What makes OU feel welcoming and safe for LGBT students?
Ohio University's SafeZone trainings helps make our campus feel welcoming by educating students and showing them how to make "their space" visibly supportive of LGBT persons.

---gender identity: male, sexual orientation: gay, class/year: Junior, age: 20

Having so many LGBTA organizations on campus and so many ways to get involved and meet people definitely made me feel welcome here at OU. Seeing professors, RAs and fellow students with SafeZone cards was also very welcoming because I knew where I could definitely find a safe space if I needed one. I transferred from a university where no one was visibly out, so coming here where so many people can be open about their sexuality was like a breath of fresh air.

---gender identity: FTM, sexual orientation: queer, class/year: Senior, age: 21

Mickey Hart and the LGBT Center make me feel safe on campus. I know that there is someone watching out for the best interests of the LGBT community. The Center offers more than just reference material, it is also a great place to hang out. It is comforting to know that it is there.
---gender identity: Female, Sexual orientation: Lesbian, Class/year: Junior, Age: 20

What is it like to come out at OU?
I came out to myself as queer before coming to OU, but the resources here - such as the LGBT Center and their book lending library, Open Doors, and talking to queer students - made coming out to friends and family much easier. When I was coming out as trans, the Transitions support group helped tremendously with coming out to friends, family, classmates, and professors. The LGBT student organizations were also very supportive and respectful.

---gender identity: FTM, sexual orientation: queer, class/year: Senior, age: 21

Coming out on this campus was no problem for me. I have been on the Faces of Pride posters put out by the LGBT Center twice now. The posters come out in the spring. I have not received any negative attention from that experience. I am also a volunteer for the SpeakOUT! panels that go to classes to share experiences of being LGBTA and coming out. I have received only positive feedback in person from these events.
---gender identity: Female, sexual orientation: Bicurious Lesbian, class/year: Senior, age: 22

My motive for "coming out' emerged from Judy Shepherd's "Call to action" which she communicated to members of the Ohio University community upon her visit to the Athens Campus. She stressed the importance of being "out" whether you identify as an ally, or an LGBT person. She made me realize that openly communicating my full identity to others can help make homosexuality seem less mysterious and subversive. I came out to my floor section within my residence hall immediately following Judy's presentation and immediately found her advice to be sound.
---gender identity: male, sexual orientation: gay, class/year: Grad Student, age: 22
I came to campus having already come out. Coming to this campus has, however, given me the chance to grow my identity more than I would have thought possible. I arrived exhausted and ready to give up on LGBT advocacy. The LGBT community on campus has been a great source of energy for me and it has reminded me why I wanted to come out in the first place.

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gender identity: Male, sexual orientation: Gay, class/year: Junior, age: 21

**How LGBT friendly are faculty in the classroom?**

Most of the faculty at Ohio University are extremely LGBT friendly. They handle queer issues with understanding and tact. I have always felt comfortable voicing my opinions in class, and professors welcome LGBT viewpoints in class discussion.

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gender identity: Female, sexual orientation: Lesbian, class/year: Junior, age: 20

Professors have always been very respectful toward my partner when I bring her to concerts, recitals, and School of Music functions. My sexuality didn’t come up too often in the classroom setting since my major is music, but coming out as trans was something that obviously had to be addressed. All of my professors have been very respectful and helpful with the transitioning process by using the right name and pronouns (most of the time), though there are obvious slips since they had known me by a different name and gender for the previous three years. They have been nothing but supportive.

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gender identity: FTM, sexual orientation: queer, class/year: Senior, age: 21

I have witnessed only positive behavior from the faculty. Most are more than willing to raise the issue in a positive or positive/neutral fashion. I have been approached by faculty who thanked me for raising the issue in their classroom. One professor in particular seemed thrilled that I had brought the issue into his classroom.

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gender identity: Male, sexual orientation: Gay, class/year: Junior, age: 21

**What is the social scene like for LGBT students?**

Open Doors serves as a discussion group for LGBT issues, and this is usually a more socially-oriented group. The graduate student group OUTgrads & Non-Trads also is a social organization. While there is not an official queer place to go in Athens, there are specific places to find queer students. Open Doors holds a monthly queer dance party at the Blue Gator on the second Saturday of every month, and it is always packed. There are also potlucks, cookouts, quarterly book clubs, the end of the year Pride Graduation & Community Celebration, and other random social events planned by student organizations and the LGBT Center.

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gender identity: FTM, sexual orientation: queer, class/year: Senior, age: 21

There isn’t much of a traditional gay social scene here. There are no gay-opened or gay themed businesses. There are no gay bars or clubs unless one drives to either Columbus, OH or Parkersburg, WV. However, the gay community is good at creating it’s own entertainment.

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gender identity: Female, sexual orientation: bicurious Lesbian, class/year: senior, age: 22
The social scene in Athens is undergoing a great deal of transformation. In the past two years, I have seen tremendous growth. I think we are finally beginning to see the convergence of a non-activist social scene with a more traditional LGBT student activist element.

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**gender identity: Male, sexual orientation: Gay, class/year: Junior, age: 21**

**What is your favorite social event?**

The Queer Prom (sponsored by the ALLY group) in Winter Quarter is always amazingly fun. There is a great DJ, elegant food, and a photographer is set up to take official prom pictures. A Prom Queen, King and Court are selected by drawing names with some interesting results. It is always a big community party.

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**gender identity: FTM, sexual orientation: queer, class/year: Senior, age: 21**

The Annual Pride Graduation and Community Celebration held Spring Quarter. A wonderful dinner is served. Graduating students are recognized and allowed to share their most proud memory at OU and their future plans. Community Superlative Awards are voted on and several door prizes are given out. It is a great way to conclude the year.

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**gender identity: Male, sexual orientation: Gay, class/year: Junior, age: 21**

The Monthly Open Doors' Dance Parties are generally the best-attended events. OUTWeek and PRIDE Week are both well-organized advocacy weeks that occur in the fall and spring. Those events give our community its best visibility on campus.

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**gender identity: Male, sexual orientation: Gay, class/year: Junior, age: 22**