

Statement in Support of LGBTQIA+ Community

The William & Mary Counseling Center prides itself for its dedication and commitment to social justice. We are heartbroken by the senseless tragedy at the Colorado Springs LGBTQIA+ nightclub on the eve of the Transgender Day of Remembrance. The epidemic of violence against the LGBTQIA+ community, particularly transgender women of color, is tragic. We should not tolerate hate and hate violence.

That spaces designed to provide a sense of belonging, understanding, appreciation, gratitude, and celebration are used for hate crimes, is appalling. That those charged with hate crimes take advantage of the potential sense of comfort marginalized communities may experience in these selected places (when society at large doesn't offer them the privilege of being openly and authentically themselves in many other spaces) is coward. The public health epidemic of hate and hate crimes needs to be eliminated.

Bills targeting the LGTQIA+ community have a strong impact in perpetuating oppression/discrimination and promoting othering. Othering often serves to villainize marginalized communities and is often a precursor for violence. We stand against these bills and their role they play in hate and violence against the community.

We are aware that the history of mental health professions had problematic views about sexual minorities. As such, we want to emphasize that affirming and celebrating our LGBTQIA+ community is a core value shared by each and every member of the Counseling Center's staff.

We stand with and affirm our LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, and staff. We are available to support our students and are here to process reactions to the Colorado Springs tragedy and the ongoing systemic injustices that negatively affect their well-being. We invite any student affected by homophobic and transphobic oppressive societal factors to contact us (757) 221-3620, if interested in addressing their concerns with a W&M clinician.