

Mentorship Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Undergraduate Students Pursuing Health Careers

Jeffrey O. Wong

UCLA Institute of Society and Genetics

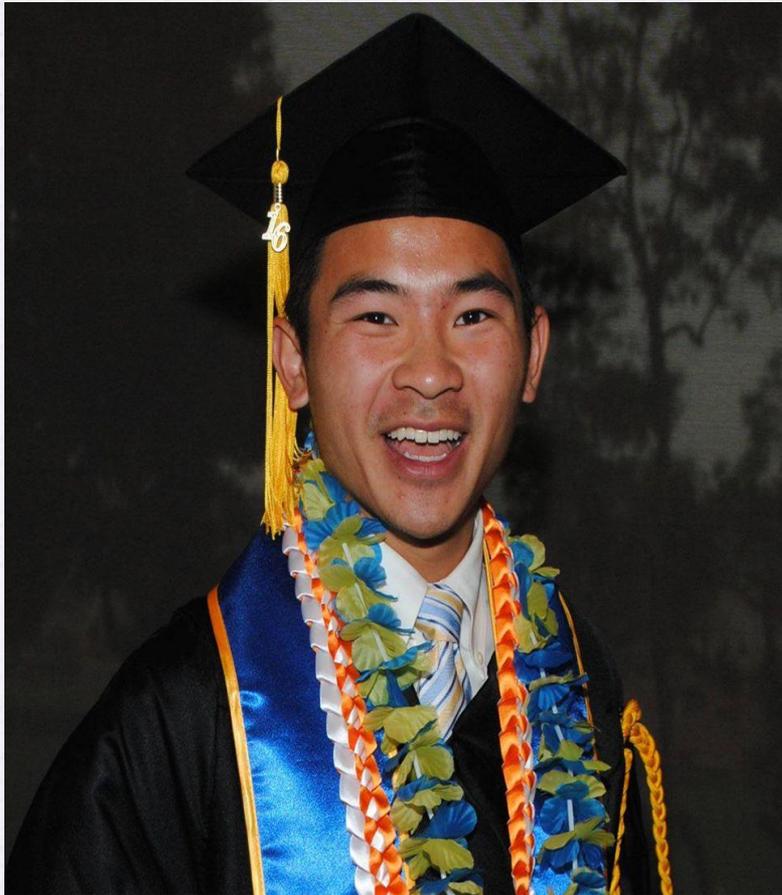
Opportunity Conference: Advancing LGBTQ Health

February 27th, 2017

Agenda

- Introductions
- Background of the Study
- Data Methods and Results
- Discussion
- Moving Forward

Introductions



Introductions

- Questions of Intersectionality:
 - Health care
 - Higher Education
 - LGBT identity
- Wanting to create change for my community, and the greater world for LGBT people.

Lavender Health Alliance (LHA)

- UCLA student group
- The mission is to
 - A. Build a community for LGBT undergraduates interested in pursuing a health-related career
 - B. Facilitate mentorship from LGBT UCLA medical students and professors
 - C. Provide volunteering opportunities for students at an LGBT medical clinic





Advancing LGBTQ Health

- Health care remains largely heteropatriarchal.
 - Providers
 - Power dynamics
 - Education
- In Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields, the fear of negative career consequences keep LGBT people from disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity. [1]

Literature Review

- Mentorship facilitates and develops psychological, social, and academic support; and a sense of belonging. [2]
- LGBT students have a history of marginalization and have difficulty accessing resources and mentors. [2]
- Isolation and discrimination are associated with diminished academic interest. [3]

Research Questions

- Are LGBT undergraduates in the health sciences able to access mentorship opportunities?
- If so, how does mentorship impact their professional development?
- And what are the barriers and facilitators to mentorship opportunities faced by LGBT undergraduates?

Mixed-Methods

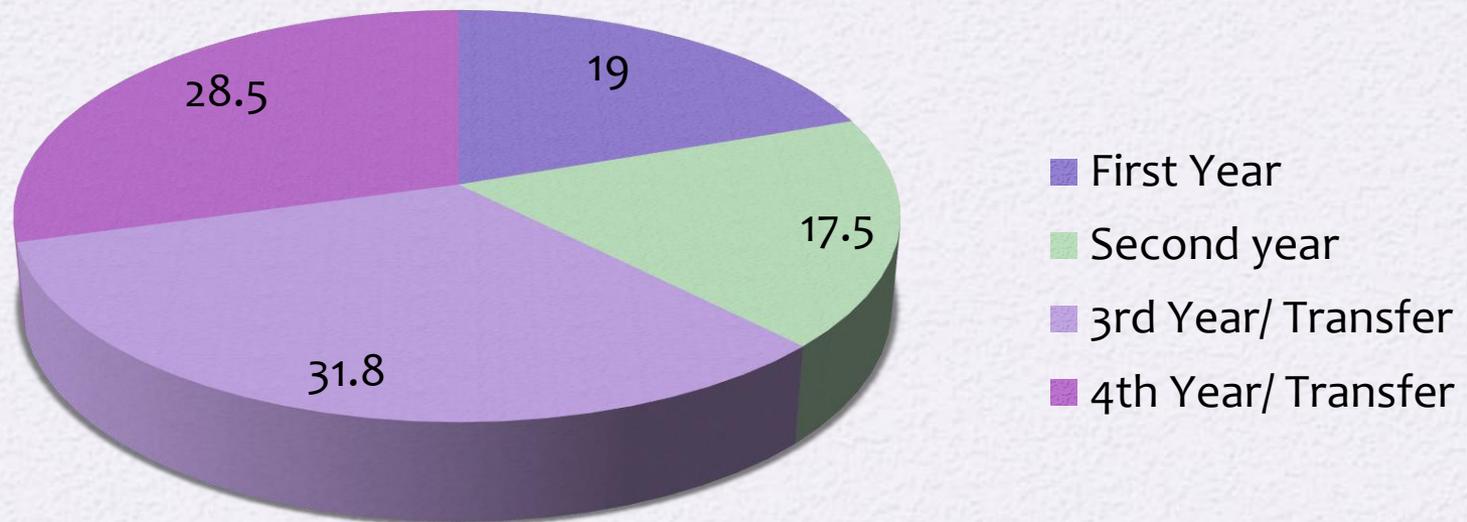
- Quantitative Survey (N=63)
 - Used a psychometrically sound survey instrument (Sanchez N, et al., 2015) [4].
 - Online Survey using SurveyMonkey
 - Recruitment via email, posts to online social groups, and on-campus flyers
- Focus Groups (N=14)
 - Subsample from survey
 - Two focus groups of seven participants
- Analyzed Data using SPSS and Atlas.ti.

Screening Questions

- Are you 18 years of age or older?
- Do you identify as an LGBTQ UCLA undergraduate student?
- Are you interested in pursuing a career in health care (examples: dentistry, medicine, public health, hospital administration, nursing, social work, physician's assistant)?

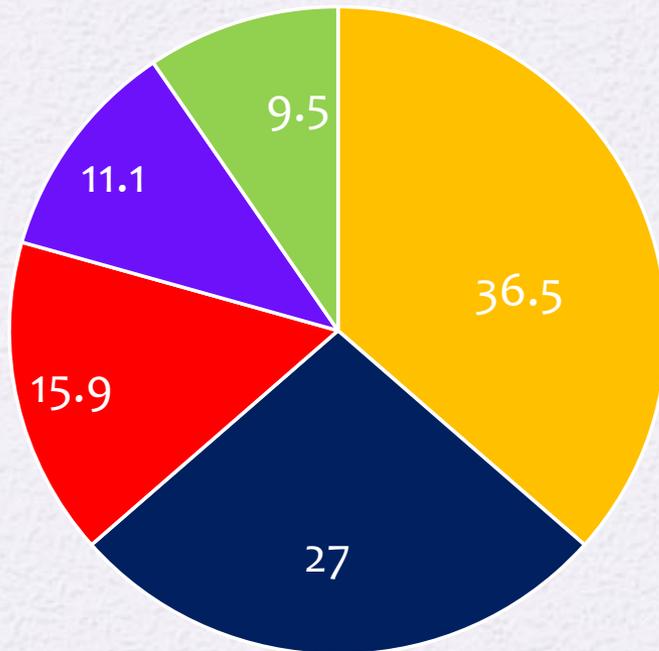
Demographics

Year in School

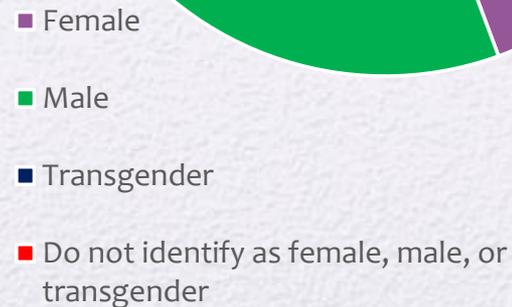
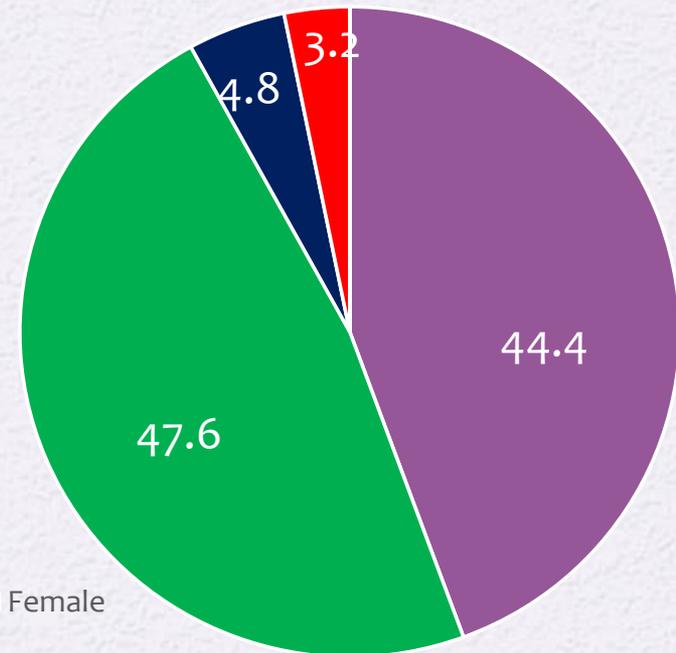


Demographics

Sexual Identity

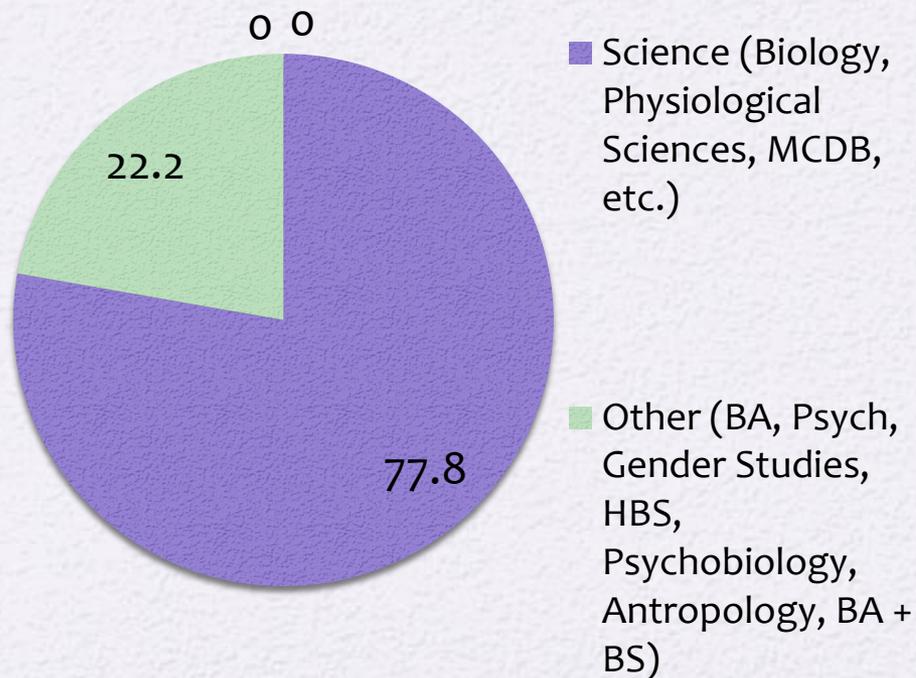


Gender Identity

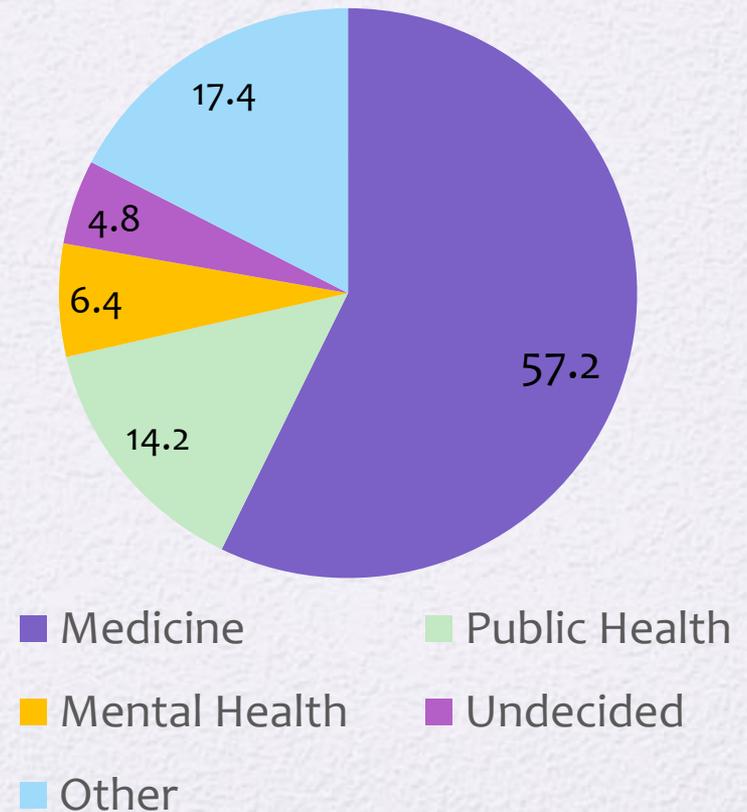


Demographics

Major (STEM fields)



Career Types



Results: Mentorship

Survey

- The majority (66%) have felt a somewhat – very Positive influence from a mentor/role model to pursue grad school education.
- Scale between Very Negative to Very Positive.

Focus Group

“Having mentors has really helped me stay in the STEM field, because let’s be honest. Being at UCLA and STEM, it’s really really difficult... I appreciate having my mentors here at UCLA; otherwise, I would’ve changed my career path.”

Results: Mentorship

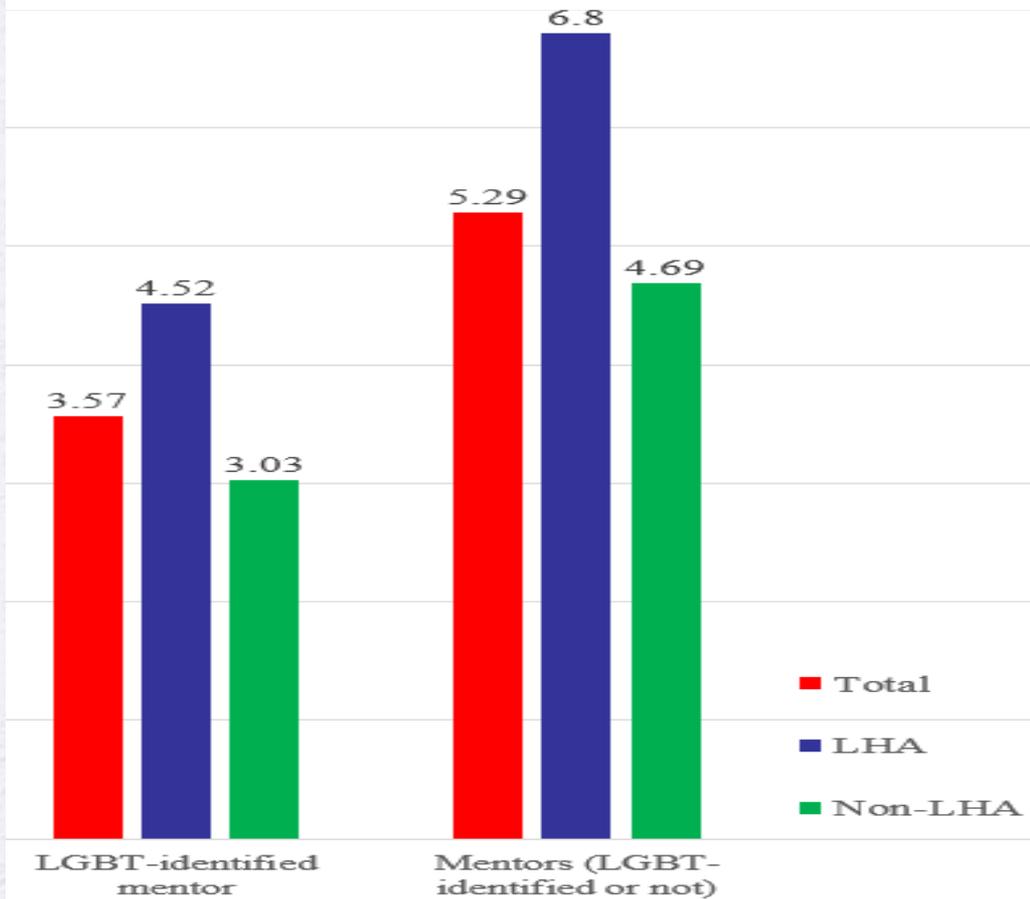
On a scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), participants answered:

“I have sufficient mentorship to pursue a health related career.”

- Only 29.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed
- Average: 2.26

Results: Mentorship

Access to a Mentor in the STEM fields
(Mean Accessibility Scores: 1 = Not Accessible, 10 = Very Accessible)



Statistically significant advantage to being in the LHA

Facilitators to Mentorship

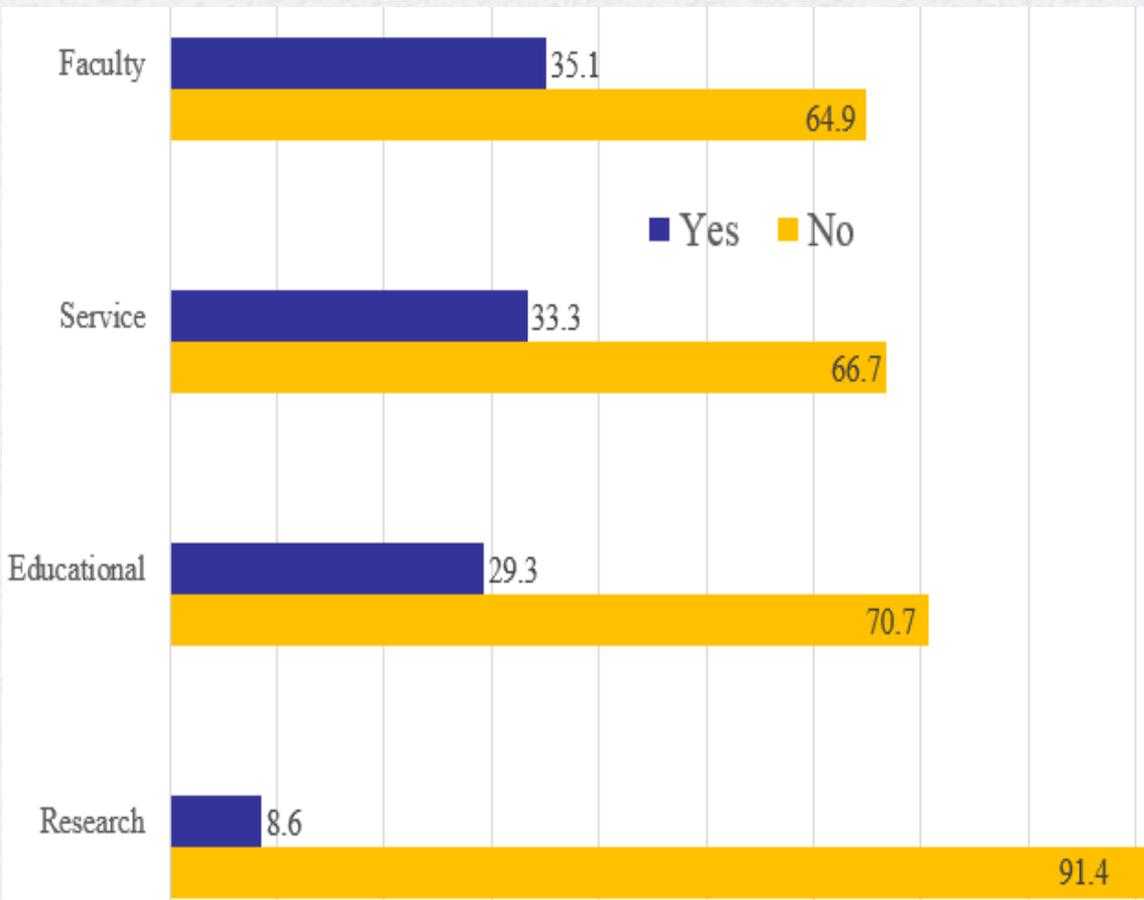
“I think finding an LGBTQ mentor is more easily accessible if you’re already personally out. For me, coming to UCLA I was already out, and so it was easy to find an LGBTQ identified mentor.”

Barriers to Mentorship

“Coming to UCLA I did pursue clubs or groups that were LGBT oriented, however I think that there was a lack of visibility of programs where they’d have mentorship umm so I think because of that I like gave up on the idea of having a mentor really quickly.”

Campus Life

Participant's involvement with university's LGBT



- About 40.4% attend the LGBT resource center only once a year.



Things to Consider

- Relatively small sample size (N = 63)
- Little research on LGBT undergraduates
- Specific to the UCLA campus

Discussion

- LGBT students pursuing health-related careers do NOT have adequate access mentorship.
- Mentorship leads to greater confidence and retention in academic careers.
- Facilitators are organized spaces that bring people together in academic environments.
 - The Lavender Health Alliance
- Barriers to mentorship include the fear and LGBT identities not being widely visible.

Moving Forward

- Universities must identify and promote ways to encourage students to be more involved in the LGBT community (campus climate, more intersectional programs with sciences).
- It is important for students' careers that resources such as mentorship are available to create a more inclusive academic environment.

LHA as a model for capacity building



LHA as a model for capacity building



- Interested in creating an LHA at your campus?

Acknowledgements

- This research is supported by a scholarship from UCLA's Office of Interdisciplinary & Cross Campus Affairs.
- This project has been advised by Shannon Dunlap, Dr. Ian W Holloway, and Dr. Thomas J Coates

References

- [1] Patridge, E. V., Barthelemy, R. S., & Rankin, S. R. (2014). Factors Impacting the Academic Climate for LGBTQ STEM Faculty. *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering*, 20(1), 75-98. doi:10.1615/JWomenMinorScienEng.2014007429
- [2]: Mallory, C., Sears, B., Hasenbush, A., & Susman, A. (2014). Ensuring Access to Mentoring Programs for LGBTQ Youth. The Williams Institute, 1-26. Retrieved March 14, 2016, from <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Access-to-Youth-Mentoring-Programs.pdf>.
- [3]: Sheran, N., & Arnold, E. A. (2012). Fairy godmothers and guardian angels: A qualitative study of the gay mentorship relationship. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 24(3), 201-220.
- [4] Sanchez, et al. (2015). LGBT Trainee and Health Professional Perspectives on Academic Careers-Facilitators and Challenges. *LGBT Health*, 2(4), 346-356. doi:10.1089/lgbt.2015.0024

Questions?

My contact information:
jeffrey.wong2@ucsf.edu

“Like” us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/LavenderHealthAlliance

Action Items

Discussed by audience members, these are items that we as a community can address for future mentorship organizations.

- Considering Faculty Advisor to maintain the student organization
 - Look into models like OSTEM
- Health Companies: considering expanding our outreach
- For companies and universities, considering advocating for more internships/externships to actually facilitate those mentoring relationships
- Supporting non-traditional students (full time, transfer)
- Monthly prompts: Questions to ask mentors
- Issue of visibility: some people not being sure about how they can be a resource
 - Help – knowing you can be out there is important
 - Training accountability to positions of mentoring for greater understanding about diversity and what that means
- Connecting with professional associations for mentors (scholarships, have people)
- Many mentors is okay.