognition.
- Creation and support of events fostering queer community building, including LGBTQ+ Student Showcases, queer filmmaking discussion, and faculty-led talks on becoming an LGBTQ+ professor and career development.
- Ongoing collaboration with faculty and staff across the university through initiatives such as the LGBTQ+ Faculty-Staff Alliance and Safe Zone training development.

- Consideration of structural support for queer faculty, including inclusion of LGBTQ+ work in recruitment, promotion, and tenure (RPT) practices.

TIMELINE OF PROJECTS

Fall 2023

- **LGBTQ+ Showcase (October 18):** Co-organized a showcase highlighting work by LGBTQ+ students and faculty, enhancing visibility and celebration of queer creativity.
- **Pronoun Expansion Advocacy:** Participated in a cross-departmental working group to expand pronoun options in PatriotWeb and Blackboard. Initial Phase 1 rollout included 15 pronoun combinations; subsequent phases aim to integrate neo-pronouns and customizable options.
- **PatriotWeb + Blackboard Integration:** Engaged in ongoing conversations around ensuring chosen names and pronouns are reflected across digital platforms. Continued to identify limitations and propose solutions, including consultation with Safe Zone leaders and DEI liaisons.
- **OutLaw Connection:** Discussed strengthening ties with the GMU Law School's OutLaw chapter, linking undergraduates with LGBTQ+ law students and national networks.
- **Library Resource Development:** Initiated collaboration with GMU librarians (Joanna Lee, Megan Reichelt) to collect and archive queer-related faculty and student works in MARS, addressing gaps in representation and academic visibility.
- **Queer Faculty Survey:** Proposed survey for identifying faculty engaged in LGBTQ+ research or scholarship to foster community and future collaboration.

Spring 2024

- **Mason Pride Week Support:** Discussed the planning and promotion of Mason Pride Week events, including the Drag Show (March 30) and World AIDS Day discussion.
- **Queer Creative Research Symposium:** Participated in the Faculty Fellows Symposium focused on representation of queer research and representation in film, bridging Lisa's queer film work with student engagement.
- **Repository Development:** Coordinated second round of meetings with Film and English department librarians to review, prepare, and upload LGBTQ+ works to the MARS archive, addressing licensing concerns where needed.
- **Pride & Celebration Events:** Supported and/or promoted the GMU LGBTQ+ Resources Center Fairfax Pride (June 1, 2024), further strengthening the presence of LGBTQIA+ cultural events for Mason Students.

Fall 2024

- **Showcase Planning:** Collaborated with the team on LGBTQ+ Student Showcase (10/7/24), expanding participation and adding interdepartmental support.

- **Safe Zone Program Advocacy:** Discussed proposed updates to George Mason’s Safe Zone curriculum, aligning it with national best practices and introducing a four-module format to increase faculty awareness and training in LGBTQIA+ inclusion.
- **Social Space Advocacy:** Supported the push for dedicated queer-friendly gathering spaces that serve both undergraduate and graduate students, acknowledging differing needs and building a sense of community.
- **RPT & Queer Work:** Facilitated early discussions with faculty leads and DEI officers (including Chris Carr and Paula in Science) to explore how LGBTQ+ scholarship and service can be recognized in recruitment and promotion processes.

Spring 2025

- **Continued Systemic Advocacy:** Remained active in pushing for full integration of chosen names and pronouns in digital campus systems including ID cards, class rosters, and student directories.
- **Repository Expansion:** Encouraged submissions for queer-related student and faculty work in MARS, including audiovisual materials, performance documentation, and written scholarship. Explored options for embargoing projects to protect intellectual property while increasing accessibility.
- **Pride & Celebration Events:** Supported and/or promoted Fairfax Pride (June 1, 2024), Lavender Day, QBIPOC trivia nights, and the Lambda Awards (April 23), further strengthening the presence of LGBTQIA+ cultural events on campus.
- **Community Collaboration:** Fostered strong ties with the LGBTQ+ Faculty-Staff to identify affiliated queer scholars and students.
- **Course Development:** Participated in discussions around the LGBTQ+ Studies minor, advocating for more cross-listed courses and strategic promotion to increase student enrollment and visibility.
- **Faculty Panel:** Panelist on the “Pathways to Becoming an LGBTQ+ Professor” (March 26, 2025), a virtual panel that demystified the academic journey and offered mentorship to queer-identifying students and faculty.
- **Lavender Graduation Awards:** Attended the Lavender Graduation Awards ceremony in support of the queer students and faculty.

SUMMARY: The LGBTQIA+ Resources Center Faculty Fellowship has made measurable strides in supporting queer students and faculty at George Mason University through systemic, cultural, and academic engagement. From expanding pronoun visibility in student systems to curating events and talks that celebrate queer voices, the work done across these two years reflects an intentional effort to affirm identity, elevate marginalized voices, and build sustainable infrastructure for continued growth.

The projects underway — including repository expansion, Safe Zone curriculum updates, and cross-departmental inclusion efforts — will have long-lasting impact and lay the foundation for ongoing collaboration across campus. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve as a Faculty Fellow and work in partnership with the LGBTQIA+ Resources Center, and our extraordinary campus community.