



LGBTQ2S+ Students' Wellbeing and Experiences on Campus

University of Waterloo
Institutional Report

November 2019

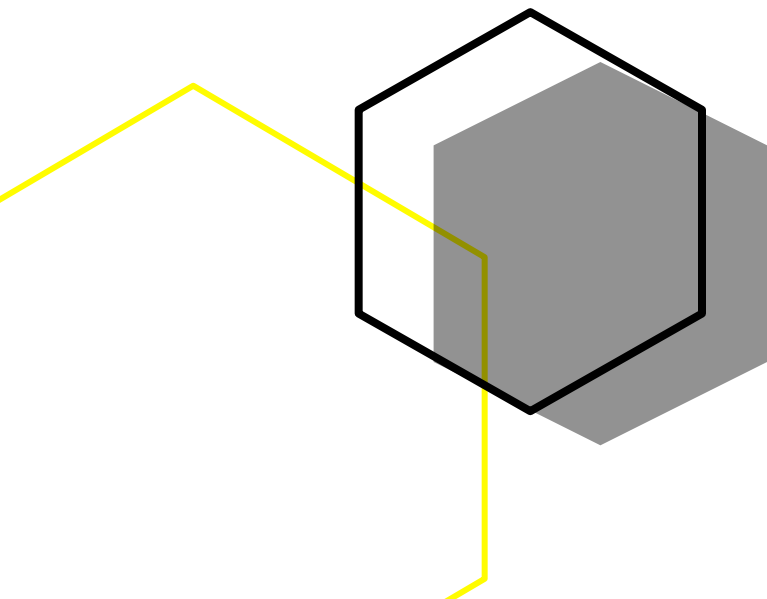


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Introduction

This Report

This report presents results specific to the University of Waterloo from the “Thriving on Campus: Promoting the acceptance, wellbeing, and academic development of LGBTQ2S+ university students throughout Ontario” survey. We hope the results will help to inform your school’s efforts to promote the inclusion, wellbeing, and success of LGBTQ2S+ students. To give context for your school’s findings, for selected variables, comparisons are made with the entire Ontario sample and/or the group of comparable institutions.¹ We compare your school to other schools with greater than 30,000 students.

Given the importance of students’ diverse and intersecting identities, when relevant and feasible (due to sample size) for participants from your school, comparisons are made between trans and cisgender participants, and findings are presented for students who identify as racialized and those who identify as living with a disability.²

Please note: the findings only apply to LGBTQ2S+ students who participated in the study. They cannot be generalized to all LGBTQ2S+ university students at your school or in the province.³

The Study

Thriving on Campus is a province-wide mixed-methods (quantitative-qualitative) study that aims to

- promote understanding of the experiences, wellbeing, and academic development of LGBTQ2S+ university students throughout the province; and,
- inform the development of services, programs, and policies to promote LGBTQ2S+ students’ inclusion, wellbeing, and academic success.

An online confidential quantitative survey was administered province-wide from February 2019 to April 2019. The qualitative phase is currently underway.

¹ Schools of comparable size based on overall student population are compared. The comparison group excludes data from students from your university.

² After answering a question inquiring about their race/ethnocultural identity, participants indicated if they *identified* as a racialized person. Following questions about living with various disabilities, participants indicated if they *identified* as a person living with a disability. These two self-identity questions are used for group comparisons.

³ To generalize the findings, random sampling is required, which is not possible among LGBTQ2S+ students. However, our recruitment strategy produced a large and diverse provincial sample, which provides robust insights into the experiences and wellbeing of LGBTQ2S+ students throughout the province. We believe the same to be true of participants from your school given the large sample size.

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The study is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Wilfrid Laurier University's Division of Student Affairs and the Manulife Centre for Community Health Research at Wilfrid Laurier University's Lyle S. Hallman Faculty of Social Work supported an earlier pilot survey designed to evaluate select scales developed for Thriving on Campus.

The research team comprises Dr. Michael R. Woodford (Principal Investigator), Wilfrid Laurier University; Dr. Simon Coulombe, Wilfrid Laurier University; and Dr. Zack Marshall, McGill University. Collaborators include Dr. Kristen Renn, Michigan State University; Dr. Z Nicolazzo, University of Arizona; and Lauren Munro (PhD Candidate), Wilfrid Laurier University. Nicholas Schwabe, was the research coordinator for the study until recently.

A multi-stakeholder advisory committee supports the study. It includes representatives from the Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity, the Canadian Federation of Students (Ontario), Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, LGBT YouthLine, the Ontario Committee on Student Affairs (Council of Ontario Universities), the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the Sexual & Gender Diversity Office at the University of Toronto, and the student experience offices at the University of Guelph and the University of Western Ontario.

We acknowledge and thank all those who supported and promoted the survey, including but not limited to members of the Advisory Committee, staff at each university who acted as campus contacts, and LGBTQ2S+ student organizations and centres. We express special thanks to all the students who shared their experiences through the survey.

For More Information:

See lgbtq2sthivingoncampus.ca

The research team can be contacted at lgbtq2scampusresearch@wlu.ca. Dr. Woodford can be reached at mwoodford@wlu.ca or (519) 884-0710 EXT. 5275.

Recommended Citation:

Thriving on Campus (2019). *LGBTQ2S+ Students' Wellbeing and Experiences on Campus: Institutional report for the University of Waterloo*. Kitchener, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University.



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada



This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Key Terminology

Academic and Intellectual Development	Students' perceptions of their level of academic development and experiences.
Academic Disengagement	Behaviours, such as skipping class, associated with students disengaging or withdrawing from educational activities.
Campus Climate	Refers to LGBTQ2S+ students' inclusion/exclusion on campus. It includes experiential and psychological aspects. Experiential campus climate refers to students' behavioral interactions, such as discriminatory actions with others and systems. Psychological campus climate refers to their perceptions of belonging at school, the attitudes held by others on campus, and the university's policies and practices.
Cisgender	When a person's gender identity is consistent with their sex assigned at birth.
Gender Expression	How a person expresses or presents their gender through behaviours and appearance.
Gender Identity	One's felt sense of gender, which may or may not be expressed publicly.
Incivility	Low-intensity, often unintentional disrespectful behaviors (e.g., receiving dirty looks).
LGBTQ2S+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirit, and other diverse gender and sexual identities.
LGBQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and other diverse sexual identities.
Microaggressions	Insults, invalidations, and slights directed at marginalized groups that typically go unnoticed by perpetrators and bystanders.
Positive Mental Health	Manifestations of emotional (e.g., satisfaction with life, happiness), psychological (e.g., purpose, autonomy, mastery) and social (e.g., social contribution, integration to one's community) wellbeing.
Sex	A category usually assigned at birth based on biological (e.g., chromosomes) and anatomical (e.g., genitalia) features; usually limited to male and female.
Sexual Identity	How a person identifies in terms of their sexual orientation, which may be based on to whom they are romantically or sexually attracted or an internal sense of identification.
Trans	The broad community of gender diverse people including, but not limited, to those who identify as trans, transgender, queer, genderqueer, non-binary, and two-spirit.
Victimization	Overt, often assaultive discriminatory incidents, such as being verbally threatened, physically chased, and physically attacked.

Methodological Notes

Ethics Approval

The survey received ethics approval from the Research Ethics Boards at Wilfrid Laurier University (REB #5774) and McGill University (REB #115-0818). It also received ethics approval from 17 other schools, including the University of Waterloo (ORE #40633).

Survey

Earlier pilot testing was conducted to develop and validate survey questions assessing LGBTQ2S+ psychological campus climate and gender expression. Focus groups with LGBTQ2S+ students provided feedback on the full survey instrument. The survey was available in English and French.⁴

Participant Recruitment

All recruitment materials were available in both English and French. Participants had the opportunity to enter a draw for over 100 e-gift cards. To reach as many LGBTQ2S+ students as possible, participant recruitment included various activities, such as social media posts and videos, outreach to LGBTQ2S+ student groups, student unions/associations, and other groups on campuses, and promotion by research partners on the Advisory Committee.

In addition, each university was asked to promote the survey by selecting from an array of activities, namely email messages (to LGBTQ2S+ and allied groups and/or campus-wide), social media posts, advertisements in newsletters, outreach to LGBTQ2S+ student groups and allied groups, and posters and postcards.

At your university, our records indicate that the survey was promoted through a university-wide email and posters. Thank you for helping to promote the survey.

Data Integrity

The survey included multiple strategies to ensure the quality of responses. Before data analysis, we removed participants whose responses were inconsistent (e.g., date of birth not corresponding to age), were inattentive (e.g., failure to follow survey instructions), and/or answered very few questions.

⁴ The median time to complete the survey across all participants was 38 minutes.

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Data Analysis and Statistical Significance

For this report, to identify statistically significant differences between groups, either t-tests, chi-square, or Fisher's exact tests were conducted. Throughout this report statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) between the University of Waterloo participants and another group of participants (i.e., the full survey sample and/or students at universities of comparable size) are noted with “†”, which is indicated as a superscript symbol just after the result of the *other* group. We use the same symbol when comparing groups of students from your school (e.g., comparing cisgender and trans students). Although such findings indicate significant statistical differences exist between groups, it is important to consider the size of the differences and your institutional context when deciding if they have practice and/or policy implications.

All multi-item scales showed acceptable or better reliability using the overall provincial dataset. “*n*” indicates the number or range of students who answered a particular question or set of questions.

Reporting and Participant Confidentiality

For questions that contain potentially identifying information (e.g., race, gender identity, faculty), categories containing fewer than five responses are suppressed or merged with other categories to reduce the possibility that a participant's confidentiality is inadvertently broken.

Trans Identity and Trans-Related Questions

Throughout this report we use the term **trans** to refer to **genderqueer, gender non-conforming, non-binary, trans, trans feminine, trans woman, trans man, trans masculine, and other diverse non-cisgender identities**. Using this definition, we compare trans students and cisgender students. To identify participants who are trans, the gender identity question included trans options (e.g., trans, trans feminine, trans man) and other gender diverse options (e.g., demigender, gender non-conforming, genderqueer, non-binary). Because some individuals who are trans identify their gender as man or woman (rather than trans man or trans woman), we compared responses between birth sex and gender identity to identify these individuals. Before being asked to answer questions designed for trans students, all trans participants were asked if they would like to answer trans specific questions.

Study Background

A growing body of research examines the experiences and outcomes of post-secondary students in the United States who identify as LGBTQ2S+. In comparison, little is known about LGBTQ2S+ post-secondary students in Canada.⁵ “Thriving on Campus” aims to address this gap and provide information to inform policies, programs, and services designed to meet the needs of diverse LGBTQ2S+ students in Ontario and beyond.

Broadly, existing research concludes that LGBTQ2S+ students are marginalized on university campuses and they report higher rates of psychological distress and mental health problems compared to their peers. Research also suggests that discrimination and a hostile campus climate contributes to poor mental health among LGBTQ2S+ students. Though these are important findings, researchers have overlooked strengths-based mental health outcomes, for example positive wellbeing, and academic outcomes, such as academic development and persistence.

Despite experiencing discrimination and hostility, some LGBTQ2S+ university students may manifest resilience and thrive, yet few studies have examined resilience factors. Given growing diversity on Canadian campuses, it is important to explore the role of intersecting identities (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, disability) on LGBTQ2S+ students’ experiences and outcomes in order to effectively support subgroups of LGBTQ2S+ students. Thriving on Campus aims to address these gaps.

The importance of campus climate⁶

Students’ inputs (e.g., gender, sexuality, ethnicity, academic goals, personal strengths) directly affect their wellbeing and academic achievement; however, the campus environment also shapes these outcomes. The campus environment includes experiential (overt victimization and covert microaggressions), psychological (perceived), and structural (policies, resources, and services) campus climate.

⁵ For recent research concerning LGBTQ2S+ post-secondary students in Canada, please see: Woodford, M. R., Coulombe, S., Schwabe, N., and the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity. (2019, May 2). *LGBTQ2 health policy: Addressing the needs of LGBTQ2 post-secondary students*. Brief submitted to The House of Commons Standing Committee on Health, Government of Canada. <http://ccgsd-ccdgs.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Brief-LGBTQ2-Health-Post-Secondary-Students.pdf>

⁶ For information about the role of campus climate, please see Woodford, M. R., Joslin, J., & Renn, K. (2016). LGBTQ students on campus: Fostering inclusion through research, policy and practice. In, P. A. Pasque, M. P. Ting, N. Ortega, & J. C. Burkhardt (Eds.), *Transforming understandings of diversity in higher education: Demography, democracy and discourse* (pp. 57–80). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

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Minority stress theory⁷ is useful in understanding the connection between campus climate and students' wellbeing and academic development. This theory posits that the disparities LGBTQ2S+ students face can be largely explained by stressors that result from a heterosexist/cissexist social environment characterized by discrimination, exclusion, and a hostile climate. This theory also takes into account factors, such as peer support, that may foster resilience against the negative impacts of minority stressors.

To support LGBTQ2S+ students, in addition to understanding student outcomes related to mental health and academic development, it is critical to understand campus climate as well as factors that might foster students' resilience, including institutional services and resources. Thriving on Campus addresses these important areas and we hope the results are useful to creating evidence-based policies, programs, and services at universities throughout Ontario and nationwide.

⁷ Hendricks, M. L., & Testa, R. J. (2012). A conceptual framework for clinical work with transgender and gender nonconforming clients: An adaptation of the Minority Stress Model. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 43(5), 460-467.

Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: conceptual issues and research evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(5), 674-697.

Participants from your School: Sample Description

At the University of Waterloo, **640 LGBTQ2S+ students** completed the survey and passed our data integrity procedures. This encompasses the 632 students from the Waterloo main campus and 8 students from the Stratford campus. The following provides a description of these participants.

Demographics

The average age of participants was 21 years and 33.8% of students *identified* as racialized (i.e., people of colour). Additionally, 1.9% of students reported an Indigenous identity.⁸ In terms of disability, 4.9% reported a physical disability or condition, 4.7% reported a learning disability, 7.5% reported a neurodevelopmental or cognitive disability, and 58.7% an emotional or mental concern; 9.3% of participants *identified* as a person with a disability.

Sexual and Gender Diversity

All participants reported a minority sexual identity with the largest groups being bisexual (42.2%), gay (17.7%), and asexual (9.1%). See Table 1 for more information.

Overall, 22.8% of participants from your school were considered trans because they selected one of the gender identity options with “trans” included in the option, another diverse gender identity (e.g., demigender), or their birth sex and gender identity did not correspond with one another. More details are presented in Table 2.

⁸ Due to the small number of Indigenous students, we are unable to describe the specific experiences of Indigenous students without jeopardizing confidentiality.

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Table 1. Sexual Identities

Sexual Identity ⁹	n	%
Asexual	58	9.1
Bisexual	270	42.2
Gay	113	17.7
Demi-sexual	12	1.9
Heterosexual (LGBQ) ¹⁰	7	1.1
Heterosexual	6	0.9
Lesbian	45	7.0
Pansexual	49	7.7
Queer	48	7.5
Questioning	18	2.8
Other diverse sexual identities (e.g., man loving man, two-spirit, woman loving woman) ¹¹	11	1.7
Prefer not to answer / Will not label ¹² /	3	0.5

Table 2. Gender Identities

Gender Identity ¹³	n	%
Agender	10	1.6
Genderqueer	5	0.8
Gender non-conforming	6	0.9
Genderfluid/Fluid	5	0.8
Non-binary	23	3.6
Queer	7	1.1
Questioning	14	2.2
(Cisgender) man	153	24.0
(Cisgender) woman	340	53.4
Trans man ¹⁴	24	3.8
Trans woman	37	5.8
Other diverse gender identities (e.g., demigender, pangender, two-spirit, trans, transgender, trans feminine, trans masculine) ¹⁵	12	1.9
Prefer not to answer	1	0.2

⁹ The survey question reported here inquired about the identity category that *best* describes the student's identity. On the survey, a preceding question asked students to select all options that applied to them; those results are not presented in this report.

¹⁰ Some students selected multiple sexual identities indicating that they are a member of the LGBTQ+ community but selected heterosexual as the identity that best describes them.

¹¹ Due to only five or fewer responses for some identities, they have been collapsed into this category to protect participants' confidentiality.

¹² Some participants who wrote in a sexual identity indicated that they do not feel comfortable selecting an identity category or do not agree with the practice of labeling one's sexual identity.

¹³ The survey question reported here inquired about the identity category that *best* describes the student's identity. On the survey, the preceding question asked students to select all options that applied to them; those results are not presented in this report.

¹⁴ The categories of trans man and trans woman include individuals who identify as a trans man or trans woman and individuals who identify as a man or woman but whose sex assigned at birth does not correspond to their gender identity, respectively.

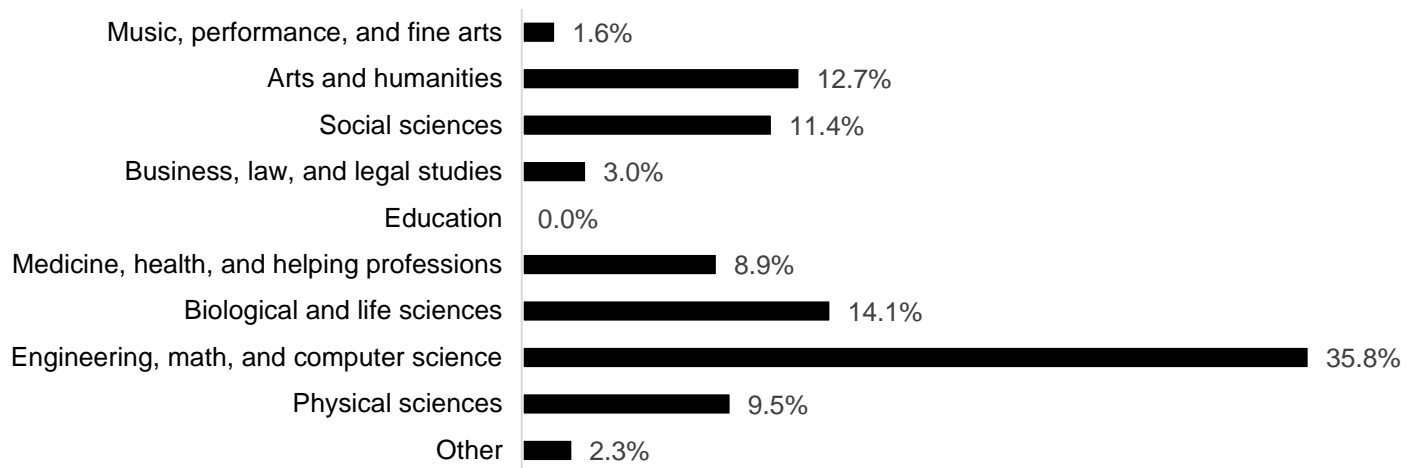
¹⁵ Due to only five or fewer responses for some identities, they have been collapsed into this category to protect participants' confidentiality.

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Enrollment Status

A majority of participants were enrolled full-time (97.8%). Approximately 95.6% of participants were enrolled in an undergraduate program and another 4.1% were in graduate programs. Additionally, 2.0% of students were taking all of their courses online. Students came from a diverse range of faculties (Figure 1) with the largest groups of students affiliating with the engineering, math, and computer science (35.8%); biological and life sciences (14.1%); or arts and humanities (12.7%).

Figure 1. Students' Primary Faculty or Area of Study (n=635)



Campus Climate

Psychological Climate

Students were asked to rate their perceptions of the LGBTQ2S+ campus climate across six domains: (1) collective attitudes towards and treatment of LGBQ/trans students, (2) presence and commitment to LGBQ/trans diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, (3) institutional leadership’s support of LGBQ/trans students, (4) sense of safety based on LGBQ/trans identity, (5) sense of safety based on gender expression, and (6) pedagogical representation (i.e., inclusion of LGBTQ2S+ writers and topics) when expected by the participant. Separate scales addressed perceptions related to gender identity (trans) and sexual identity (LGBQ).

The specific content of some domains of trans climate differs from that for LGBQ climate slightly in that the former includes some items addressing trans specific issues (e.g., “the university fosters an environment in which trans students can access the washrooms that reflect their gender identity”). Other than these items, questions for each group are similar other than asking about trans or LGBQ.

With the exception of the last two domains (i.e., sense of safety based on gender expression and pedagogical representation), trans students answered questions about perceptions related to the trans community at their school and their personal experiences as a trans person. Likewise, LGBQ students answered questions related to the LGBQ community and their own experiences. Trans students who also identify as LGBQ are included in data about LGBQ campus climate.

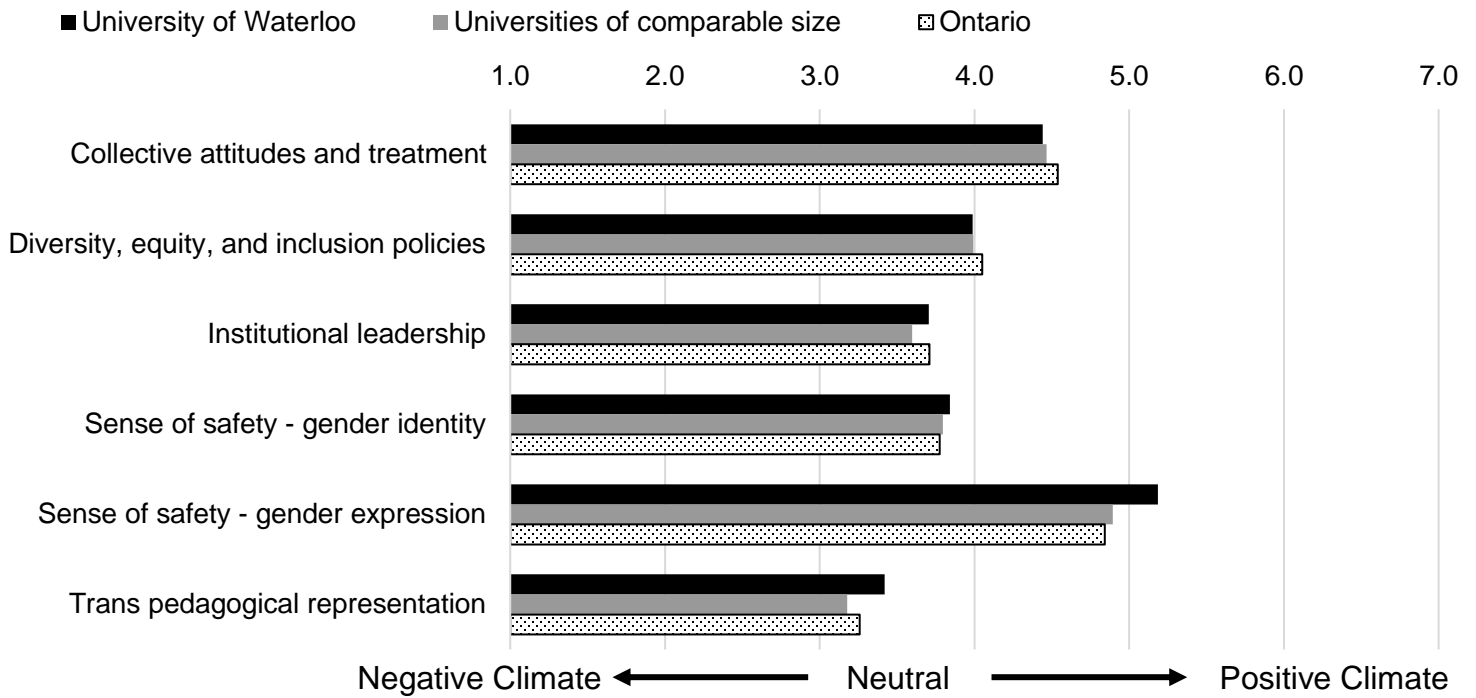
Items were answered on a 7-point scale (1 = ‘strongly disagree’, 7 = ‘strongly agree’). Higher scores indicate more positive perceptions of the climate.

Trans Campus Climate

The following chart (Figure 2) provides an overview of how trans students at the University of Waterloo perceive the campus climate. Comparative data are also provided, specifically data from institutions of comparable size and the Ontario sample.

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Figure 2. Trans Campus Climate Across Multiple Domains



Significant Differences: Significant differences were found for sense of safety related to gender expression and trans pedagogical representation. Participants from your school reported more positive perceptions of sense of safety related to gender expression than those attending comparable schools and those in the Ontario sample. For trans pedagogical representation, perceptions at the University of Waterloo were more positive than among schools of comparable size.

Table 3 displays the average scores for each of these domains at your school comparing racialized students and students with disabilities with non-racialized students and students without disabilities, respectively.

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Table 3. Trans Campus Climate Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared by Racialization and Disability Status

Domains	Racialized students (n=29-37) ¹⁶	Non-Racialized students (n=57-68)	Students with a disability (n=18-20)	Students without a disability (n=66-82)
Collective attitudes and treatment	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.5
Diversity, equity, and inclusion policies	4.3 [†]	3.8	3.6 [†]	4.1
Institutional leadership	3.8	3.6	3.1 [†]	3.8
Sense of safety based on gender identity	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.9
Trans students' sense of safety based on gender expression	5.3	5.1	4.6 [†]	5.3
Trans pedagogical representation ¹⁷	3.3	3.5	2.9 [†]	3.5

Scale scores range from 1 to 7; higher score = more positive perception of climate

Results from a select number of items from the trans campus climate scale are provided (Table 4 and Table 5) to help campus leaders to identify both strengths and areas for improvement. These items were selected because they are particularly salient to university administrators' efforts to promote inclusion and could inform policy and practice changes. Items in Table 4 are specific to trans inclusion (i.e., positive aspects) and Table 5 items are specific to trans exclusion (i.e., negative aspects).

Table 4. Students' Agreement with Trans *Inclusion* Climate Items (n=98-105)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The campus is welcoming for trans students.	2.9%	9.5%	20.0%	25.7%	23.8%	13.3%	4.8%
The university prohibits the discrimination of trans individuals through anti-discrimination/ harassment policies.	0.0%	3.9%	4.9%	24.5%	16.7%	37.3%	12.7%
I am confident the university would ensure that its trans anti-discrimination/ harassment policies are followed.	3.9%	13.7%	10.8%	9.8%	28.4%	25.5%	7.8%
The university provides accessible information for students about its trans equity/ inclusion policies.	8.8%	16.7%	19.6%	21.6%	14.7%	13.7%	4.9%

¹⁶ n ranges reflect only the first four domains.

¹⁷ Questions about trans pedagogical representation were asked of trans *and* cisgender students.

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The university fosters an environment in which trans students can access the washrooms that reflect their gender identity.	9.8%	15.7%	11.8%	27.5%	19.6%	11.8%	3.9%
The university makes efforts to prevent trans discrimination/ harassment (e.g., awareness campaigns, presentations/ workshops).	7.1%	12.1%	18.2%	20.2%	31.3%	9.1%	2.0%
Administrators (e.g., president, deans, department chairs/ directors) treat the well-being of trans students as important.	5.1%	12.2%	15.3%	35.7%	20.4%	8.2%	3.1%
There are public statements from administrators (e.g., president, deans, department chairs/ directors) promoting trans equity/ inclusion.	13.1%	15.2%	19.2%	27.3%	16.2%	8.1%	1.0%
Administrators openly support trans issues and concerns (e.g., displaying symbols of support, posting on social media, sending institution-wide emails).	14.1%	18.2%	15.2%	29.3%	13.1%	8.1%	2.0%
The university supports organizations and programs to help trans students feel like they belong.	4.0%	8.1%	14.1%	16.2%	36.4%	19.2%	2.0%
The university demonstrates a commitment to trans equity/ inclusion (e.g., funding trans groups, events, or scholarships)	11.1%	20.2%	12.1%	33.3%	16.2%	5.1%	2.0%

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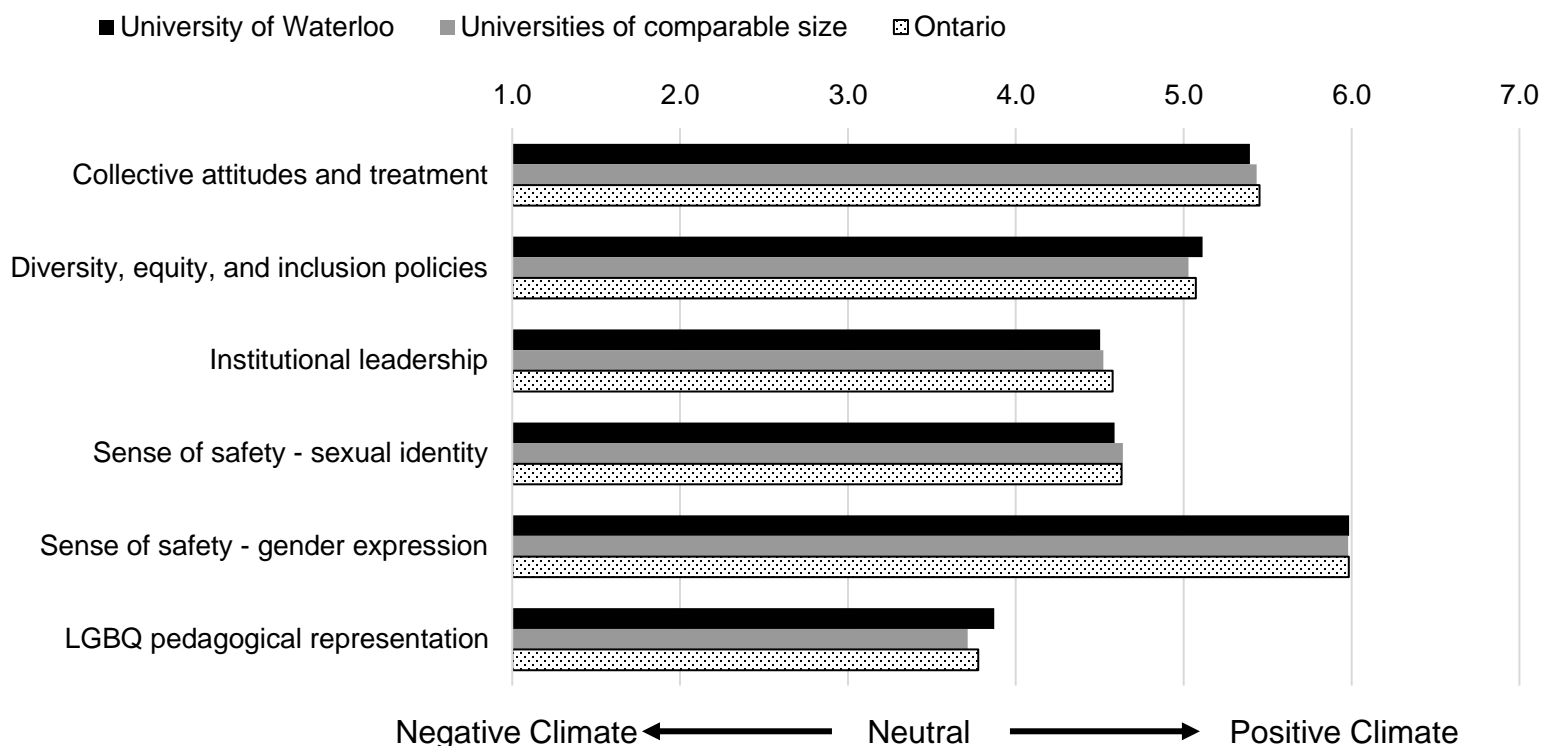
Table 5. Students' Agreement with Trans *Exclusion* Climate Items (n=104-105)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Trans students are treated unfairly.	8.7%	13.5%	13.5%	26.9%	28.8%	5.8%	2.9%
Trans students experience more barriers than other students in accessing services (e.g., counselling, health, career, accessible learning).	4.8%	11.4%	6.7%	22.9%	19.0%	15.2%	20.0%

LGBQ Campus Climate

Figure 3 provides an overview of how LGBQ students at the University of Waterloo perceive their campus climate across various domains. Comparative data are also provided, specifically data from institutions of comparable size and the Ontario sample. Table 6 displays the average scores for each of these domains at your school comparing racialized and non-racialized students and students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Figure 3. LGBQ Campus Climate Across Multiple Domains



Note. No significant differences found.

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Table 6. LGBQ Campus Climate Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared by Racialization and Disability Status

Domains	Racialized students (n=189-206) ¹⁸	Non-racialized students (n=375-400)	Students with a disability (n=50-55)	Students without a disability (n=510-546)
Collective attitudes and treatment	5.4	5.4	5.1 [†]	5.4
Diversity, equity, and inclusion policies	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.1
Institutional leadership	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.5
Sense of safety based on sexual identity	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.6
Cisgender LGBQ students' sense of safety based on gender expression ¹⁹	5.8 [†]	6.1	6.0	6.0
LGBQ pedagogical representation ²⁰	3.8	3.9	3.2 [†]	4.0

Scale scores range from 1 to 7; higher score = more positive perception of climate

Results from a select number of items in the LGBQ campus climate scale are provided to help identify both strengths and areas where improvement is needed. As per the trans climate scale, these specific items were selected because they are particularly salient to university administrators' efforts to promote inclusion and could inform policy and practice changes. Items in Table 7 are specific to LGBQ inclusion (i.e., positive aspects) and Table 8 items are specific to LGBQ exclusion (i.e., negative aspects).

Table 7. Students' Agreement with Select LGBQ *Inclusion* Climate Items (n=589-606)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The campus is welcoming for LGBQ students.	0.2%	2.1%	9.1%	15.3%	26.7%	35.0%	11.6%
The university prohibits the discrimination of LGBQ individuals through anti-discrimination/ harassment policies.	1.0%	2.2%	2.3%	15.1%	18.3%	43.6%	17.6%
I am confident the university would ensure that its LGBQ anti-discrimination/ harassment policies are followed.	1.2%	3.0%	7.4%	15.2%	27.6%	30.7%	14.9%
The university provides accessible information for students about its LGBQ equity /inclusion policies.	2.0%	8.7%	14.9%	18.4%	21.9%	24.9%	9.3%

¹⁸ n ranges reflect only the first four domains.

¹⁹ LGBQ students' sense of safety related to gender expression excludes trans students (see trans climate for that information).

²⁰ Questions about LGBQ pedagogical representation were asked of cisgender and trans students.

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The university makes efforts to prevent LGBQ discrimination/ harassment (e.g., awareness campaigns, presentations/ workshops).	2.2%	7.1%	11.5%	21.7%	29.7%	21.5%	6.3%
Administrators (e.g., president, deans, department chairs/ directors) treat the well-being of LGBQ students as important.	1.2%	3.6%	9.7%	30.4%	22.1%	27.0%	6.1%
There are public statements from administrators (e.g., president, deans, department chairs/ directors) promoting LGBQ equity/ inclusion.	3.6%	11.5%	14.1%	32.8%	19.7%	14.8%	3.6%
Administrators openly support LGBQ issues and concerns (e.g., displaying symbols of support, posting on social media, sending institution-wide emails).	2.7%	9.5%	14.4%	28.6%	22.7%	18.0%	4.1%
The university supports organizations and programs to help LGBQ students feel like they belong.	0.8%	4.2%	5.6%	14.6%	30.3%	35.4%	9.0%
The university demonstrates a commitment to LGBQ equity/inclusion (e.g., funding LGBQ groups, events, or scholarships)	1.5%	7.3%	10.7%	22.8%	29.3%	21.3%	7.1%

Table 8. Students' Agreement with Select LGBQ *Exclusion* Climate Items (n=605-606)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
LGBQ students are treated unfairly.	18.5%	40.5%	15.7%	14.2%	7.3%	3.3%	0.5%
LGBQ students experience more barriers than other students in accessing services (e.g., counselling, health, career, accessible learning).	18.6%	31.0%	12.4%	14.9%	14.7%	5.9%	2.5%

Connectedness and Belonging

Students reported their perceptions of connectedness and belonging on campus, both general indicators of campus climate. On a scale from 1 to 7 (higher score indicates more connectedness/belonging), the average score for school connectedness was 4.9. School connectedness is comprised of the following items.²¹

Table 9. Students' Feelings of School Connectedness (n=567-569)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I can really be myself at this school	1.9%	6.5%	12.0%	19.9%	22.7%	28.9%	8.1%
I feel like a real part of this school	6.5%	10.5%	14.4%	17.9%	22.0%	22.7%	6.0%
People at this school are friendly to me	0.5%	2.5%	3.5%	7.4%	27.4%	49.2%	9.5%
Other students here like me the way I am	1.8%	2.1%	7.4%	19.0%	20.6%	40.4%	8.6%

For belonging, on a scale of 1 - 5 (higher score indicates greater belonging), students reported an average score of 3.3.²² The items comprising this scale are in the table below.

Table 10. Students' Feelings of Belonging (n=569)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel valued as a person at this school	6.2%	22.1%	29.7%	35.0%	7.0%
I feel accepted as part of the campus community	3.7%	12.5%	27.6%	46.0%	10.2%
I feel I belong on this campus	5.8%	14.1%	25.7%	44.5%	10.0%

Comparative findings for sense of school connectedness and belonging are presented in Table 11 and Table 12.

²¹ Renshaw, T. L., & Bolognino, S. J. (2016). The college student subjective wellbeing questionnaire: A brief multidimensional measure of undergraduate's covitality. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 17(2), 463-484. doi: 10.1007/s10902-014-9606-4

²² Dugan, J.P., Kusel, M. L., & Simounet, D. M. (2012). Transgender college students: An exploratory study of perceptions, engagement, and educational outcomes. *Journal of College Student Development*, 53(5), 719-736. doi:10.1353/csd.2012.0067

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Table 11. LGBTQ2S+ Students' Connectedness and Belonging Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario

	University of Waterloo (n=568-569)	Universities of comparable size (n=1223)	Ontario (n=2637-2638)
School Connectedness (1 to 7)	4.9	5.0	5.0 [†]
Belonging (1 to 5)	3.3	3.3	3.5 [†]

Table 12. LGBTQ2S+ Students' School connectedness and Belonging Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared by Gender Identity, Racialization, and Disability Status

	Trans students (n=120-121)	Cisgender LGBQ students (n=448)	Racialized students (n=193)	Non-racialized students (n=375-376)	Students with a disability (n=52)	Students without a disability (n=513)
School Connectedness (1 to 7)	4.6 [†]	5.0	4.8	5.0	4.7	4.9
Sense of Belonging (1 to 5)	3.2 [†]	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.1 [†]	3.4

Campus Experiences

Microaggressions

Trans and LGBTQ students experience a variety of microaggressions based on their gender and sexual identities, respectively. The survey included two microaggression scales, one addressing the experiences related to trans identity and another addressing sexual identity related experiences. Both scales included microaggressions that occur *interpersonally* (i.e., remarks and behaviors directly targeting the person) and *environmentally* (i.e., incidents that occur in the larger social environment, such as through social norms, institutional policies/practices, and comments not directed at the person).

For both scales, students reported how frequently they encountered various microaggressions on campus in the past year (0 = ‘Never’ to 5 = ‘Very frequently’). A higher average score indicates having experienced microaggressions more frequently.

Trans Microaggressions

Of the 25 different microaggressions included in the trans microaggressions scale,²³ Those experienced by most trans students at your school were

- forms or documentation asking about gender and sex with only “male” and “female” options (89.4%)
- I saw negative messages about trans people on social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat) posted by contacts, organizations and/or advertisements (80.0%)
- a friend or acquaintance made transphobic comments without realizing they were offensive (75.3%)

Information about the frequency each trans microaggression was experienced by trans students at your school is provided in Table 13.

Table 13. Trans Microaggressions Frequencies (n=85-87)

Microaggressions	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
Strangers/acquaintances asked invasive questions about my sex life (i.e., "how do you have sex?").	62.1%	9.2%	10.3%	17.2%	1.1%	0.0%
Other people said "that's just the way it is" when I voiced frustration about transphobia.	47.7%	11.6%	12.8%	17.4%	8.1%	2.3%

²³ Scale adapted from Woodford, M. R., Chonody, J., Pitcher, E., Nicolazzo, Z., Jourian, T. J., Kulick, A., & Renn, K. (2018, January). Development and testing of the trans* microaggressions on campus scale. Paper presented at the 2018 Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work and Research, Washington, DC.

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Microaggressions	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
My school/college made an effort to support LGBTQ students, but not trans students.	32.6%	15.1%	12.8%	30.2%	7.0%	2.3%
A healthcare worker made inaccurate assumptions about my health needs because they knew or assumed my gender identity.	60.0%	8.2%	7.1%	10.6%	10.6%	3.5%
In school it was OK to make jokes about trans people.	28.7%	12.6%	19.5%	17.2%	13.8%	8.0%
I was referred to as someone's "trans friend", "genderqueer friend" or something similar when I was introduced.	76.7%	9.3%	5.8%	4.7%	2.3%	1.2%
I have heard people say they were tired of trans inclusion.	46.5%	10.5%	15.1%	18.6%	5.8%	3.5%
In my school, I was made to feel that expressing my gender identity and/or expression would prevent me in succeeding in pursuing my career goals.	31.8%	11.8%	14.1%	24.7%	9.4%	8.2%
I felt others avoided working with me (i.e., on a group assignment) because they knew or assumed I was trans.	66.3%	7.0%	16.3%	7.0%	2.3%	1.2%
People avoided getting to know me better after learning I was trans.	63.5%	5.9%	17.6%	7.1%	4.7%	1.2%
I received information about sexual health that was limited to cisgender bodies.	28.2%	5.9%	8.2%	14.1%	25.9%	17.6%
Others gave me dirty looks because they knew or assumed I was trans.	63.5%	14.1%	11.8%	5.9%	2.4%	2.4%
I was told I talk about my gender identity/ expression too much.	63.5%	10.6%	9.4%	10.6%	3.5%	2.4%
Someone used the incorrect pronouns when referring to me.	37.6%	2.4%	10.6%	5.9%	7.1%	36.5%
Strangers/acquaintances asked invasive personal questions about my genitals (i.e., "what parts do you have?").	78.8%	9.4%	2.4%	5.9%	3.5%	0.0%
A cisgender person said 'trans people are just like cisgender people' or something similar.	64.7%	17.6%	4.7%	9.4%	2.4%	1.2%
I was made fun of for my gender identity and/or expression.	64.7%	11.8%	8.2%	10.6%	1.2%	3.5%
A friend or acquaintance made transphobic comments without realizing they were offensive.	24.7%	14.1%	12.9%	23.5%	14.1%	10.6%

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Microaggressions	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
I was expected to speak for all trans people.	58.1%	9.3%	9.3%	12.8%	4.7%	5.8%
People told me they wished I wasn't trans because they are worried for my safety.	77.9%	2.3%	8.1%	4.7%	5.8%	1.2%
Forms or documentation asked about gender/sex and only included "male" and "female".	10.6%	7.1%	8.2%	15.3%	25.9%	32.9%
People said or implied that my birth sex is my "real" sex/gender.	41.2%	7.1%	10.6%	15.3%	15.3%	10.6%
I saw negative messages about trans people on social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat) posted by contacts, organizations and/or advertisements.	20.0%	11.8%	10.6%	22.4%	18.8%	16.5%
I was told I talk about the discrimination of trans people too much.	63.5%	9.4%	12.9%	8.2%	3.5%	2.4%
I did not have access to bathrooms where I felt comfortable as a trans person.	41.2%	10.6%	5.9%	12.9%	15.3%	14.1%

Table 14 presents average frequency scores (across all relevant scale items) for interpersonal and environmental trans microaggressions for your school and comparisons with schools of comparable size and the Ontario sample. Returning to your students, Table 15 displays the average scores for each of type of microaggression comparing racialized and non-racialized students, and students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Table 14. Average Trans Microaggressions Frequency Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario

	University of Waterloo (n=85)	Universities of comparable size (n=235-236)	Ontario (n=509-510)
Interpersonal Macroaggressions	1.1	1.1	1.2
Environmental Microaggressions	2.3	2.2	2.2

Scale scores can range from 0 to 5; higher score indicates more frequent exposure to microaggressions

Table 15. Average Trans Microaggressions Frequency Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared by Racialization and Disability Status

	Racialized students (n=13)	Non-racialized students (n=78)	Students with a disability (n=25)	Students without a disability (n=66)
Interpersonal Microaggressions	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.0
Environmental Microaggressions	2.0	2.5	2.8	2.2

Scale scores can range from 0 to 5; higher score indicates more frequent exposure to microaggressions

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LGBQ Microaggressions

Of the 20 different microaggressions included in the LGBQ microaggressions scale,²⁴ those experienced by most LGBQ students at your school were

- hearing someone using “that’s so gay” to describe something as negative, stupid, or uncool (81.0%)
- hearing the phrase “no homo” (73.6%)
- receiving information about sexual health that was limited to just heterosexual sex (66.7%)

Information about the frequency each LGBQ microaggression was experienced by LGBQ students at your school is provided in Table 16.

Table 16. LGBQ Microaggressions Frequencies (n=518-520)

Microaggressions	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
Others said LGBQ people shouldn't be around children.	71.3%	12.5%	9.4%	5.2%	0.6%	1.0%
People said or implied that I was being overly sensitive for thinking I was being treated poorly or unfairly because I am LGBQ.	63.5%	11.5%	10.2%	11.7%	2.3%	0.8%
I heard someone say "that's so gay" to describe something as negative, stupid or uncool.	19.0%	19.2%	13.5%	28.8%	12.9%	6.5%
Other people said "that's just the way it is" when I voiced frustration about homophobia, biphobia or queerphobia.	48.8%	17.6%	11.0%	16.2%	4.8%	1.5%
Someone told me they were praying for me because they knew or assumed I was lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer.	82.9%	7.3%	3.8%	4.0%	1.2%	0.8%
Someone said they couldn't be homophobic because they have (a) lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer friend(s).	54.4%	15.6%	9.6%	13.3%	4.8%	2.3%
In my school/workplace, it was OK to make jokes about LGBQ people.	39.8%	21.2%	12.9%	14.8%	7.7%	3.7%
Straight people thought I would come on to them because I was lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer.	60.3%	15.8%	7.7%	11.0%	4.2%	1.0%
I heard the phrase "no homo."	26.4%	17.0%	12.9%	25.8%	10.8%	7.1%
I was told I should act "less lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer".	79.8%	8.1%	4.8%	5.4%	0.8%	1.2%
Others thought I would not have kids because I am lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer.	72.1%	8.8%	5.6%	7.7%	3.5%	2.3%

²⁴ Woodford, M. R., Chonody, J. M., Kulick, A., Brennan, D. J., Renn, K. (2015). The LGBQ microaggressions on campus scale: A scale development and validation study. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 62(12), 1660-1687. doi:10.1080/00918369.2015.1078205

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Microaggressions	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
Someone said or implied that my sexual orientation is a result of something that went "wrong" in the past (i.e., your mother was overbearing).	73.7%	10.8%	6.5%	6.2%	1.5%	1.3%
Someone said or implied that LGBTQ people engage in unsafe sex because of their sexual orientation.	68.3%	12.7%	6.5%	8.1%	2.7%	1.7%
Someone said or implied that LGBTQ people all have the same experiences.	58.5%	13.1%	11.0%	11.7%	4.6%	1.2%
People seemed willing to tolerate my LGBTQ identity but were not willing to talk about it.	40.7%	16.8%	10.2%	20.2%	9.2%	2.9%
I was told that being lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer was "just a phase".	63.6%	14.5%	7.9%	8.7%	3.9%	1.5%
People assume I have a lot of sex because of my sexual orientation.	67.8%	11.9%	5.4%	7.7%	4.6%	2.5%
I saw negative messages about LGBTQ people posted by contacts, organizations and/or advertisements on social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat).	44.9%	20.6%	12.5%	11.9%	7.7%	2.3%
I have heard people say they were tired about hearing "the homosexual agenda".	57.5%	18.3%	7.9%	11.0%	3.7%	1.7%
I received information about sexual health that was limited to just heterosexual sex.	33.3%	11.8%	11.2%	19.5%	16.8%	7.5%

Table 17 presents average frequency scores for interpersonal LGBTQ microaggressions and environmental LGBTQ microaggressions at your school and compares scores with those from comparable schools and the provincial sample. Returning to participants from your school, Table 18 displays the average scores for each of type of microaggression comparing racialized and non-racialized students, and students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Table 17. Average LGBTQ Microaggressions Frequency Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario

	University of Waterloo (n=519-520)	Universities of comparable size (n=1095-1098)	Ontario (n=2356-2359)
Interpersonal Microaggressions	0.8	1.0 [†]	1.0 [†]
Environmental Microaggressions	1.8	1.8	1.8

Scale scores can range from 0 to 5; higher score indicates more frequent exposure to microaggressions

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Table 18. Average LGBTQ Microaggressions Frequency Scores at the University of Waterloo Compared by Racialization and Disability Status

	Racialized students (n=168)	Non-racialized students (n=351-352)	Students with a disability (n=50)	Students without a disability (n=467-468)
Interpersonal Microaggressions	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.8
Environmental Microaggressions	1.8	1.7	2.0	1.7

Scale scores can range from 0 to 5; higher score indicates more frequent exposure to microaggressions

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Incivility

The microaggression questions specifically addressed subtle discrimination related to being LGBQ or trans. By contrast, incivility²⁵ first asked students to indicate how often they experienced an incident on campus and then to specify the reasons why they think it happened, choosing from a list of possibilities (e.g., ethnicity/race, disability, gender, sexuality).

The incivility incident that the most students at your school had experienced was “other students, professors and/or staff interrupted or ‘spoke over’ you;” 50.4% and 49.8% of trans and cisgender LGBQ students, respectively, experienced this incivility. Students were most often either unsure as to why they experienced this incivility or attributed it to gender identity. Table 19 lists incivilities and their occurrence.

Table 19. Frequency of Incivility (n=536-539)

Incivility	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
Other students, professors and/or staff made jokes at your expense.	76.1%	9.6%	6.3%	6.3%	1.5%	0.2%
Other students, professors and/or staff interrupted or "spoke over" you.	50.1%	14.3%	10.8%	17.3%	6.5%	1.1%
Other students, professors and/or staff ignored you or failed to speak to you (e.g., gave you 'the silent treatment').	83.6%	7.1%	3.9%	3.4%	1.7%	0.4%
Other students, professors and/or staff paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions.	67.5%	17.4%	6.0%	7.1%	1.3%	0.7%

Overall, using the multi-item incivility scale, students at the University Waterloo experienced incivilities significantly less frequently than students in the Ontario sample (data not reported). On average, students at the University of Waterloo with a disability experienced incivilities significantly more often than students without a disability (data not reported).

²⁵ Scale adapted from Matthews, R. A., & Ritter, K.J. (2016). A concise, content valid, gender invariant measure of workplace incivility. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 21*(3), 352-365. doi: 10.1037/ocp0000017

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Victimization

Similar to incivility, when answering victimization²⁶ questions, students first indicated how often they experienced an incident on campus and then selected the reasons why they think it happened, choosing from a list of possibilities (e.g., ethnicity/race, disability, gender, sexuality).

The experience of victimization that the most students reported was “I've been verbally threatened, bullied, or intimidated;” 19.3% and 9.7% of trans and cisgender LGBTQ students, respectively, reported this experience of victimization. Students most frequently reported that this experience of victimization occurred because of their sexual identity. Table 20 lists victimization and their average occurrence.

Table 20. Frequency of Victimization (n=537-538)

Victimization	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
On my campus, I've been verbally threatened, bullied, or intimidated.	88.3%	7.6%	2.0%	1.9%	0.2%	0.0%
On my campus, I've been physically threatened, bullied, or assaulted.	98.0%	1.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
On my campus, I've been followed in a threatening manner.	92.9%	5.4%	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%
On my campus, I've had personal property vandalized.	98.0%	1.5%	0.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
On my campus, I've been sexually harassed or assaulted.	90.7%	6.7%	1.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%
While attending this school, I've received offensive or threatening phone calls, e-mails, or online messages from other students, professors and/or staff.	95.7%	2.2%	0.9%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%

Overall, students at the University of Waterloo experienced victimization (scale consisting of all items) significantly less often than students at comparable universities and students in the Ontario sample (data not reported). Among participants from your school, on average, racialized students experienced victimization less frequently than non-racialized students (data not reported).

²⁶ Scale adapted from Woodford, M. R., Han, Y., Craig, S., Lim, C., & Matney, M. M. (2014). Discrimination and mental health among sexual minority college students: The type and form of discrimination does matter. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health, 18*(2), 142-163. doi: 10.1080/19359705.2013.833882

Facilities and Services

The survey included questions about students' awareness and perceptions of various facilities and services. In some cases, they were also asked if they used the facility or service.

Inclusive Facilities²⁷

Washrooms (n=593)

When it comes to gender inclusive washrooms at the University of Waterloo, 62.7% of students reported that they were available. Between 320 and 335 participants answered follow-up questions. Among them, 21.9% slightly to strongly agreed that there was a sufficient number of inclusive washrooms; 25.8% slightly to strongly agreed that the university does a good job informing students about their availability; and 35.5% slightly to strongly agreed that their locations were clearly publicized with signage.

Locker/Change Rooms (n=584)

For gender inclusive change rooms and locker rooms at the University of Waterloo, 1.2% of students reported that they were available. Findings from the follow-up questions are suppressed because of small sample size.

Housing (n=583)

Students were asked about the availability and quality of gender inclusive housing. In terms of availability, 13.6% of students reported that gender inclusive housing was available at the University of Waterloo. Between 52 and 57 students answered followed-up questions. Among them, 50.0% slightly to strongly agreed that there was a sufficient number of gender inclusive housing units; 58.5% slightly to strongly agreed that the application procedure for gender inclusive housing did not require additional paperwork as compared to mainstream housing services; and 28.1% slightly to strongly agreed that the university does a good job of informing students about the availability of these units.

Among the students who reported that gender inclusive housing was available (n=76), 30.3% had used this housing. Within this subset, 87.0% slightly to strongly agreed that they felt *welcomed and respected* by housing staff; 69.6% slightly to strongly agreed that they felt *supported* by housing staff; and 87.0% slightly to strongly agreed that they felt *welcomed and respected* by other students in gender inclusive housing.

²⁷ Students who indicated that particular facilities (e.g., gender inclusive washrooms) were available at their school were then asked a series of questions regarding their perceptions of these facilities.

Record Change Procedures

When transitioning, some trans students may wish to change their *official* academic records (e.g., transcripts) as well as other *campus* records (e.g., student ID, class rosters) to accurately reflect their name and gender identity.

Participants were asked if it was possible for students at their university to change their gender marker and name on official academic records and other campus records. Between 580 and 587 participants answered these questions. For official records, 11.4% indicated that it was possible for students to change their name and 4.6% indicated that it was possible for students to change their gender. For campus records, 25.9% of participants indicated that it was possible for students to change their name and 7.7% indicated that it was possible for students to change their gender.

Among those who said it was possible to change their records, they were asked about their perceptions of the application process; these findings are presented in Table 21 and Table 22.

At the University of Waterloo, 10 participants reported they had changed their name on official records and 19 on campus records. Their perceptions of the application process are included in the tables below with those who indicated that it was possible to change records at your school.

Table 21. Ease of Changing Gender and Name on *Official Academic Records*

	Slightly to strongly disagree	Neutral	Slightly to strongly agree
Name Change (n=44-53)			
Information on the process is easily accessible	37.7%	9.4%	52.8%
The process is user-friendly	38.6%	11.4%	50.0%
Gender Change (n=18-20)			
Information on the process is easily accessible	40.0%	5.0%	55.0%
The process is user-friendly	44.4%	5.6%	50.0%

Table 22. Ease of Changing Gender and Name on *Campus Records*

	Slightly to strongly disagree	Neutral	Slightly to strongly agree
Name Change (n=99-117)			
Information on the process is easily accessible	40.2%	10.3%	49.6%
The process is user-friendly	25.3%	17.2%	57.6%
Gender Change (n=36)			
Information on the process is easily accessible	44.4%	5.6%	50.0%
The process is user-friendly	30.6%	13.9%	55.6%

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Service Delivery²⁸

Throughout their time at university, students may access a range of services offered by the institution. Table 23 presents the percentage of students who used various campus services at your school. Participants who indicated having accessed particular services were asked also about their perceptions of the service *as an LGBTQ2S+ student*. Findings from these questions are presented in Table 24.

Table 23. Percentage of Students who used Various University Services (n=536-537)²⁹

	Used in the past 12 months
Career counselling	22.5%
Mental health services	32.3%
Medical health services	52.5%
Academic advising	54.5%
Housing services	31.8%
Sexual assault support and prevention services	2.8%
Women's centre	9.5%
Campus recreational spaces	65.9%
Student orientation ³⁰	74.6%

Table 24. Students' Rating of Various Facets of Service Quality

	Slightly to strongly disagree	Neutral	Slightly to strongly agree
Career Counselling (n=121)			
I felt welcomed and respected	7.4%	15.7%	76.9%
The staff were knowledgeable about my needs	13.2%	16.5%	70.2%
The staff were skilled in providing services to me	14.0%	8.3%	77.7%
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	13.2%	10.7%	76.0%
Mental Health Services (n=173)			
I felt welcomed and respected	6.4%	5.8%	87.7%
The staff were knowledgeable about my needs	15.2%	14.0%	70.8%
The staff were skilled in providing services to me	15.2%	11.1%	73.7%
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	17.5%	10.5%	71.9%
Medical Health Services (n=282)			
I felt welcomed and respected	6.8%	14.7%	78.5%
The staff were knowledgeable about my needs	12.5%	12.5%	74.9%
The staff were skilled in providing services to me	11.1%	13.3%	75.6%
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	11.5%	12.9%	75.6%
Academic Advising (n=292)			
I felt welcomed and respected	4.8%	9.0%	86.2%
The staff were knowledgeable about my needs	9.7%	12.8%	77.6%
The staff were skilled in providing services to me	7.9%	14.1%	77.9%
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	8.3%	10.3%	81.4%

²⁸ Because fewer than 10 students reported using some services, result for those services are not reported.

²⁹ The sample size range *n*, excludes student orientation because only first year students saw this service listed.

³⁰ Only students in their 1st year of university were asked about student orientation, n=122.

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	Slightly to strongly disagree	Neutral	Slightly to strongly agree
Housing Services (n=171)			
I felt welcomed and respected	4.7%	10.7%	84.6%
The staff were knowledgeable about my needs	7.1%	18.9%	74.0%
The staff were skilled in providing services to me	7.7%	15.4%	76.9%
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	8.9%	11.2%	79.9%
Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Services (n=15)			
I felt welcomed and respected	0.0%	6.7%	93.3%
The staff were knowledgeable about my needs	0.0%	6.7%	93.3%
The staff were skilled in providing services to me	0.0%	6.7%	93.3%
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	6.7%	0.0%	93.3%
Women's Centre (n=51)			
I felt welcomed and respected	2.0%	6.0%	92.0%
The staff/volunteers were knowledgeable about my needs	0.0%	16.0%	84.0%
The staff/volunteers were skilled in providing services to me	0.0%	14.0%	86.0%
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received	0.0%	4.0%	96.0%
Campus Recreational Spaces (n=354)			
I felt welcomed and respected	2.8%	12.2%	84.9%
The staff were skilled in providing services to me	2.8%	24.7%	72.4%
Overall, I am satisfied with my experiences	2.0%	12.2%	85.8%
Student Orientation (n=91)			
I felt welcomed and respected	2.2%	9.9%	87.9%
Orientation was helpful for me to know about LGBTQ2S+ services, programs and facilities.	42.9%	8.8%	48.4%
Orientation addressed the importance of everyone creating a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ2S+ and other diverse students (e.g., people of colour)	30.8%	17.6%	51.6%
Orientation helped me to make some new friends who are accepting of my LGBTQ2S+ identity.	28.6%	16.5%	54.9%

The results indicate that the majority of participants were overall satisfied with the services they received (range 71.9% - 96.0%). However, the findings also suggest some areas for improvements. For instance, a majority of students who participated in orientation did not agree that orientation helped them know about LGBTQ2S+ services, programs and facilities. Also, 15.2% of students accessing mental health services felt the staff were not knowledgeable about their needs and were not skilled in providing services. Accordingly, 17.5% of students were not satisfied with the mental health services they received.

LGBTQ2S+ organizations/groups and spaces can be an important source of support for students. Table 25 presents students' perceptions of the LGBTQ2S+ centre/group they have used or visited, with the vast majority of students positively evaluating the centre/group along each indicator.

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Table 25. Students' Perceptions of the LGBTQ2S+ Centre/Group they have used

	Slightly to strongly disagree	Neutral	Slightly to strongly agree
LGBTQ2S+ Centre/Group (n=133)			
This organization/space is a place where I can meet other LGBTQ2S+ people	2.3%	1.5%	96.2%
This organization/space provides a group of people with whom I can be myself	11.3%	10.5%	78.2%
I feel supported by the students involved in this space/organization	10.5%	10.5%	78.9%
This space/organization provides a place I can openly express my feelings	15.0%	6.8%	78.2%

Academics

Academic Development and Disengagement

One of universities’ primary functions is fostering the academic and intellectual development of its students. Table 26 and Table 27 report students’ average scores for academic and intellectual development (scale includes questions about satisfaction with their academic experience and performance) with possible scores from 1 to 7, where higher scores indicate greater academic and intellectual development.³¹ Comparative findings are presented.

Yet, LGBTQ2S+ students also face various obstacles to succeeding in university. When students experience *academic disengagement*, they tend to display various behaviors, such as missing classes or when in attendance being late, sleeping through lectures, or doing poor work, which can interfere with their learning. Scores for this scale can range from 0 to 4, where higher scores indicate greater academic disengagement.³² Table 26 and Table 27 display students’ average scores for how often students disengaged from their academics in their last semester. Comparative findings are presented.

Table 26. Students' Academic Development and Disengagement at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario

	University of Waterloo (n=563)	Universities of comparable size (n=1189-1194)	Ontario (n=2580-2586)
Academic and Intellectual Development (1 to 7)	3.6	3.7 [†]	3.8 [†]
Academic Disengagement (0 to 4)	1.9	1.9	1.9

Table 27. Students' Academic Development and Disengagement at the University of Waterloo Compared by Gender Identity, Racialization, and Disability Status

	Trans students (n=121)	Cisgender LGBQ students (n=442)	Racialized students (n=190)	Non-racialized students (n=373)	Students with a disability (n=52)	Students without a disability (n=507)
Academic and Intellectual Development (1 to 7)	3.5	3.6	3.5 [†]	3.7	3.6	3.6
Academic Disengagement (0 to 4)	1.9	1.9	2.0 [†]	1.8	2.0 [†]	1.8

³¹ Scale adapted from Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1980). Predicting freshman persistence and voluntary dropout decisions from a theoretical model. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 51(1), 60-75. doi: 10.2307/1981125

³² Ramos, A. (2000). *Sexual harassment at the University of Puerto Rico* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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Persistence

A measure related to students' academic development and satisfaction is academic persistence. A true measure of persistence would compare students who quit their studies to students who remain enrolled. However, because our survey included only students who were presently attending an Ontario university, such comparisons cannot be made. Instead, we asked students whether they had considered leaving their university over the past academic year because of their experiences on campus as a proxy measure of academic persistence.

Below we present findings for your school, comparable schools, and the provincial sample. We also present findings for specific groups at your school.

Table 28. Academic Persistence Among Students at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario

		University of Waterloo (n=563)	Universities of comparable size (n=1187)	Ontario (n=2569)
During the academic year have you seriously considered leaving your university because of your experiences	No	87.4%	86.9%	87.2%
	Yes	12.6%	13.1%	12.8%

Table 29. Academic Persistence Among Students at the University of Waterloo by Gender Identity, Racialization, and Disability Status

		Trans students (n=121)	Cisgender LGBQ students (n=442)	Racialized students (n=189)	Non-racialized students (n=374)	Students with a disability (n=52)	Students without a disability (n=507)
During the academic year have you seriously considered leaving your university because of your experiences	No	83.5%	88.5%	86.8%	87.7%	78.8%	88.4%
	Yes	16.5%	11.5%	13.2%	12.3%	21.2%†	11.6%

Wellbeing

Positive Mental Health

Some students experience positive mental health – defined as manifestations of emotional (e.g., satisfaction with life, happiness), psychological (e.g., purpose, autonomy, mastery) and social (e.g., social contribution, integration to one's community) wellbeing.³³ Students who experience high levels of emotional, social, and psychological wellbeing are said to be *flourishing*. By contrast, students with low levels of positive mental health are considered to be *languishing*. Alternatively, if not in these two categories, students are classified as having moderate positive mental health. Below we present findings for your school, comparable schools, and the provincial sample. We also present findings for specific groups at your school.

Table 30. Positive Mental Health Among Students at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario³⁴

	University of Waterloo (n=550)	Universities of comparable size (n=1177)	Ontario (n=2529)
Flourishing	20.5%	26.3%†	26.3%†
Moderate	66.7%	59.5%	60.2%
Languishing	12.7%	14.3%	13.6%

Table 31. Positive Mental Health Among Students at the University of Waterloo Compared by Gender Identity, Racialization, and Disability Status³⁵

	Trans students (n=118)	Cisgender LGBQ students (n=432)	Racialized students (n=183)	Non-racialized students (n=367)	Students with a disability (n=52)	Students without a disability (n=495)
Flourishing	17.8%	21.3%	17.5%	22.1%	17.3%	21.0%
Moderate	63.6%	67.6%	65.6%	67.3%	59.6%	67.3%
Languishing	18.6%	11.1%	16.9%	10.6%	23.1%	11.7%

Overall, participants from the University of Waterloo were significantly less likely to experience positive mental health (flourishing) compared to students from comparable universities and students in the Ontario sample.

³³ Keyes, C. L. M. (2005). Mental illness and/or mental health? Investigating axioms of the complete state model of health. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 73*(3), 539-548. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.73.3.539

³⁴ Significance differences were calculated by comparing the proportion of students who are flourishing (vs not flourishing, including moderate or languishing) across groups.

³⁵ Ibid.

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Mental Distress

Unfortunately, many students experience mental distress. This was measured using a four-item scale describing symptoms of mental distress, including feeling nervous, anxious or on edge; feeling down, depressed or hopeless; not being able to stop or control worrying; and little interest or pleasure in doing things. Students were asked to indicate how frequently they experienced these symptoms in the past two weeks from 0 = ‘Not at all’ to 4 = ‘Nearly every day.’ Average scores are calculated and then categorized based on cut-off points proposed by the scale’s authors: none, mild, moderate, and severe.³⁶ Below we present findings for your school, comparable schools, and the provincial sample. We also present findings for specific groups at your school.

Table 32. Mental Distress Among Students at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario³⁷

	University of Waterloo (n=545)	Universities of comparable size (n=1166)	Ontario (n=2511)
None	21.3%	16.4%	15.8%
Mild	34.1%	28.5%	28.3%
Moderate	24.2%	26.3%	26.7%†
Severe	20.4%	28.8%†	29.2%†

Table 33. Mental Distress Among Students at the University of Waterloo Compared by Gender Identity, Racialization, and Disability Status³⁸

	Trans students (n=118)	Cisgender LGBQ students (n=427)	Racialized students (n=180)	Non-racialized students (n=365)	Students with a disability (n=52)	Students without a disability (n=490)
None	17.8%	22.2%	23.3%	20.3%	11.5%	22.4%
Mild	32.2%	34.7%	35.0%	33.7%	23.1%	35.3%
Moderate	26.3%	23.7%	25.6%	23.6%	30.8%†	23.3%
Severe	23.7%	19.4%	16.1%	22.5%	34.6%†	19.0%

Participants from the University of Waterloo were significantly less likely to experience moderate-to-severe mental distress than students from universities of comparable size and students in the Ontario sample. Overall, among participants from your school, students with a disability were significantly more likely to experience moderate-to-severe mental distress than students without a disability.

³⁶ Kroenke, K., Spitzer, R.L., Williams, J.B.W., & Lowe, B. (2009). An ultra-brief screening scale for anxiety and depression: The PHQ-4. *Psychosomatics*, 50(6), 613-621. doi:10.1016/S0033-3182(09)70864-3

³⁷ Significance differences are between students experiencing moderate or severe mental distress vs mild to no distress

³⁸ Ibid.

Student Satisfaction

We measured students’ overall satisfaction with their university using a two-item scale: (1) “If I had to do it all over again, I would still attend this university;” and (2) “I would recommend attending this university to others.” Possible answers ranged from 1 = ‘Strongly disagree’ to 7 = ‘Strongly agree.’ Higher average scores indicate greater satisfaction. Comparative findings are presented below.

Table 34. Average Student Satisfaction at the University of Waterloo Compared to Comparable Universities and Ontario

	University of Waterloo (n=568)	Universities of comparable size (n=1222)	Ontario (n=2636)
Institutional Satisfaction (1 to 7)	5.2	4.9 [†]	5.2

Table 35. Average Student Satisfaction at the University of Waterloo Compared by Gender Identity, Racialization, and Disability Status

	Trans students (n=120)	Cisgender LGBQ students (n=448)	Racialized students (n=193)	Non-racialized students (n=375)	Students with a disability (n=52)	Students without a disability (n=513)
Institutional Satisfaction (1 to 7)	4.9 [†]	5.2	5.0 [†]	5.3	5.0	5.2

Next Steps...

Ultimately, we hope these results are helpful in your efforts to promote the inclusion, academic development, and wellbeing of LGBTQ2S+ students whilst attending to their intersecting identities.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact the Thriving on Campus team at lgbtq2scampusresearch@wlu.ca

We would like to know how you use information in this report to strengthen your schools' policies and practices to meet the needs of diverse LGBTQ2S+ students. Please send us an update at the email above. In addition, if you have any resources, strategies, or program and practice models to share, please share them with us. We would be happy to pass them along to other schools.

In the meantime, you may find the resources listed below helpful to you and your team.

The current phase of the Thriving on Campus project involves interviews with LGBTQ2S+ university students across Ontario. We look forward to developing a rich and vivid understanding and description of LGBTQ2S+ students' experiences.

JOIN AN UPCOMING WEBINAR: Educational webinars to be held in early 2020 will address key findings from our study and recommended actions campuses can take to promote LGBTQ2S+ students' inclusion, wellbeing, and success. If you would like to be notified about these and other events, please let us know by entering your name and email [here](#).

LGBTQArchitect

Pennsylvania State University

A comprehensive repository of LGBTQ2S+ inclusion higher education resources and templates (e.g., training presentations, policy drafts, programming material)

Policy and Practice Recommendations

Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals

Documents describing best practices for LGBT inclusion and specifically supporting trans and queer students of colour

LGBTQ Students on Campus:

Issues and Opportunities for Higher Education Leaders

Kristen Renn

A concise description of key issues and best practices for the support of LGBTQ students



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.