Annual Report for Academic Year 2020-2021

Introduction & Charge

The President's Committee on Issues of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (CISOGI) is
charged to

(a) advise the President on matters pertaining to issues of sexual and/or affectional
orientation and gender identity and expression as they pertain to USF faculty, staff,
and students and
(b) evaluate and monitor the university environment for problems and issues related to
these matters.

The charge of the Committee on Issues of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (CISOGI) is
based on the understanding that prejudice and discrimination toward people of diverse sexual
orientations and gender identities is experienced in society, including the workplace and
academic settings such as a university. It is CISOGI’s goal to assist and advise the President in
recommending equitable processes, visibility, access, and policies to all members of the LGBTQ+
community in order to maximize their talents and their contributions to the university. These
recommendations seek to bring value to the educational outcomes of USF and are consistent
with USF’s commitment to diversity and inclusion as indicated in the USF Statement on Diversity
and our Principles of Community.

Ac complishm ents

Dur ing the 2020- 202 1 academic year, CISOGI met monthly to assess progr ess on key areas, plan

activities, and address new issues as needed. The accomplishments in each of our three areas

represent the hard wo rk of multiple students , facul ty, and staff members, on the committee and

those who worked in collaboratio n with us for the betterment of our university. The c ommittee

was led by co-chairs: Jennifer Iceton and Michael Rogers as well executive committee members:

Meg Stowe and Ren Bradley-Tyler .

Ad apt to the COVID - 19 pand emic in or der ability to continue c arrying out our c harge .

x C ommittee Structure and M eetings : During the pandemic year, CISOG I pulled bac k on

having multiple subcommittee meetings and instead primarily met as one group in order

to acc o mplish the l arger c ommittees’ tasks while conser ving team member ’ s energy as

possible. The comm ittee relied upon the C ISOGI executive committee and its clo se

partnership with Office of M ul tic ul tural Affair s L GB TQ + Programs Coor d inato r , C r istina

Yelvington, to handle the day to day func tio ns. A positive change was noted that since all

meetings were on Teams, it allowed for greater par ticipation from all three c ampuses.

R eview rel evant policies and resourc es on c ampus for LGB TQ + students , fac ulty and staff to

det er mine oppo rt unities to address gaps and recommend enhancem ents.

x C ampus Pride Index : We continue to us e the national evaluatio n tool, the Campus P r ide

Index, whic h provides a framework f or evaluating and monito ring pol icies and resourc es

that impact the LGBTQ+ c ommunity in h igher educ ation institutio ns. This index results in

a 5-point scale indicating how welcoming a university is to its LGBTQ+ students, staff, and

fac ulty based on its policies and resourc es.

x Rating at 3.5 out of 5: Our overall score on the scale has remained at 3.5, indicating that

the Univer sity of South Flo rida is a generally LGB TQ + affir ming institution. The Campus

Pride Index also has pr ovided guid anc e o n where the univer sity might foc us it attention

to continue to impr ove the exper ienc e and wellbeing of its 1 n92 r-3(and)7(st)-3(aion ins 0 g 0 G (ina)12(to

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virtual ceremony due to our newfound ability to email all students who had been
registered to graduate in Spring 2021. Each student was mailed a rainbow stole and a
personalized letter of affirmation on the student’s achievement and their names were
read aloud along with sharing additional information via PowerPoint slide. During the
event we also announced the winners of the 2021 USF Pride Awards and the student
recipients of LGBTQ+ Alumni scholarship.

x Campus Activities: CISOGI participated in a welcoming event for LGBTQ students in Fall
2020 and the in-person student pride celebration in June 2021. Co-chairs participated in
search processes for key positions at the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and met with
DIEO as it underwent changes in personnel and structure. Members advocated for key
provisions within a name change policy at USF that students who are transgender and/or
gender non-binary can utilize to be called their appropriate name within multiple USF
systems. The committee also wrote and sent a letter to the president in solidarity with
Black faculty and staff who had called for institutional changes to address anti-Black
racism at the University of South Florida.

x Community Involvement: As the pandemic continued to make large-scale community
events inadvisable, CISOGI decided to continue to postpone organizing a USF contingent
to attend Tampa Pride. CISOGI members and guests represented USF at a LGBT Chamber
of Commerce event in the summer of 2021.

x Promotion of LGBTQ+ Specific Resources at USF: CISOGI shared information regarding
the following resources at meetings, on its Teams page and via email distribution lists
o Stonewall Suites Living & Learning Community (Housing & Residential Education)
o Queer and Sexuality Studies Minor (Department of Women’s & Gender Studies)
o Safe Zone Training (Office of Multicultural Affairs)
o Special Collection: LGBTQ Studies (Library)
o Therapy Groups for LGBTQ+ and Trans/Non-Binary students (Counseling Center)
o Haven Clinic for LGBTQ+ student health concerns (Student Health Services)
o CISOGI and LGBTQ+ Alumni Scholarships (Foundation)
o LGBTQ+ focused groups for students, current faculty & staff, and alumni (Various)

OBJECTIVES FOR THE UPCOMING ACADEMIC YEAR

 In addition to monitoring LGBTQ+ activities, academics, and issues across the entire USF
system, CISOGI plans for the 2021-2022 school year include the following:
x Continue to support the visibility and vibrancy of the USF LGBTQ+ community through
multiple efforts, including by organizing our Annual Lavender Graduation
x Increase active participation in CISOGI by university community members and enhance
CISOGI’s ability to carry out its charges
x Engage in respectful advocacy regarding one or more of the committee
recommendations to the president (see next page)