

Oakland University ranks as one of state's top LGBTQ-inclusive campuses

Oakland University was recently ranked as one of the top LGBTQ-friendly campuses in the state of Michigan by the **Campus Pride Index**, which rates both colleges and universities using a five-star rating system.

"The rating is based on an assessment that was created by many leaders in the field of LGBTQ campus resources," said Grace Wojcik, coordinator for the university's **Gender & Sexuality Center**.

"It allows us to measure our effectiveness in this specialized area and to identify areas of opportunity for future growth. It also demonstrates our commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive campus."

Based on a variety of factors, including LGBTQ policy inclusion, academic life, student life, campus safety, housing and residence life, and other relevant practices, Oakland University received a ranking of four out of five stars from Campus Pride.

"The four-star rating means that we are continuing to meet the needs of the LGBTQ students, staff and faculty," Wojcik said.

According to the Campus Pride website, Oakland University had the second-highest ranking in the state, while Eastern Michigan University secured the top spot on the list.

"I am thrilled that Oakland University has the second-highest rating in Michigan," Wojcik said. "I am confident this rating will help us in recruiting and retaining the best and brightest students, as well as staff and faculty."

The university was rated highly in multiple areas, with Campus Pride noting that OU has already implemented several LGBTQ-inclusive policies and programs on campus, including:

- Adoption of a non-discrimination statement inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression
- Providing insurance coverage to employee's same-sex partner
- Training new faculty/staff on sexual orientation and gender identity issues
- LGBTQ-specific courses and programs
- Gender-inclusive housing for new and returning students
- A procedure for reporting LGBTQ-related bias incidents and hate crimes
- LGBTQ student scholarships
- A trans-inclusive trained counseling staff
- Offering LGBTQ-inclusive training and resources to admission counselors

In addition, the report also highlighted several of the LGBTQ-inclusive social activities and educational events offered at OU, including the upcoming Transgender Day of Remembrance, as well as the availability of the Gender & Sexuality Center, which serves as an important resource for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual and allv students, staff and faculty at Oakland University.



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“The GSC provides a variety of programs and services including Students, Administrators and Faculty for Equality (S.A.F.E.) on campus training, a peer mentoring program that was the first of its kind in Michigan,” Wojcik said.

While pleased with the university’s rating, Wojcik also acknowledged that there is still work that needs to be done to achieve the coveted star ranking.

“I am fortunate to work with a number of dedicated professionals who are passionate about making Oakland University a diverse and inclusive environment for all,” she said. “A great deal of collaboration has gone into achieving a four-star rating for our campus, and I am confident with continued collaboration we will eventually earn five stars.”