Provost:
Good afternoon everyone. Good afternoon and welcome to the open forum on LGBTQ QIA cultural competency. I have to say that I’m really delighted to see such a great turnout on such a bitterly cold Chicago day. This is one of the many things that I love about Columbia College Chicago and have loved about it since I was first introduced to this institution, and that is the level of engagement that we have on this campus. Thank you all very much for being here I really look forward to a robust conversation this afternoon. I’m here primarily to listen but I do want to say a few words first and then we’re going to have a few words from Kara Summers who I think is here somewhere as well.

21:17
So let me talk about why we are doing this. Of course there has been some outcry about not scheduling a section of an LGBTQ course and there’s no doubt that our commitment or lack of commitment which ever it is to diversity is in fact reflected in our system of scheduling courses. But my sense was that, there was so much response to the scheduling of a single section of a single course that I thought that this issue had hit on a deeper nerve in our community and when you hit on a deeper nerve you really need to expose that and have a conversation about it. And so that’s what I want to do today is have a conversation about deeper issues surrounding identity and diversity in the context of LGBTQ QIA communities on our campus.

I’m not going to talk a lot about scheduling of courses right now i’m giving you a handout, some FAQ’s on scheduling and also a factsheet on HHSS courses. I do want to tell you that it is a fairly complex process that involves not a single department or single division within a department but the entire college, and it involves a complex estimation of enrollment from semester to semester and from year to year. We do have some pretty good ways of predicting that and for one thing we know that enrollment is always about 10 percent less in spring than it is in fall. So I asked the Deans to ask the Chairs to schedule about 10 percent fewer sections of courses in the spring so that we could be good shepherds of, most of you are students here today so, your tuition dollars making sure that we are using those dollars as efficiently as possible.

23:07
Of course anytime tough scheduling decisions have to be made, there can be controversy surrounding this. But, I don’t really want to focus this afternoon on that single section, of a single course for a single professor and in fact i don’t think that is an appropriate thing to talk about in a public forum because that is really a personnel decision. But other things are fair game and I’ll talk about that now. We’ve made a commitment and it’s manifest in our strategic plan not just to diversity because every institution of higher learning in the United States has some sort of blah blah blah about diversity. But our commitment is not a blah blah blah
commitment, our commitment is a commitment to leadership and that’s a very specific and powerful kind of commitment that we want to be national leaders in the areas of diversity and inclusion. And that commitment takes a deep level of engagement across our entire community and that’s what I’m hoping for here today is that deep level of engagement. I’m hoping that this will be the first of many of these kinds of forums about issues of identity, issues of diversity, issues of inclusion on our campus. So what do I want to hear about? I want to hear your ideas on how we achieve that commitment to national leadership. I want to hear your ideas on how we make diversity, how we embed diversity systemically in everything we do. In the way we schedule courses, in the way we design our curriculum, in the diversity of courses in our curriculum. In the way that we embed issues of diversity and inclusion in all courses in our curriculum so that we don’t just call out specific courses as diversity courses, there’s nothing wrong with diversity courses but we need to recognize that diversity courses in and of themselves are not sufficient. There are other kinds of issues, we need to think about our facilities, we need think about our extracurricular activities and our co curricular activities. We need to think about how we recruit and retain faculty, we need to think about how we recruit and retain students. We need to think about the criteria we use for tenuring our faculty, all of these things are fair game in a discussion about you manifest a commitment to diversity.  

25:37
What I hope this is not is two things; I hope it doesn’t slip into a discussion about the scheduling of a single section because the problem with that is that there are lots of different kinds of sections of different kinds of courses, all of which are important to someone and my job as provost is to make sure that I’m a good shepherd of your tuition dollars so I had to reduce the number of sections that we are offering in the spring because there won’t be as many students here in the spring. So we’ll have about 90 percent of the tuition dollars that we’ve had this fall to pay our faculty to teach those courses in the spring. However, a discussion about scheduling of courses more broadly is something I’m very open to. The other thing that I hope this is not is an ad hominem attack on individuals. I want this to be at the levels of ideas and not at the level of pointing fingers at people or criticising individual people. I don’t think that’s productive, I think that will be a destructive road that we don’t need to go down. the reality is, we have a commitment to diversity at this institution. Are we living up to it fully? Probably not. Will we ever get there? Absolutely not. But we need to continue working on getting there. There will always be an open road ahead of us, you can help us figure out how to get down that road.  

27:07
The reason I gave out the fact sheet and FAQ’s, is I wanted to give you some sense of where we stand right now at this moment in history. This is not to suggest we’re there, we’ve arrived, everything is fine. But it’s to make sure that the conversation is based on some notion of where we are at this point in time. And we’ll also have Kara talking about where we are at this point in time in other arenas. I just want to say two other things quickly because I don’t want to dominate this. The first is, I’m sure some of you are questioning “is this sincere?” “is this real?” I understood when I took this job that there would be people who would question my
sincerity but those people don’t know me. The reality is, I didn’t have to take this job. I’m here because I want to be and I’m here because of two things; I’m here because of Dr. Kwon Wu Kim’s passion for genuine shared governance and his particular commitment to leadership and diversity, which is something that I believe in as well. And I’m here because this is such an extraordinarily engaged community that wants to participate in these kinds of dialogues. So this is real, this is sincere, we do want to hear what you have to say and I hope that you’ll speak out openly and fearlessly about what you want to say. The other thing that I thought I should address is my own personal credibility. Why is an old, white, straight man standing here, leading a conversation about LGBTQ QIA diversity. I understand that all those categories I just identified, old, white and straight, are kind of privileged groups in our society. But that doesn’t mean I don’t understand the struggle for identity because I went through, in my youth my own personal struggle for identity. It doesn’t mean that I can’t understand a struggle for identity. the other thing is privilege is a token with two sides. there’s no question that there are advantages to privilege but there are responsibilities that come with it too. I’m in this role as your provost because I’m passionately committed to that responsibility. To my responsibility to help make this institution greater than it already is a better place than it already is and to help make this world a better place than it already is, and so that’s why we are having this conversation. So now I would like to ask Kara to come up and just say a few words and then we’ll open this up.

29:38

**Kari Sommers:**

Thank you Dr. Wearden. And thank you for hosting us today. I also want to take a quick moment to thank Lott and Precious who will be leading us in the dialogue and Sheila Carter, the executive director of student engagement and culture and Kim Wetherly, the director of multicultural affairs. We are actually in the process, as many of you know, of the hiring process for new LGBTQ coordinator. In the next few weeks, we will be bringing candidates on campus to have college wide meetings so judging from the size of this room I think we’ll have nice attendance in some of those so that will be awesome. So I just wanted to let everyone know that and then also ‘ve come to understand that we have not done a very good job of communicating some of the work that’s been done in the office of LGBTQ culture and community. two years ago there was great effort with student surveys, student research and a five year LGBTQ plan. I’m afraid I didn’t bring enough copies today but I’d like to draw your attention to the LGBTQ website where you can find the full report, including all of the research and you can also find the plan. So very briefly I’m going to give you a few updates on the plan that some of you may be aware of, some of you maybe not. These come from the recommendations from the report and I have to switch hands (sorry). We are very excited one of the most important first steps that we took with the five year plan for inclusion included an updated statement of non-discrimination that included gender identity and expression. The college is fully on board with that and all of our policies are up to date. We’ve also completed the LGBTQ student survey and we expect to revisit that once we have a new hire on board, so that will be one of the new hires first jobs. We also have the completion of the five year plan, the publishing of the single use restrooms, as I understand really needs to be updated,
again this is a process. We also have the wide distribution from CiTE of the letter to faculty regarding transgender educational issues, we are now able to offer residential housing that is mixed gender and gender inclusive. Last but not least we have the college wide systemic change that allows current and prospective students to use their preferred first name. That took 10 offices, college wide and a year to make that happen. I tell you this understanding full well that we are just in the beginning stages, and we have much for work to do. I’m really excited to hear what the community has to say today, I am absolutely positive that it will inform our next steps. Thank you all for coming, I will be taking lots of notes.

**Provost:** 32:38
Ok I just wanted to really quickly introduce our moderators, forgive me Lott, our moderators are Precious Davis, assistant director of diversity recruitment initiatives in enrollment management and admissions, and Lott Hill who is the Executive Director for CiTE, and they will be moderating the conversation this afternoon, and I am going to sit here and listen.

**Lott Hill:** 33:12
And that is why I’m going to take away your mic until we allow for you to have it back. So one of the things that Precious and I discussed with the Provost and Kari and others, was that today should really be about the administration listening to the community, this is really about hearing the feedback the comments and the questions they are coming from a diverse community, we want the administration to listen to the community today, it’s not really about trying to give answers, they are here to listen. So Precious tell us a little about yourself.

**Precious Davis:** 33:52
Good afternoon everyone and thank you so much for being here, my name is Precious, and I am an alumni from the college, give it up for alumni! As the provost said I am also the assistant director of diversity recruitment initiatives in enrollment management. I have a personal relationship with Victoria Shannon, I have taken her class, and I just wanted to thank Victoria Shannon for her contributions. Starting off I just wanted to say these conversations are often difficult, but we must have them, and they are important conversations to have, all of us are participants and must be respectful. This is a dialogue in achieving our strategic plan, and start planning for the future, to be more inclusive to eh LGBTQ community here at Columbia College.

**Lott Hill:** 34:50
The conversation today will be webcast we are also making sure that it is as accessible as we can possibly make it today, so we have our ASL interpreters here with us, and this is the view that can be seen as webcast and folks that are tuning in online are welcome to contribute to the conversation through Twitter and the use of the hashtag #columinclusion to contribute today. We will stop the conversation when there are tweets that we need to hear out here in the space. As frequently happens particularly in the queer community at large and in conversations like we’re often operating simultaneously from a space of loss and change and I feel that it is important to acknowledge that this week the queer community lost a true icon,
trailblazer and groundbreaker in the loss of Leslie Feinberg and so I would just like to welcome Leslie here into the space, understanding that it is a spirit of activism of proactivism in a spirit of really striving to find a space of dialogue so that we can talk across a difference. That is kind of how we hope the conversation today will transpire, we’re calling it a conversation because we hope that there is a sense of dialogue in the room but again we are going to ask the administration we have the provost, the president, and several vice presidents in the room, and we ask that they are really here to listen to the community. The audio from this will be transcribed into notes, the notes will also be informing the strategic planning process that is underway right now. If there is something that you wish to say today that you would also like to communicate in the strategic planning process, you may want to attend a roundtable session that is part of that. You can also contribute your comments to the civic commons website, and I think that you guys have gotten many emails from this guy over here about that website. Please do participate, and then we will also include some of the information here on an administrative level to be carried forth in the strategic plan.

Precious Davis: 37:10
In terms of our comments today I ask that you keep your comments brief, that you keep your comments about 60 seconds. I ask that you think about does this need to be said, does this need to be said by me, and does this need to be said by me right now in this current moment. You also can engage in this conversation, like Lott said through the #columinclusion, and we’re going to start our forum.

Lott Hill: 37:33
Yeah, and so just real importantly it’s critical to Precious and I that we state that we are members of the queer community both at Columbia College and large. We do understand and we believe that our curriculum needs to be more diverse. We do believe ourselves that we need more classes to represent the diversity of the student body, faculty, and staff of the institution, and our communities. So starting with that I guess we did not model what we’re going to ask the folks to do, we’re going to ask that one person uses the mic, so whoever has the mic is the person who’s speaking, I will be watching the second hand, and so we may ask you to wrap it up if you’re taking more than a minute. But we are going to ask folks to introduce themselves by name, the gender pronoun that you use and your affiliation with the institution. So how does that work Precious?

Precious Davis: 38:33
My name is Precious, my preferred gender pronoun is she her; diva, and I am the assistant director of diversity recruitment initiatives. You’ll notice that we are sort of in the theatre of the round. So if some people could just come up a little bit, because we’re having a conversation, and a dialogue and we really want it to be communal so that we weren’t talking at each other. Does anyone have any questions before we get started?

Lott Hill: 39:16
Fantastic. So I am Lott Hill, I prefer he, his. I am comfortable with any neutral pronouns such as they and their and anything said with love and respect. So I am going to handle this side of the audience and Precious will handle this side. Who’s ready to get started? We’re going to dive right in. We thought about asking you questions to prompt the conversation, but we would really like for it to go where it needs to.

Karen Osborne: 39:48
English Department, I came to Columbia College in 1986. The pronoun I use is she and I’m fine with anything out of love and respect. A little bit of history if you’ll indulge me when I came to Columbia I had been a victim of homophobia in other academic environments. When I came to Columbia, my first year here I went to something called AIDS Awareness week, I sat in the audience and a highly laced administrator at that time stood up and said “ I want to support AIDS Awareness week for all of these reasons and also because I am a gay man.” I can not tell you how much that meant to me at the time, I felt like I had died and went to academic heaven. Columbia is not perfect, but Columbia was way ahead of most of the rest of academia in the 1980’s when I came here. It was the first place I came where I could be me, and still have my teaching career. Now that being said I understand that today is not the mid 80’s, but my department has always had a great variety of literature classes, and other classes, I have taught community engagement classes, I have been able to design whatever queer themed class I’ve wanted to, such as literature of HIV/AIDS, writing and rhetoric 2 creating queer communities, we have people teaching queer literature every semester. We can always use more. I’d also like to say that my colleagues across Columbia College, especially my non gay and non queer colleagues have always been in my experience powerful champions of diversity in the curriculum, that actually lead the way, like BoBo Dwine in Television, people like Susan Blemmally, people like Sue Anzoli used to teach here. These colleagues of mine have been a great inspiration to me and they’re across the college in all different departments. People of powerful commitment to LGBT inclusion curriculum, and to advancing the welfare of our needs and listening to our LGBT students, and I just wanted to remind that enrollments do depend upon factors other than our curriculum. Hopefully Columbia can come out of this and be stable, but we are an institution that can be very proud of our historic commitment to diversity. Thank you.

Lott Hill: 42:32
So thank you, I just want to remind folks if we can avoid whenever possible, even when giving compliments, avoid naming folks or name calling, because we do want to keep this conversation broad and productive in terms of considering the implications of these names on our community.

Precious Davis: 42:54
Comments? Suggestions? Visions?

Greg Beldino: 43:03
I am an alum of the college, class of 2011, and former employee of the school. I will be timing this as well., because if we cannot please ourselves than would can we please. Preferably he him and his. In my former position here one of my jobs had involved calling students to inform them that their classes had been cancelled due to low enrollment. These classes were opened until the very last possible chance to allow students the opportunity to sign up for them. These classes would sometimes only have two people signed up for them, these were not fun calls, these would royally screw with people's plans for graduation, or academic career. This also of course took away work from people I knew and worked with. As an alum, I have been a guest lecturer in LGBT studies classes, at this college, for the past four years. During which, each class I have never seen a class that was less than full, I have never seen a class less than full and interested. The reason I bring this up is because we are cancelling classes, not because at the last second we have found that the enrollment was too low to allow them to go on; but because college wide enrollment is generally going to be down, that suggests that we have no real evaluative criteria for when to cancel a class. If we cannot trust a class, hold the applause people I only have so many seconds, if we cannot trust a college to allow a class to continue when it has active enrollment how can we trust them to support other classes and to create and support new classes in the curriculum. Thank you.

**Lott Hill:** 44:53
The floor is open folks

**Haley Weigman:** 45:04
Hi my name is Haley Weigman, I prefer she, her anything with love. I toured a lot of different schools before I came to Columbia, and one of the first things I asked each and every school was do you have any type of commitment to an LGBT programme, and most schools responded with what does that mean. I was very impressed with Columbia when I first came, and I heard all of the cultural programs they were offering, and classes they had that supported this community. I actually formed the Gay straight Alliance at my high school, we didn’t have one. It was so important to me that me and my friends and the people that I love are respected, and that respect is taught and shared to other people, and we preach that our school offers that diversity and that support. I work in the admissions department, I am one of the tour guides, and this is one of the things we continue to tell the students that we offer this community, and to hear that they are slowly shutting its windows, it’s something that we market as one of our most promising portion and aspect of our school is really heart breaking. There are plenty of programs that have lots of attendance, and the desire to take these classes is really big. I understand budget cuts, and I understand when we can’t offer every class, but when this is something that we are using as a selling point, and people come here because of this, its so important to keep it going, it’s one of the only reasons why I came to this school.

**Dylan Holfred:** 46:44
I am soon to be a student at Columbia. I go by lots of things. The one thing that I want to talk about is that Columbia was a place for me to be myself and that's one thing that brought me
here and the amount of studies that it has not only to explore themselves further mentally, but also how they perceive the world around them and through classes and through education, you can change a person’s entire way of viewing each other. That was the biggest point of me coming to Columbia and to help other students explore themselves more and the world around them better. I am going into fashion studies and there are plenty of colleges that I could go to but not a lot of colleges that I know I can be myself at. Thank you.

**Lott Hill:** 47:37
Thank you, so I’ll just remind you that, first of all I would just like to acknowledge how many folks have come out for this conversation today which does I think indicates how important this is to our community, but how many moments do you have The Provost, and the President and the Vice Presidents in the same room simply listening to you? So this is an opportunity to express your voice here in person and also on twitter using the #columinclusion, and please we are here to listen.

**Chester Monroe:** 48:14
Good afternoon my name is Chester Monroe, I am an alum of Columbia College, a BFA in Graphic Design from 2009. I go by him, his, he, girl or mine. I’m attending today in part and I am glad that there are Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Provosts here because on October 26th I sent an email and a letter by post to the President’s office about some of these issues and I never even got an automated response back saying that the email had been received. That disturbs me, and I find that appalling. I’m also here in part to be a supporter of a class, I won’t say the name or the section but I really love that we mentioned Leslie Feinberg because without this person it might have taken me years to find Leslie Feinberg and her book Stone Butch Blues on my own and it happened directly because of that class. I’m also really glad I’m sitting next to Dylan because as an alum of this college it’s really hard to sit and listen to a President say that he is committed to diversity and then watch many many of these class cuts happen, and again what you said the audience they are trying to reach, it’s very hard. To use the word finances just seems like a lame excuse, it doesn’t hold water for me. I have written something so I am trying to paraphrase this as quickly as I can, that was pretty much what I wanted to say, and again I really just want to address the issue when alumni and students contact the Presidents office, they need to feel like they’re being heard, and way before this.

**Taylor Townsend:** 50:02
My name is Taylor Townsend and I am a film and video major, and my issue is that with diversity. We talk about it but in the film department there is so little of it. It is male dominated, straight white male, there is no actual indication that diversity exists within the department. Look how many of our teachers and faculty are of color or of anything other than white. So we talk about diversity but we don’t actually live it, and that is very disheartening to me, it’s why I came here. I have not seen much of an indication and that is what Columbia stands for, and has the potential to do that, and the community is here for it. And the fact that we are closing so many of the programs, does not really indicate that we are being supportive of that community.
**Cole Robertson:** 50:47
My name is Cole Robertson, I am an alum from the photography MFA program, and I’m on staff here in the library. First of all I want to throw a question out, how many of you are currently enrolled students? Ok so let’s get real, when you have a class that fills up, you guys are saying with your tuition dollars that that class is meaningful, that area of study is meaningful for you. When that class is then cancelled, other people are telling you no you need to divert your studies to other areas. How do you feel about that? That’s all. Oh and I prefer he but, you can call me any names, I don’t care.

**Brian 51:42**
True… Hello everyone my name is Brian, I’m a current student here and I prefer they, them and theirs as pronouns. I wanted to speak to this, and I agree that it shows that when we have classes that are filling up that this means that there is a strong support for those classes and that’s an important point to make. And at the same time I want to say that sometimes when classes don’t fill up, that does not make them any less important to have. And I’m speaking specifically about a class that was cancelled which actually is not listed there, it was called Queer Theory, and it was specifically for Cultural Studies students. And it was shut down because of a system that says if a class isn’t 60 percent [full] that it gets shut down automatically and the problem with this is that it does not address specific lacks of “diversity courses” and specific majors and departments. Furthermore I want to say that offering those classes consistently is a community service in and of itself. So it’s less about “our students are supporting this or our money is supporting this or this is the best systematic use of this money” but rather, we need to offer these because our commitment to diversity comes before that. So wherever that needs to be cut in order to offer these classes, for me that is the preeminent purpose of college, the education. Education that is diverse and inclusive.

**Lance 53:05**
I’m Lance. I am a cultural studies student, I’ve been here for three years doing the work. So I want to call attention to this page that has all of the courses on it. If you look at the spring 2015 column, there are 4 courses that say either queer or gay or anything of the nature in the title. The rest are women and gender studies courses. Two different things. With that I want to note that if there’s 4 courses there, that are queer based, there are also three courses that I know Trans people have been harmed in. Actively, actively harmed in. So, if we’re going to put those here, we need to be thinking a little more critically about them. I have a lot of other thoughts. Another thought is, if we have courses that fill up, why don’t we have students that create a petition that says “I am going to take this course” and if you get 25, you get it added because that’s going to be a full course. I’ve heard that this happens at our college and I think that might be the solution here, I think that’s pretty simple. I had more, things about policy vs. process but we can talk about that later.

**Lott Hill 54:19**
One quick response from the provost.
Provost 54:22
I really do hear what you’re saying about students voting with their feet so to speak, and that the classes that fill up are the classes that students want. I also heard the previous comment about, in times past, waiting and cancelling classes at the last minute when they didn’t fill up and while there is some value to that, I stopped that in part because I had concerns about students getting the schedule they needed if classes got cancelled at the last minute, and faculty, particularly part time faculty, being able to determine how they are going to make a living if they thought they had a class and then it gets cancelled at the last minute. I think what we need, and what would help a great deal, is some sort of a waitlisting process so that if a class fills, you go on to a waitlist and if there’s a sufficient number of people who want that class, that triggers the offering of that class. We need to work on that technology I think, and that will help a lot with this.

Gabe 55:19
Hi, I’m Gabe. I use He, Him, His, They, Them, Their pronouns. I am a musical theatre major here at Columbia. I just want to talk about how we promise diversity and yet I still feel like we have a long way to go. This year I recently came out as Trans and went through the whole process of changing my name and I even went to lots of my professors and said “Hey, use these pronouns, this is my name”, many professors have been really respectful but I have a certain professor who has still misgendered by calling me the wrong name and It’s weird and kind of makes me uncomfortable and we’re supposed to be so diverse and welcoming to people and I still feel like we have such a long way to go.

Diana Valera 56:17
My name is Diana Valera, I am the president of the part-time faculty union at Columbia College and I sit on the diversity sub-committee for the strategic planning. I was trying to just listen for a little bit as well but I need to say a few things. One; this meeting was laid out with specific ground rules and it’s informing the community about what can and cannot be discussed. With the topic as race, where we already are silenced in so many ways, race and diversity, and these kinds of issues, I’m having an issue with being silenced. I think it should be a truly open discussion. And I strongly suggest that we open the forum up without any kind of strict ground rules like that. Now I wear many different hats at this college and I can tell you that I’m also on the strategic planning committee where I see that the fact that Dr. Kim has laid out one of the strategic planning commitments of the college is diversity and inclusion. To me that’s a strong statement because he has already said that this is a commitment, it’s no question it’s a commitment by the college. What I see though is it needs to be manifested in an institutional commitment. How does that happen? I’m hearing discussions about we have to wait until a course fills before we open another course and I think that’s not correct. I think what needs to happen is that these courses do hold a special status by the college. It needs to be that type of commitment that the college and the institution makes. Thank you.

Precious Davis 58:07
We just want to make sure everyone’s voice is heard, we’re not cutting anyone off, we just want to make sure everyone has a chance to speak and we are on a time limit, and we have time constraints. Feel free to speak in this space but we just want to make sure everyone’s voice is heard.

**Lott Hill 58:18**
As a long standing member of both the Columbia community and as a member of the queer community myself, I do want to acknowledge one thing that I think a lot of us in the room are probably aware of. In far as about 20 years at Columbia College Chicago, this is the first time that I have ever seen a forum of this nature take place and I think that indicates something from the administration. Again that to me speaks of an effort to be making progress in these areas that is truly responsive to the community, that’s my personal opinion. Secondly, having been apart of these conversations as they have been transpiring, in terms of framing today's conversation, I think the intention is that this is an open dialogue and so if you’ve misunderstood our suggestion or request that we avoid naming and name calling, the intention is not to sensor anyone’s comments or sensor anyone’s input but to try to keep the conversation as productive and collegial as possible. I don’t mean that to negate anything anyone has said, but to hopefully underscore the spirit of the conversation we’re hoping to have today. Thank you.

**Dana Ares-Fens 59:39**
Cultural Studies student, she, her her’s. I want to go back to this idea of gender pronouns, and I don’t like preferred gender pronouns because it is not a preference, it’s my identity and it does not exist in a vacuum. So far there are very few space on campus where you actively have not only students but faculty asking you what your pronouns are, and how you want to be addressed. This is something that has been brought up a couple of times by the women and gender studies and humanities department. Your identity should not exist within spaces that have been created for women and people and queer bodies, it should exist everywhere in life. You should be able to go into a space and not have to tell your teacher hey this is my name, these are my pronouns, and worry that they are going to respect it. I would ask that we talk about a way to implement a sensitivity training that integrates gender pronouns into all courses on campus and that all faculty members are aware of it and respect all students identities.

**Oscar Valdes 1:00:45**
Hi my name is Oscar Valdes and I work in the department of humanities and social sciences. To a student who said about a wait list, our department, three years ago, started a wait list for courses, so if students were trying to get into classes they could contact me, so if a student drops we are bringing students in. So definitely contact me at ovaldes@colum.edu if you are trying to get into a course in our department and it is closed already. Thanks.

**Amanda Strauss 1:01:18**
Hi my name is Amanda Strauss, I use they them pronouns, I am a student here in Graphic Design and Cultural Studies. I know we talk a lot about diversity, but there needs to be more sensitivity training. Alright I am just going to say it, there is a course that I have taken, that is on the list of courses, where I was asked for my biological sex, and gender, and my gender wasn’t even listed. I am not the only student who has a problem with this, where my gender was invalidated. I was told I was wrong about my gender that’s what you are, that’s not a thing, and I am not the only student who has had this problem. I am not the only trans student who has had this problem, in this course. Unfortunately I was able to drop it because I figured out this was not an ok class, and this was not an ok thing to do. There were students who didn’t figure this out in time and had to withdraw and they had to stick it out and deal with it, and then be misgendered and insulted every single day they take this course, and that’s not ok. You shouldn’t go into these courses being afraid that you’re going to be misgendered and invalidated every single day.

Michelle Nance 1:02:46
Hi my name is Michelle Nance. I am a senior here at Columbia, double fashion studies major. I am also the president of common ground, Columbia’s LGBTQ student organization here on campus. I would also like to talk about sensitivity training for faculty and staff on campus. I have had many members of common ground tell me stories of how they have been horrified by teachers and even fellow students misgendering them, and treating them as if they are anything other than a student in those classes. It has been horrible to sit with these members and talk about these things and come up with ways to educate each other as well as those ones around us. Sensitivity training is something that has been talked about since I have been here, for the past four years, and I think that it is time to take that step forward and make make that happen. Not only having a training but making it mandatory for all faculty and staff.

Megan 1:03:53
I’m Megan, I am an alum, I am a part time faculty member in the creative writing department, and in the CiTE. I am so grateful to hear from all of the students here today. I am especially grateful for what Michelle just said, we offer this training of the CiTE, but we can’t get the people in the room that need to be in the room. This absolutely needs to be mandatory on a department level, and I would an overall discussion of how that happens. Especially as we move forward in the strategic planning process. Thank you.

Lott Hill 1:04:18
We are going to get a couple more comments from the room and then we are going to check in with our twitter feed, briefly.

Jeremy 1:04:23
My name is Jeremy, I am a technical theatre student. I apologize for not standing I have issues with my leg. Pronouns, you can call me whatever you please, I don’t care. There have been four main things focusing around the room and that has been : community, faculty, finances, and leadership. I want to draw attention to a couple of things. First, the Columbia
motto. I am not going to read it in latin because I suck at latin, it’s to be rather than to seem. Then if you read the Columbia about page on our website, it says we know that faculty who are actively engaged in the subjects they teach are uniquely qualified to share their expertise in the classroom. If you read the financial disclosure report, tuition goes up on average about four and a quarter percent every year, over the last five years. Possibly most importantly, in the mission statement quote: to help students find who they are and discover their own voices, respect their own individuality, and approve their self esteem and self confidence. There is this concept of leadership floating around, and it hurts me to say this, I have served in the military and in the military I have seen people die for each other. I live at ⅓ the poverty level and I still willingly go out of my way to help people who I know can help themselves. We have this sense of community that is structured, we have the student body, we have faculty and we have the administration. They are three separate entities. I don’t understand why the administration can’t take their own pay cut to solve the financial problems, can they not step up to the plate and shave a little bit off of their turkey to put on someone else’s plate to make sure the students get what they need through the faculty getting what they need.

Sam 1:06:09
Alright my name is Sam. I am a senior film major, I am also working on campus as a tour guide. I have a few things to say. First, about sensitivity training and things like that. What systems are in place for faculty who we find to be disrespectful or not allowing themselves to be open about how we identity our sexuality and our race. I am a student who has filed complaints with the film department with human resources, and had to go back to class with teachers, and they said we will talk to them, we’ll do something about it, and I was still being treated the exact same way. I’m still getting comments that make me uncomfortable. So what are we doing for our faculty who aren’t willing to step forward and make the change. Also, with the name change program I am putting this out there, I have had to submit a name change request three times through Columbia, because at the beginning of every semester it reverts back to my birth name. For me, if it’s the middle of the semester, I’ve been going by Sam, and I look on the roster and I see oh that’s my birth name and I feel very uncomfortable. That can lead to misgendering in classrooms and that can be very triggering for me, and I know other students who are trans or gender non conforming, so what are we doing to make sure that doesn’t happen.

Raina 1:07:37
Hi I’m Raina I am the president of black film society on campus as well as a one tribe scholar. I use I, they, them, she, her, her’s pronouns. I would like to say sensitivity training and cultural competency training period. That’s actually not all I wanted to say, I wanted to say that as the college is going through many many changes I keep seeing this sentence “like all colleges and universities,” and I don’t like that, it makes me uncomfortable.

Lott Hill 1:08:08
So we’re going to check in really quick as far as the twitter feed goes and Peegan Quinn is going to share some of those tweets with us now.

**Peegan Quinn 1:08:14**
So there is a good amount of activity on the tag #colum inclusion, so I’ll just read a selection here, I encourage you to check it out for yourselves so that you can see all of them. Lenn S. says thanks to Karen for recognizing the CC special culture and history. KR Lee says English and HSS departments are fairly typical spaces for LGBTQ studies, what about departments such as CAS and A+D? Bobby Floats says that for Columbia to present and market as an inclusionary space and then not be fully invested in the growth and the sustainability of that inclusion is beyond problematic, it's unethical. Ames Hawkins says, let’s talk about a minor and a faculty advisor, what about getting a new director for the office of LGBTQ and CNC. Beth Davis Bergs says faculty need to be educated in the terms people use today faculty are no longer as young as we think we are. Ames Hawkins says that faculty definitely need some form of training about these issues, sure sign that you need it is if you think you don’t. Bronte Price says so grateful for students who are raising their voices.

**Lott Hill 1:09:38**
So if we missed anything in sharing the tweets that are appearing on twitter please raise your voice and help those folks get their voices up if you would like to read a tweet.

**Onye Ozuzu 1:09:50**
Hello my name is Onye Ozuzu and I am the chair of the dance department. I want to talk a little about sensitivity I think we should just call it faculty development and continuing education. I think that it is important to make that differentiation as sensitivity trainings can often be a little bit light, and keeps us at the very first level of the potential for this kind of re-education. Continuing education and professional development. The dance department, we started off two years ago by doing a two and a half day intensive workshop with the peoples institute for survival and beyond in race, and then this year we followed up with a reprisal of that work and then an intensive training on gender. What we are finding in our environment is that we are starting to get into much deeper conversations than just comfort, and pronouns, and that first level. We are starting to get into highly interesting and deeply rigorous academic discussions, philosophical discussions, content driven discussions. We are having students who identify as queer coming in to our required african dance classes and challenging us on the historical gender representations deep in the physical content of the practice of those technique classes and we’re having conversations where there is intersectionalities of race and racism and contemporary identifications of gender, and where we are talking about the difference between gender in african societies and gender in european societies, you know what I’m saying? It can get interesting and fun and inspiring and get much deeper into what we’re all here to do, which is to develop the ability to author culture.

**Juliet Bond 1:11:40**
Hi, I’m Juliet Bond and I teach a couple of courses here, or did, and I came today to support the overall student outcry and faculty outcry over the loss of classes and I wanted to start by really pointing out that this isn’t about one class at all, we have loss sections of gay and lesbian studies one and two, women in US society, race and ethnic relations, women and law, introduction to women and gender studies, exploring the goddess, queer theory, and then I want to point out that our faculty it takes two students to pay for us, we’re pretty cheap especially the adjunct right. So you don’t need that many of us to teach those important classes. If the university wants to wait and fill those classes at the last minute and it doesn’t fill, as an adjunct faculty I am grateful if that class is left open and allowed to fill and if it doesn’t go ahead and cancel it, that’s on me. I didn’t do my job making that class a good class right. That is all, thank you.

Caitlin 1:12:55
Hi I’m Caitlin, she and her. I didn’t come to Columbia just to strengthen my writing skills and learn about TV. I came to grow as a person and to grow as a person, I have to get better spiritually, and I feel like I can’t really do that without these classes. My art, I want it to represent my life. I think it is ridiculous when I go into my advisor and say something like gay and lesbian studies, they say oh well you can take a women studies class, I’m all about women that’s really cool. I would like to take a class that is directly for gay and lesbian studies. So that was all I really wanted to say.

Liz 1:13:32
Hi I’m Liz, an animation major, freshman year. She, her or they them pronouns, or anything said with love. When we talk about diversity I think it is really important to look at this list and look at these classes that are offered, but it is also really important to look at the classes that we have that are no on this list, and how diversity is involved in those classes. There is one course that I am taking this semester I went into not knowing what to expect, and I was pleasantly surprised to hear the word queer and transgendered mentioned in that class, without being prompted by this list, and I think that is a really important thing to talk about when we talk about diversity, or what content we can bring into classes. I’m in animation, I’m taking a film class right now, I would love some more queer inclusion in that, and go beyond this list. Challenge our teachers to bring the content and represent what we want and what we deserve in multiple forms.

Susan Imus 1:14:36
I’m Susan Imus, Chair of creative art therapies. Along the line of what Onye was discussing, that same thing is happening in our department. We have a number of classes that we have to look at social and cultural foundations as it relates to the counseling world. Some of our students challenge the level and it was very similar to what Onye was describing, that there can be many different levels of this, and the sensitivity level is the surface level. So what I challenge the students to do and what the students challenge the faculty to do is to create a course together. So we’ve been, this semester, having meetings on a regular basis, we have video taped all of our meetings. The richness of the discussions between the students and the
faculty are amazing. We’re hoping to put that into a film in itself. But this class that is getting created is deepening our understanding of diversity. I am not your normal. I’m just excited to say that departments are trying to do this work, and doing this work on a very deep level, and are listening to the voices of the students. So it is happening and I am just pleased to be a part of this.

**Pat O'Brien 1:15:54**
Good afternoon my name is Pat O'Brien I am an alumni of Columbia College. I am a graduate of Loyola University and John Marshall Law school. I am here today to show that there is outside support for the diversity program at Columbia College. I am here to support the students who seek to go to the diversity classes, and the professor who seek to teach it. It is a unique college to support diversity, it is not something that I have heard of, it is not something that existed when I went to college. Columbia needs to embrace it, it needs to embrace those faculty, students, and those classes and understand their uniqueness and the passion that comes from them. I do wish to though say briefly, that I did send an email. I received a response that I thought was inappropriate and unprofessional from the school. I sent a letter via US mail, I received no response. Thank you.

**Lott Hill 1:16:59**
Thank you, and as we start to move into the final thirty minutes of this conversation, I am going to respectfully ask the esteemed colleagues in the room to hold back and to really honor the Craig Ferguson rule. Does this need to be said, does this need to be said by me, and does this need to be said right now. I think what we are seeing is that student voice and the voice of the community really does need to be heard, and Precious and I are going to do an extra special job making sure that’s who we hand the mic to.

**Anna Madill 1:17:59**
Hello my name is Anna Madill, I am theatre student, she her they them, either way. I just wanted to go off of a point that someone made earlier about involving the queer community in other classes when it comes to history or science there are a lot of people in the queer community that are involved in those things, because we are not a recent thing we’ve been here for a while. So I think that is really important, because the people who take the LGBTQ classes are people who are already interested, and while that is great and that’s fantastic and I’m so glad we have that. The people who aren’t interested are the people who also need to learn about our community, because they need to know that we exist, and I think that is important.

**Sal 1:18:12**
Hi I’m Sal, you can call me she or whatever. I just wanted to just say that I am a triple threat, I am a black gay female, so in class sometimes it’s cool for me to be gay but it’s not cool for me to be black, and sometimes it’s cool for me to be gay but not cool for me to be a woman and this this and that. So when it comes to diversity and definitely sensitivity, I think it needs to go towards all minorities and everything, because I got a lot going on. So I think I should be
accepted all three ways, instead of just oh we love your gay side but you’re a woman and you’re black so we don't like you.

Megan 1:19:04

I’m Megan, current student, her, she, her’s, whatever. I would like to address the comment made earlier about spring enrollment and how we cut in spring because there is less people. But if there is problems in spring enrollment now can you imagine when students are suffocated in traditional courses and aren’t allowed to expand and explode I'm sorry expand and explore and then explode whatever. Then I think there will be a real problem in enrollment because nobody will come to Columbia because that quote on quote diversity will not be there. So I think we should end enrollment problems now with current students and future students exactly what we are clearly demanding.

Ava 1:19:48

I’m Ava, I’m in the film department. She, her, her’s. I really want reiterate that a class I took last semester, Documenting Social Injustice, had a really transformative impact on my career and it was cut this fall. and i just want to shed light on all the classes that were cut, not even just in this department but across the college i think there are a lot of important classes that were cut this semester that should be available. And also students...I've had this panic for the past two semesters, I'm graduating this year, I don’t know what’s going to be available, what’s not, I’m constantly dropping and adding classes the first 2 weeks of the semester and I would really like to take a couple classes that I don’t know are going to be available in the spring.

Bret King 1:20:40

My name is Bret King, I am a staff person and former student. I'm speaking from that ladder perspective as a former student to say that, like my friend over here who has now left was saying earlier, I think there is a demand for a minor in something like LGBT studies as opposed to just women and gender studies. the ladder is wonderful, that’s the course that i took but they're are people who are interested in specifically LGBT studies and I think there should be room for that.

JJ McCulcky 1:21:18

My name is JJ McCulcky, and any pronouns. I grew up in a small town where I was terrified to be who I was and of my identity. And through certain classes that I took last year that opened me up to so much knowledge and allowed me to be myself for the first at this school and that was one of the main things that attracted me to this school and now there are some classes
where I feel I can identify with myself but for the most part I feel like I have to hide parts of myself from everyone in the room and teachers who will occasionally disrespect other students and myself. I would just love to be able to walk into a room and just be able to be myself and for other students to be able to be their self throughout any time and not feel pressured to conform to something that they're not. Thank you.

**Lott Hill 1:22:10**

As we go forward here, Precious and I are going to be looking for folks who we haven't heard from yet. We will try to make sure that everybody gets heard but when folks are speaking for the first time we are going to give preference.

**Olivia 1:22:22**

Hi, I'm Olivia. I'm a cultural studies major, junior. They them pronouns. I've been seeing a lot of stuff being said about intersectionality and how certain parts of our identities get ignored in various classes, mainly that has to do with race. and in my major that has been the only place that i have found any sort of intersectionality programs or lessons being taught as far as race, gender and sexuality goes in one specific course. I think that if we are going to be teaching things about women and gender studies, we need to include stuff about race. If we are teaching something about sexuality it needs to be all inclusive of every part of our identities instead of just focusing on this one bit because otherwise we are only ignoring the rest of who we are. Thank you.

**Amy Isaac 1:23:21**

Hi my name is amy Isaac, She, her, hers pronouns. I'm a double major in film and game design and I've been really proud and honored to be able to speak as a guest lecturer in some of the lgbt studies classes. It’s been really amazing to see the feedback that I’ve gotten on topics that i’m really passionate about. I just want to say that I can imagine how amazing it would be if we had classes that covered these topics in all of the majors. I would love to have a class in interactive arts and media that covers queer characters and queer games or queer characters and queer films. There is a space at the college for these kind of classes and they need to be addressed and i think the fact that this room is so filled up that there were people standing in the hall, is all the evidence that we need to be able to support that. So for the people who are listening and who can make that happen, I think all of your evidence is right here in this room.

**Precious 1:24:24**

Are there any more students who haven't gotten a chance to speak yet?

**Danielle 1:24:29**
Hi I’m Danielle. Cultural Studies senior so I’ll be graduating but this is still really important. I think what I’m hearing is that we need at the very least one professor, full time, who can teach queer studies and queer theories. At least one, in multiple departments.

**Havilla 1:24:56**

Hi I’m Havilla, i go by they, them their and she her, all of those are fine. I work for admissions and I’m all bundled up to leave but I really wanted to thank everyone for all of their comments, they really ring true but also wanted to bring up administration and bureaucracy and I’m excited that there is a five-year plan but I think columbia college and be ahead of things instead of on track or behind other colleges especially when it;s concerns of gender lgbt issues are concerned. and if we have the support of our administration to go ahead and move things quicker i think that should be a priority and make the paperwork go faster, that’s it.

**Michelle Cockerham 1:25:46**

Hi, my name is Michelle Cockerham. I am currently a junior, I am theatre directing major, second major live and performing arts management, minor in stage combat. One of the greatest opportunities I have had is to take one of Victoria Shannons Gay and Lesbian studies classes. I came from an area where it was ok to be gay but you didn’t talk about, you didn’t discuss it, you did not ask about it. Within the first couple of months of me being able to be at columbia, I was actually able to come out and be myself. Within the next semester I was then learning about a group of people, a group of people down the street that have been doing so much for us as a community, and I didn’t even know they existed until I was able to take these classes, able to learn about these types of people and it changed my life. And it really touched me even on a spiritual sense, and now I’m actually one of her guest speakers because I was able to see the work of God through this class and I love (at one point i feel that we’ve lost it) but this diversity that we have. Chicago is one of the leading cities in the country about gay rights. The top ten most gay friendly neighborhoods, one of them is Boystown which is right off the Belmont stop and any student is able to go to it because we have our free cta passes, we have these abilies. But with these classes at Columbia we’re able to actually start somewhere. I’m not asking for classes to be added, and I know they should be, I fully agree with everyone who has stated that but I just want it to continue. That’s what we came here for, was that change, to live what you love, live with the people you actually care about and do that art. I know that my art to this day would not be the same if it wasn’t for these kind of classes.

**Precious**

We’ve got about 15 more minutes, so if we could hear from people who haven’t spoken. Has everyone spoke who wanted to speak in the room?
Jeff Able 1:27:49

Hi, I’m Jeff Able and when I’m dressed like this, I’ll take the “he” pronoun, in other circumstances, not. I just to add my voice to the call for increased training of faculty at the college in the terms of addressing all of these issues. I’m distressed by a loss of queer specific curriculum from the college but I would actually like to see queer issues inclusive in a broader sense of the curriculum so that when we are teaching things like art history, or music history or game design or ect. that these things come up and are openly, and in a friendly non-hostile environment, talked about and addressed. Academia is a weird area and homophobia is deeply entrenched in certain disciplines more than others. Certainly the humanities tend to be a little more open and at least given to discussion of these things other areas, I know my degrees are in music and everybody in the music department and my school was in denial that there was such a thing as gender, much less that you should talk about it in a classroom. So I encourage us all to get some new education for the faculty so that we can all address these things constantly.

Tayler Williams 1:29:28

Hi my name is Tayler Williams, I’m a senior at Columbia, She, Her pronouns. I study music with a minor in women and gender studies. I am a fat, black, queer, disabled woman and that shit doesn’t get you anywhere in a world run by old white men. And so, especially coming from the perspective of a music major, it’s a very male dominated major, there have been plenty of instances since I’ve started school here where I’ve felt invalidated as a woman, invalidated as a queer, invalidated as multiple other minorities just because everything is centered around men. So having classes like gay and lesbian studies 1 & 2 or intro to women and gender studies have been super important because they help to make me feel like a fully realized human being. Even with all that you are learning at Columbia, you can’t go out into the world and feel like a successful person, if you feel like there are parts of yourself you have to bury inside. You have to be able to talk, there has to be discourse, there has to be someplace where any student can go and feel comfortable and not feel like who they are is something to be ashamed of. There needs to be classes where we can go, where everything that makes us different can be celebrated. So if you take these classes away from us, you’re taking away chances for people to feel like they matter, and I think that’s a really terrible thing.

Jessica Paul 1:31:07

Hi I’m Jessica Paul, I’m a sophomore here at Columbia, She pronouns. I just wanted to say that taking Victoria Shannon’s class, gay and lesbian studies 1, has encouraged me to be proud of who I am and it has encouraged me to come out through my writing and my art and in my classes on the first day of school when they ask “tell us about you”. It’s not always easy, sometimes I want to go back in the closet and hide from who I am but I just remind myself that there is a community of family and queer support here that reminds me that I’m not alone and
we need to invest in these communities across campus, because you never know, it could save a life, it could keep you from failing a class, it could keep you wanting to wake up in the morning and be proud of the school that you attend everyday.

**Precious 1:31:52**

Thank you. We’ve got about ten more minutes left. I want to thank everyone so much for participating in this dialogue and I just want to assert myself into this conversation for a moment. I’m really excited, my role here at the college is new. As the assistant director of diversity recruitment initiatives, it’s my job to push the campus to a more inclusive space. I really started with enrollment management having diversity conversations and everyone in the department has been so amazing in terms of the conversation so I’m just so excited that I as a trans woman, openly as an alum, as a community leader here in Chicago, I’ve spoken in Victoria Shannon’s class, I’ve taken Karen’s class so I am also invested in this community and I am also excited to push these conversations forth. I’m here so I just want to say that the college brought me here, they pay my salary as a black trans woman, inserting myself into this space, so I just want to give Columbia the credit for that.

**Lott Hill 1:32:54**

Precious has hit the ground running already. Her work is cut out for her and I can vouch to say that Precious is holding the institution to these goals for sure.

**Victoria Shannon 1:33:05**

Hi, I’m Victoria Shannon, She. I’m so happy to see everyone here today, so many students. We are a pretty diverse institution but I just wanted to say that 14 years ago, I started the office of gay and lesbian student concerns when I went over to what was then LIB ed, we had absolutely no LGBT courses, I’ve been instrumental in getting all of them running in our department. In addition, I stole Terry from the english department when I split part one and part two for gay and lesbian studies. I’m aware that there are other courses being taught but there are not enough. But I’m also here to tell you that I’m here, I’m queer and I’m getting really tired so step up!

**Precious**

Anyone else who hasn’t spoken?

**Sam 1:34:03**
Again, I’m Sam. I’m a senior, I’ve been here all four years. One thing I’ve noticed in my four years here at Columbia is that other departments try to be diverse in the courses they offer but that diverse course is limited to five weeks. I should be able to take representation of black people for a full 15 weeks. If I can take U.S history class for 15 weeks and learn all about white history, I should learn about black history and how we’re seen, how we’re portrayed and how that’s changing. Another thing is, in those gay and lesbian courses themselves, there needs to be a diversity of the courses that we’re learning. I took gay and lesbian history last semester and I was like “oh man, I’m really excited” and we spent one week on transgender history. We didn’t talk about black folks at all, and I was like “I want to know about queer folks who look like me, I want to know about my queer history, I want to know about queer blues singers” Yes, I will go out and research that stuff on my own but there should also be a curriculum that supports that interest and sparks new interest.

Elise Tanner 1:35:09

Hi, my name is Elise Tanner, I’m an alum. And I just want to know why classes that fill were cancelled because the reasons you’ve given us so far sound like bullshit.

Lance 1:35:32

Awesome. I’m still Lance, I still use He, his, him pronouns. I want to cover a lot of stuff. First thing is pronouns, I am hearing a lot of folks that are saying use whatever pronouns for me and that’s fine if that’s your thing but I want to let everyone know that that’s not licence to do that for other people. And I think that has to be said, and I think that has to be said because we don’t have a training that tells you that anywhere else. So, leads me to training. We’re talking a lot about sensitivity training, I don’t think we’re ready to be sensitive I think we need to be competent. We’re not yet competent. Third, bias reporting, important, let’s do it. But, fourth thing, lets honor the people that are doing the work. There are people that are doing this work in fiction, there are people that are doing this work in, I don’t know, cultural studies, other places that I’ve taken courses, because their work isn’t under the title that “this is a queer course”, you don’t know that they are doing the work. So there’s that. Training, again, we have to do it, we really do. And we run into this thing about, ok let’s do training but we have to pay part time faculty to do that and great, let’s find a way to do that, and I think the thing is, the incentive is you keep your job. Sorry, that might be a little divisive but the incentive is you keep your job because I need you to care about the students. We’re individuals before we are students in your class. Addition to that, I have done this work. I did a training at a national conference about this stuff and I can’t do it here and I think that’s bullshit. Facilities, on the list we need more gender inclusive restrooms. The only one in 1104, shout out to Allen for saying this on twitter, the only one in 1104 is in the basement and it’s usually locked. Cool, I’m going to go to a different building to go to the bathroom, ridiculous. Gender inclusive housing isn’t really actually inclusive, from what I hear, they house people based on gendered names not based on what they want. Also, not on the list but I hope it’s being taught next semester, shout out to queer
tv, it's one of the most inclusive classes, hey Mikki. One of the most inclusive courses in queerness that I've taken here, and I think that's everything.

**Michelle Nance 1:37:46**

Hello, my name is Michelle Nance, still here, again president of Common Ground. As we are talking about embracing our spaces within the classroom, we need to take a minute to think about the spaces for queer students outside of the classroom. Like bathrooms, if we do not have enough gender inclusive bathrooms, that’s just a problem. You shouldn’t expect students to have to go to a completely different floor or completely different building to pee, especially when they’re only on break from their classes and they only have a couple minutes to do so. Also we to talk about how we are building up our queer community here on campus, such as scholarships for queer students who have none and who can’t afford to come to this school because it’s too expensive, as well as spaces, safe spaces on campus where students can be themselves, more areas where students don’t have to worry about is there other events going on? Do I have to hide my identity because there are other people in the room? We should be able to express ourselves the way we want to and I’m really getting tired of members telling me that Common Ground is one of spaces on campus where they can do that, even though we have classes and classrooms where you’re supposed to be doing that and I really think we need to be listening to what the queer students are saying and give them more spaces like this to say more things.

**No name 1:38:59**

Offering these classes shouldn’t just be optional. We shouldn’t have to find out through random people. I have not heard of Elizabeth [Victoria] Shannon before this because those classes aren’t talked about in our departments. Why is it that we have to hunt for them when they should be made available to us? There should be some way that they can connect with different departments and make it known that they are offering classes and I think we as a school really need to think about the fact that your students represent the school. The way we behave in the world outside of this is a direct reflection of you. Do you want to be reflected negatively? The people who don’t understand these issues, who continue to just conform and make these notions that are inaccurate or do you want us to go out and be proud ambassadors of the school and really stand for something? And I think that’s a question you really need to address because right now, you’re not giving us a very good answer on that.

**Precious 1:39:47**
Thank you. We’ve got five minutes left so I just want to pick four people who can raise their hands and we can just pick our last four. So you pick two over there Lott and I’ll pick two over here. Preferably people who haven’t spoken. I’m going to come back to you Mikki.

**Gabe 1:40:06**

Hi I’m Gabe, my pronouns are still he, him, his, they, them, their. Question, do I have any non-binary people in the house? Yes, ok more about pronouns. Let me get my thoughts together. I’ve noticed that out of the trans inclusion, a lot of non-binary people are left out and I think that sucks, goes along with needing bathrooms. What if I am too scared to use the men’s bathroom and also feel really uncomfortable to use the women’s bathroom? I have to hold it until I get home. So that’s a thing, and also my pronouns are not preferred, they are mandatory. That’s all I have.

**Mickey Mahoney 1:40:59**

Hi, I’m Mickey Mahoney, I teach Queer TV in the television department and I’ve been teaching queer pictures at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and next semester I’ll be teaching Trans Pictures. I developed all of those classes and then I developed Queer TV specifically for Columbia College because there was no queer TV anywhere. Not UCLA, not NYU, not The School of The Art Institute, but it really needed to be in my department that I had been teaching for 15 years, now 18 years and so now we have Queer TV. The first semester, it didn’t go, there weren’t enough students. So I flyered, I called the LGBT office, I worked with people, all of my friends, Terry passed the word around, Ames passed the word around. Oh, I’m trans identified, I use he, him. I don’t know very many other faculty here who are trans identified. I know probably all that there are here and I wish there were more. I wish there was a full-time faculty representative who was trans in my department or in my area, I wish I had a bathroom I could go to in my building, that would be helpful. I go two buildings down to go to the bathroom, to a gender neutral bathroom. So all of these things, are things for me as faculty I hope to be addressed. My department I have to say, when I said I want to develop, I want this class to run, everyone in television was very, very supportive. And so I think these kinds of classes can be supported, I think they will eventually be supported. I think things are moving quickly, especially for gender non-conforming issues. I see them at The Art Institute, I see them happening here and I love, I love seeing this and being in this room and hearing what you have to say.

**Valerie 1:43:30**

Hi, I’m Valerie. I’m a transfer student here and as a transfer student, there’s two specific things I’d really like to address. Coming here from a small to medium sized community college, I was incredibly excited to actually be around people that were like me for once and actually take classes and learn so much more about history and culture. To see those slowly
being taken away is really heartbreaking and as well, I'm in my third year of college which means that I have a lot less time here than people I know who are starting as freshmen. So I have a lot more limited time span to have those classes available to me. Which sort of just motivates me to get these things done quickly and efficiently because I know there are people like me who are transfer students and who want to have this opportunity now. And One more thing, I know someone mentioned the motto “live what you love” earlier, and it’s something that I heard in my first month here, over and over. And I’d just like to point out that yes, live what you love, but what about live what you teach?

**Adrian 1:44:50**

Hi everyone, I'm in the back just so you're aware. I'm a theatre directing major, I'm a senior graduating in May. I also worked in the MCA office, I'm a one tribe scholar. I have the good fortune of being a tour guide for the admissions department and I want to just focus on something on our actual website, I want to pull up something and I'm going to butcher this pronunciation but it says “Ese Quan Vidarie”. Translation, “to be rather to seem”. So cutting these courses in section and all over the course catalog that seems like we are “seeming” we’re not “being”. We’re not being the school that I was told to be. We’re not being the school that I hear people sell to thousands of students month, by month, by month. Don’t get me wrong, I’ve had great fortune of having a great education at this college but I want us to be, I don’t want us to seem diverse, I want to be diverse. I’ve earned it, I’ve put my money toward it, all these students have put their money toward it. We deserve to be, not seem. Thanks.

**Lott Hill 1:45:55**

Thank you everyone for your comments and your questions today. Precious and I are going to make sure that it’s not the white males who get the last word today, straight or otherwise. All of your voices, all of your comments, all of your suggestions and I would say demands are critical to this college moving forward in a direction that does actually serve the students, the faculty, staff and ultimately the communities of Columbia. So thank you again for participating today, online the folks who tweeted and for the last word, the lovely Precious Davis.

**Precious Davis 1:46:33**

I want to thank everyone for coming out and sharing your ideas today. When it comes to diversity and inclusion, it is an every occurring process. We should always continually be learning and educating ourselves. This is a system of navigation of something, an exercise, that you’re going to have to deal with your entire life. So it’s important that we learn how to navigate systems and advocate for ourselves. I want you to know that I am here and I am a part of this process and I want to thank everyone for coming out today. Thank you.