

Aggie Allies Workshop Evaluation Spring 2017

Background

Aggie Allies is an organization at Texas A&M University whose mission is to provide visible support to and a safe environment for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the Texas A&M community. The organization is composed of faculty, staff, students, and community members. In order to become an Ally, people must complete the three-hour educational Aggie Allies Workshop training session. Trained facilitators run the workshop that includes common definitions, the coming out process developmental model, several activities, and a panel of LGBT people. At the end of that workshop, participants are given the opportunity to sign a contract to be an Ally, but they are not required to do so.

Aggie Allies has used Student Life Studies since 2007 for the workshop evaluation. Aggie Allies has also used Student Life Studies for web-based membership surveys.

Method and Sample

The 15 question survey was developed using Teleform[®], survey design software that creates scannable forms and databases. The survey consisted of nine quantitative questions, three qualitative questions, one demographic question, and two questions asking the date of the workshop and workshop facilitator name. The surveys were distributed to participants at the end of 10 workshops which were held between December 10th 2016 and May 10, 2017. Of the 134 attendees who received the survey, 134 participants completed at least a portion of it, yielding a 100% response rate. The data was analyzed using SPSS[®], a statistical software package, and Microsoft Excel[®].

Results

Results will be reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100% and comparison to fall 2016 results are provided where available. Summary themes are reported in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document.

First the participants were asked if they identified as a faculty member, staff member, graduate student, undergraduate student, or community member. Out of 120 respondents, 52% were staff, 24% were faculty, 11% were graduate students, and 12% selected undergraduate student and 2% selected community member. Compared to the fall 2016 workshops, there were 28 more participants overall, and the classification of the participants was similar.

Next, participants were asked a series of questions related to how the workshop aided them in understanding different aspects of the workshop's learning objectives. Table 1, on the following page, shows participants were most positive about recognizing what it means to be an Ally, and were also least positive about evaluating the origins of their ideas of sexuality and gender, similar to the fall workshop attendees. However, the participants of the spring workshops rated their ability to recall campus and community resources at lesser extent than the participants of the fall workshops.

Please indicate to which degree this presentation aided you in being able to:	To a great extent (3)	Somewhat (2)	Very little (1)	Not at all (0)	Spring 2017 Mean (sd) [n]	Fall 2016 Mean (sd) [n]
Recognize what it means to be an Ally.	92%	8%	--	--	2.92 (.27) [125]	2.93 (.29) [101]
Identify and reflect on privilege, phobias, and heterosexism.	78%	18%	3%	--	2.75 (.50) [125]	2.74 (.51) [100]
Develop Ally support and action techniques.	74%	23%	2%	--	2.72 (.50) [124]	2.67 (.54) [99]
Explain current LGBTQIA+ terminology.	75%	21%	3%	1%	2.70 (.60) [126]	2.74 (.56) [100]
Recall campus and community resources.	71%	27%	2%	--	2.69 (.50) [121]	2.84 (.37) [97]
Evaluate the origins of your ideas, sexuality, and gender.	59%	35%	6%	--	2.54 (.60) [125]	2.41 (.67) [99]

Table 1: Workshop Learning Outcomes

Next, participants were asked to respond to three questions regarding their knowledge of terminology used during the workshop and the workshop’s facilitator. As seen in Table 2, the majority of participants strongly agreed and agreed that the facilitators fully engaged the participants and were knowledgeable about the topic. However, fewer respondents strongly agreed and agreed when asked if they were familiar with the terminology used in the workshop before they attended, and at a slightly lesser degree than in fall 2016.

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements:	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Spring 2017 Mean (sd) [n]	Fall 2016 Mean (sd) [n]
The facilitator was knowledgeable about the topic.	81%	17%	2%	--	--	4.79 (.47) [126]	4.74 (.47) [99]
The facilitator fully engages the participants.	74%	18%	6%	2%	--	4.64 (.68) [126]	4.78 (.48) [100]
I was familiar with terminology discussed during this workshop before today.	32%	47%	14%	6%	2%	4.01 (.93) [126]	4.08 (.99) [100]

Table 2: Terminology and Facilitator

Next respondents were asked to give an example of one new thing they learned from the workshop. Of the 101 participants who responded with a comment, many mentioned that they learned specific examples of terminology including intersex, cisgender, and pansexual. Other comments included knowledge of resources on campus, importance of asking students their preferred name and pronouns, more awareness of privilege and about how to become more inclusive.

Participants were then asked how they will apply what they learned from the workshop. Ninety-nine (99) responses were collected; many mentioned offering support and a safe place, becoming more inclusive in interactions with students and patients, asking students their preferred pronouns and names, and promote awareness and use of more inclusive language, including on forms.

Finally, participants were asked what could be done to improve the workshop. Eighty-two (82) participants responded, and the most frequent recommendations suggested making the workshop more interactive and including more activities, group exercises, role play and practicing more real life scenarios. Other comments suggested covering recent LGBTQ+ issues (legislative and cultural) and provide a resource print out or brochure for reference. One of the workshops included primarily healthcare professionals and they suggested tailoring the presentation for that audience.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The workshops presented in the spring of 2017 should be considered successful; participants were able recognize what it means to be an Ally, developed support and action techniques and could explain current LGBTQIA+ terminology after the workshops. Participants also indicated that they could recall campus and community resources and that the workshop aided them in evaluating the origins of their ideas, sexuality, and gender, and developing support and action techniques, although the level of agreement with these statements was slightly lower than others.

Participants also felt that the facilitators were knowledgeable about the topics presented but were slightly less positive regarding finding the facilitators engaging. Participants also felt that they were not very familiar with the terminology discussed at the workshop before they arrived.

When asked for improvements that could be made to the workshop, many participants recommended a more interactive workshop, so Aggie Allies workshop organizers may want to consider if adding more activities, such as group discussions, role playing scenarios and spending more time developing an action plan during the workshops would be support the content presented. Facilitators may also want to tailor the content of the workshop for its audience, if the workshop is going to be presented to a professional audience and not students. Finally Aggie Allies could give out a list of terms to the participants prior to the workshops so that they are familiar with the terms before the workshop begins, and a list of campus resources for the participants to take with them after completing the workshop.

The Allies Executive Committee is also encouraged to share information about the assessment results with various campus organizations such as the GLBT Resource Center, the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, the GLBT Professional Network, GLBTA, or other stakeholders interested in diversity education.

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