

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center's Guide to Life at Ohio University

Fall 2007 Edition

Welcome to OU!

I am so glad you are here and becoming part of the OU/Athens LGBT Community.

While we may not have all the things you could wish for, we do have more options than many universities. Also, we have a big-hearted group of people here to support and assist you.

You made a great choice in OU! Recently Ohio University was selected as one of the top 100 Colleges and Universities for LGBT people. OU is a great place, but it is made better each year with the involvement from new students like you!

If I can help you in any way, I will or I will find someone who can. I hope that you will get involved and further enrich our community.

In pride,



Mickey Hart, Director
LGBT Center

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What you need to know to be out and about in Athens —

This guide is for you! It was created to give new LGBT students a better idea of what to expect in the Athens area as well as places to go and people to meet. We hope that the information provided will help you to find places that you are interested in seeing, to discover student groups you may want to join and to give you an idea as to what you can do on the weekends at OU and beyond.

While this guide contains a lot of information and things you need to know, the best source of information is our website: www.ohio.edu/lgbt. Also, returning students who have lived in the Athens area for awhile and have been to some of the places listed can be very helpful. Utilize people as your resources and take part in the student groups. Other students will be happy to give you an idea as to what they enjoy and may even have suggestions as to some things that are not contained in this guide. Enjoy your time in the Athens area!

Information in this guide is up-to-date as of 08/14/07.

LGBT Center ~ Provost's Office of Diversity, Access, and Equity ~ 354 Baker University Center ~ 740. 593-0239

www.ohio.edu/lgbt



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2 People and Places to Know

Mickey Hart- Mickey's fulltime job at Ohio University is to make the campus better for LGBTA students and to educate all students about LGBT issues. He serves as the Director of the LGBT Center. Visit the center in 354 Baker University Center. He can be reached at 740.593.0239 or hartm@ohiou.edu. Mickey is also available on AOL Instant Messenger: OU LGBT Center, and Yahoo! Messenger: ou_lgbt_center.

Office of Diversity, Access, and Equity – In addition to the LGBT Center, this newly-formed office of the Provost is comprised of the Multicultural Programs Center, the Women's Center, Diversity Services, Institutional Equity and Disability Services. The office is in charge of delivering a full spectrum of diversity-related services, experiences and opportunities to the campus. This Fall will see the hiring of the first Vice-Provost for this office.

Dean of Students Office- Patti McSteen is the Associate Dean of Students. Her office is located in Baker University Center and she is available to help students with any concerns about the university or student life. She can be reached at 740.593.1800 or by email at mcsteenp@ohio.edu.

Residence Life- Yes, your RAs CAN be really useful. RAs go through a 8+ week training and each RA's room is supposed to be a safe space. Additionally, your RD can be a huge help. They want to make your on-campus living experience the best if can be, especially since not everyone has to go through sensitivity training to live in the residence halls. If anything happens, report it to your RA or RD immediately.

Student Leaders- There are student leaders throughout campus, from the RAs in residence halls to the peer mentors you will find at the Academic Advancement Center. Use these student leaders to assist you if you are having problems and to help you decide which classes to take or what student groups to join. Consider becoming a student leader yourself!

Police- The Ohio University Police Department (OUPD) is available to help in the same ways a town or county police department would. If you are harassed or are the victim of any crime on campus call OUPD. OUPD is located in 135 Scott Quad and can be reached at 740.593.1911. The Athens Police Department can assist you with any off-campus concerns. Call 911, APD is located on College Street.

Queer Faculty and Staff- Queer faculty are great resources for LGBT students. If you wish to contact queer OU employees, stop by the LGBT Center or contact Mickey Hart at hartm@ohio.edu. If you are a queer faculty and staff member be sure to check out the organization OUT@Work featured on Page 3 of this guide.

UCM: Center for Spiritual Growth & Social Justice- A longtime LGBT-allied organization. Open Doors meetings and other LGBTA events are held at UCM, 18 N. College Street. This Center also offers a variety of queer-friendly programs and events and proves that Christians and other spiritual seekers can be pro-LGBT. UCM also serves as a meeting place for many social justice events—including the free weekly Thursday Supper. UCM has been a "HOME" to the LGBTA community since the mid 70's and still is today! UCM is a very safe and friendly environment. UCM workers and volunteers are dedicated to social justice and service to others. Stop by or call: 740.593.7301.

Hillel Center- The Jewish student center has a history of being very LGBT-friendly and of providing LGBTA speakers and programs each year. Rabbi Danielle Lashaw is a great ally of all LGBTA students. Stop by the center at 21 Mill Street or call: 740.592.1173.

The Ohio SafeZone Project is here for you!

Since homophobia and limited understanding negatively impacts LGBT individuals, efforts to make the LGBT population feel welcome in any environment are needed. To fill this need, we have implemented the Ohio SafeZone Project at Ohio University.

Lesbian Gay Questioning Bisexual Transgender

OHIO SafeZone

A project of the
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Programs Center
www.ohio.edu/lgbt

The SafeZone project identifies a growing work of students, faculty, staff and community members who are willing and prepared to provide support and information to LGBT and questioning people. SafeZone members take part in a 2-hour training and at the completion, receive a SafeZone card and button to display.

Be on the look out for cards and buttons, because you are bound to find a supportive person nearby. You can become a SafeZone, register to attend a workshop today at our website. www.ohio.edu/lgbt.



In Query: Be Informed and Involved

LGBTA eNews – While classes are in session, we publish these electronic news digests on a weekly basis to keep people up-to-date on campus, local, state, national and world LGBTA events and issues. Be in the know. Sign up to receive this free service at our website. www.ohio.edu/lgbt

CAT-Vision – The cable in the Residence Halls usually has at least one or two movies a month that are queer-themed. Listings run periodically between movies or check out CAT-Vision online.

Press – *The Athens News*, *The Athens Messenger*, and *The Post* have traditionally offered very queer-friendly reporting. However, the letters to the editor can be a different story. Little nasty rants can fly back and forth with frequency. The simple solution? Write your own.

Queer Courses – There are several courses offered that focus on LGBT issues, including L&G Politics and L&G Literature. Also, there are classes that deal in part with LGBT issues. English classes are the most common, but many others have been identified by faculty. How can you find out about these classes? Ask fellow students, watch the LGBT listserv, and make sure you



Get Involved with These Groups and Organizations!

Act OUT– This group seeks to increase visibility of LGBTQ issues and to challenge homophobia and other forms of oppression through creative education and awareness efforts.

ALLY– An inclusive and exciting group open to any and all allies of LGBT people. The group works to raise awareness about LGBT people and issues and to support the work of other Allies. One way they support LGBT people is through the sale of the “gay? fine by me!” t-shirts. Their big event is hosting the Queer Prom each Winter Quarter.



Athens AIDS Task Force (AATF)– The AATF serves several counties with support programs. They also provide financial assistance to HIV positive people. The annual benefit drag show is a must see. They offer educational pamphlets for safer sex, STIs, AIDS and various prevention measures. You can almost always find free condoms outside their office (18 N. College St.). They will help you in any way they can, but if you have a desire to help them, they can almost always use volunteers. 740.592.439

Empowering Women of Ohio (EWO)– This organization strives to bridge the gap between LGBT issues and Women’s Rights concerns. EWO actively participates in both PRIDE Week and Take Back the Night Week. Its mission is to raise awareness of issues concerning social justice for LGBT individuals and other minority groups, through radical activism and print media.

LGBT Affairs Commissions– These Commissions of Undergraduate and Graduate Student Senates are involved with advocating and assessing the needs of queer students on campus. They have been instrumental in the formation of the LGBT Student Needs Task Force, the LGBT Center, as well as the planning for Pride Week. They are open to all students.

Open Doors– The LGBTIQQA student union meets at UCM every Wednesday at 8:00 pm. Open Doors

is a mostly conversational and social coming out resource. Meetings focus more on discussions and forums than on direct political actions. Meetings begin at 8:00 with a business section for executives and interested members to make proposals and/or updates, followed by a discussion, activity, or film. Open Doors is useful to folks just coming out, those that are already very out, as well as those needing a safe environment to discuss issues and topics particularly relevant to queer and progressive folks. Open Doors also hosts the monthly Dance Party at Blue Gator and Casa.



OUT@Work– OU’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Ally Employee Network welcomes faculty, staff and grad students who are interested in the university attitude and environment concerning queer issues. They try to assess the environment and utilize a wide range of OU and Athens resources to create actions within the university. They are advocates for LGBT faculty and staff and try to raise awareness and increase community education.

OUTGrads & Non-Trads– This social group is open to all grad students and non-traditional undergrads (23+).

P-FLAG– Athens area Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG) is a loose affiliation of concerned parents and friends in the region.

SHADES– This group is dedicated to fostering connections between the multicultural Same-Gender Loving, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender community at Ohio University. They welcome people of color who are at various stages of understanding the coming out process, questioning or accepting their sexuality and/or understanding the LGBT community. SHADES is intended to be a safe space where members can speak freely.



Unify– This group of diverse students is committed to helping increase diversity and understanding at OU. They provide various opportunities for information sharing and collaboration among representatives from different campus organizations dealing with diversity issues. Members work to plan an annual diversity conference, discuss important topics and unify various diversity initiatives.

Group contact information available at:

www.ohio.edu/lgbt

Click on LGBT Organizations.

4 Explore Athens and Beyond

This is not a comprehensive list, but rather a list suggested by other students to get you pointed in the right direction. While Athens can seem small, there is plenty to do and explore. Enjoy your time in Athens, it will be over before you know it.

19 South— Often referred to as “Evo” (an abbreviated version of its old name), this bar hosts dance nights almost every night of the week. They also host a queer night once a week called Borderline. This dance typically happens on Wednesday nights, so make sure to stop by after the Open Doors meeting.

Alden Library- This is one of those things that seems so obvious that you may miss it. OU's library has a good selection of queer films and books—including a decent supply of queer lit, gender and feminist theory, plus Internet access for its entire collection. www.library.ohiou.edu.

Area Stores- Little Professor Bookstore has a selection of queer books, magazines and gay porn. Follett's Book Store tends to have a few queer related books, too. You can find decent movies at Magic Video and other Video stores. Some uptown shops have a few rainbow items here and there!

Beads & Things- This is a small shop where people can buy beads, find instructions on how to make different kinds of jewelry, and even be taught basic beading techniques. If you are interested in making your own jewelry or are looking to try something new, Beads & Things is a great place to try. Located on N. Shafer Street.

Blue Gator— Though this bar has existed for several years, it has just recently become a queer hotspot. Hosting its first Open Doors dance party last spring, the Blue Gator looks to host more dance parties in the future.

Casa Nueva and Cantina- Casa is a worker-owned co-op with a progressive aura running rampant. It serves really good veggie and vegan food, as well as great breakfasts. There is often a wait, but it's worth it! Casa is exceptional in Athens for having created a kind of cultural center for artists and performers of all kinds. They always have an exhibit up on the walls, as well as a wide booking of poetry readings, local musicians, and even the occasional film. Perhaps even more notably for us, Casa gives up its bar from 10 pm to 2 am one Saturday a month for dance parties.

Dairy Barn- Located on Dairy Lane, the Dairy Barn is a cultural arts center that has a mission to promote the arts, crafts, and cultural heritage of Southeastern Ohio and bring to the region the best of the arts from all over the world. There are different events held year round, and it is a great place to go if you want to get away and experience something new.

Donkey Coffee- Donkey is a cool little coffee shop and gathering place located on W. Washington Street. Donkey offers several opportunities for students to demonstrate their talents by reading poetry, displaying art, and playing music. ** Plus the manager is one of us!*

Farmacy- Located on W. Stimson Ave., this organic foods store contains a deli, juice bar, and grocery section. The grocery section offers several varieties of organic and natural foods, from carrots to teas, meat alternatives, health care items, bath needs and cook books. This is the place to go if you want to find natural and organic foods!

The Front Room— Located on the 4th floor of Baker University Center, the Front Room has the charm of Starbucks and the coffee to match. The coffeshop also serves as a concert venue, with open stage nights every Friday night and free shows on Saturdays.

Graffiti Wall— Members of the LGBT groups paint it about once or twice a quarter and before most major events like Pride Week and OUT Week. Come help out or just watch for fun messages! The wall is located outside of Bentley Annex, on the corner of Richland Ave. and W. Mulberry St.

Hocking Hills State Parks- Hocking Hill State Parks (Old Man's Cave, Ash Cave, Cedar Falls and more) are great places to go if you enjoy being outside or are trying to find a place to get away for a day. The parks have towering cliffs, waterfalls and gorges that provide an amazing site for hikers and naturalists. Campsite and cabin rentals are available.

Hudson Health Center- Hudson is located on North Green and houses the offices of Counseling and Psychological Services, Environmental Health and Safety, Physical Therapy, and Student Health Services. Many of the staff at Hudson are knowledgeable about LGBT health and related needs.

O'Betty's Red Hots— Best Hot Dogs and Fresh Cut French Fries in town! Queer owned and operated. Check out the Hot Dog Museum. Located on W. State Street.

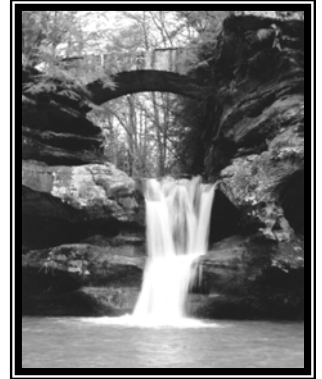
Ombuds Office- Located in Crewson House, the Ombuds' duties include the maintenance of simple, orderly procedures for receiving requests, complaints, and grievances, both from students and from other members of the university community. The Ombuds works for change in regulations, procedures, or personnel to prevent problems. The Ombuds also report valid complaints directly to the president when no remedy has been found elsewhere in the university. If you feel that you have been threatened, harassed, or have a grievance, this is a great place to go.

Perks- Yes, they have great coffee, but they also have a great view of the College Green. Located at Court and Union Streets. ** Plus the manager is one of us!*

SubAMUH- The Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home is a women's only 151 acres retreat of trails, ponds, campgrounds and cabins. The women who live there are devoted to education and action, and open up the land and their homes to forums, festivals, discussions and workshops. It is a very positive place and is a great place for young dykes to come out and interact with other area women. Contact the collective at 740.448.7242.

Union Street Diner— This old-school diner is usually open 24 hours. Some people despise its greasy-spoon aesthetic, but that's why other people absolutely love it. The diner is an after-hours hangout place for many queer students. It gets most busy on weekends at 2 am when the bars close.

Athens is a fairly LGBT-friendly place, but remember like all cities there are some people and places that are not entirely safe and friendly. If you want to know more about these people and places, ask LGBTA students, faculty or staff members. Report any concerns or incidents to the LGBT Center.



OUR MISSION: The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center advances the missions of Ohio University and Campus Life by serving individuals and groups of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We are committed to fostering human development and cultivating an inclusive, open, and supportive community through education, support, collaboration, and advocacy at Ohio University and beyond.