Safe Zone

Safe Zone is a campus-wide program that establishes a visible network of university employees who wish to be supportive of persons who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, queer/questioning, intersex, or allies/androgynous/sexual (LGBTQIA).

This program is currently under construction by a committee of the Commission.

The Hard Facts: (Source: http://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Negative attitudes toward gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people put LGBT youth at increased risk for experiences with violence, compared with other students. Violence can include behaviors such as bullying, teasing, harassment, physical assault, and suicide-related behaviors.

A 2009 survey* of more than 7,000 LGBT middle and high school students aged 13-21 years found that in the past year, because of their sexual orientation:

- Eight of ten students had been verbally harassed at school
- Four of ten had been physically harassed at school
- Six of ten felt unsafe at school
- One of five had been the victim of a physical assault at school [2].

*Survey participants were recruited online and through community-based groups and service organizations serving LGBT youth.
The State of Pennsylvania has not yet passed the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), legislation that would outlaw workplace discrimination against gay, bisexual and transgender Americans.

According to the Numbers: (Source: http://articles.latimes.com/2013/nov/21/business/la-fi-mo-a-rundown-of-lgbt-workplace-discrimination-20131121, 21% of LGBT employees reported having been discriminated against in hiring, promotions and pay.

- 47%. That's the percentage of transgender employees who reported similar discrimination at work.
- $0.68-$0.90. That's how much gay and bisexual men make for every dollar earned by similarly-qualified heterosexual men.
- One out of every 25 complaints made about workplace discrimination comes from LGBT employees.
- 96%. That's the percentage of Fortune 500 companies that have LGBT workplace protections who say such policies have boosted their businesses. Fortune 500 executives, including Apple CEO Tim Cook, have said such workplace policies boost productivity, increase retention rates and attract talent.

From The Chronicle of Higher Education:

'Ask Me': What LGBTQ Students Want Their Professors to Know

26% of LGBT youth say their biggest problems are not feeling accepted by their family, trouble at school/bullying, and a fear to be out/open. 22% of non-LGBT youth say their biggest problems are trouble with class, exams and grades.