

**Identify a gap or need for information or change.**

Community Assistants (CAs) at a branch campus of a major university go through several trainings prior to the start of the school year. One important piece of these trainings is a discussion of topics related to supporting the LGBTQIA+ population. Many CAs have no background experience with this population and are reluctant to participate in the discussion. In the past, CAs have reported feeling self-conscious, uncomfortable participating, and a fear of being viewed as ignorant by other participants in this discussion.

**Describe how you identified this gap. What type of needs assessment strategies did you use?**

I identified this gap in discussions with a colleague in the Student Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) program. She is a Resident Director and directly oversees 4 of the 22 total CAs at this campus. We met several times to discuss the issue and what can be done to solve it. We discussed concerns brought up by CAs after their training to identify areas for instruction. We also completed the attached Learner Analysis Worksheet.

**Describe why an instructional event should fill this gap.**

An instructional event with goals and objectives that covers historical background information, defines terms, and discusses issues related to the LGBTQIA+ population will give CAs a solid base for participating confidently in discussions (both in a group with other CAs and with the students living in the residence halls).

**Define the environment where the need exists.**

This need exists at a branch campus of a major university in a small town in western Pennsylvania. The CAs who will be participating are 19-22 years old, and are college sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The anticipated class size is 25 people. It is important that this event is viewed as politically neutral – it should not feel like it's pushing an agenda. This event could be either an online training or an in-person training (although past CAs indicated that an online training would be preferable).

Ideally, this event should be highly adaptable and be able to be replicated at other types of college campuses.

**Solicit and/or confirm support/agreement for the instructional need from various audiences.**

Support for the instructional need was confirmed by the SME (SAHE colleague), several past participants in the CA trainings, other Resident Directors, and the Director of Housing and Residence Life.

**List in detail who else supports your belief in the need for the program and why they support it.**

As stated previously, several stakeholders in the Residence Life community at this campus support the idea of this program. This program is viewed as an important and currently absent component of training that will empower CAs to confidently discuss sensitive topics and support the residents who may come to them for guidance.

## **Plans for the future**

When building this event, I plan to speak with the SME to discuss areas of instructional need. I plan to review evaluations of the current training/discussion, and, in conjunction with the SME and Director of Housing and Residence Life, tailor the educational content to the needs of the CAs. I have found several ally training resources to reference (The Safe Zone Project, The Trevor Project, etc), and will also seek out information from campus ally groups.

## Learner Analysis Worksheet

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	LEARNER DETAILS
Size of target audience	The target audience size for this program is 25 people.
Are there any sub-groups that may participate?	There are no anticipated sub-groups that will be participating.
Age ranges	The anticipated age range is 19-22 years old.
Educational/grade level, or academic program year How long have they been out of an educational setting?	The participants will all be college sophomores, juniors, and seniors.
Gender breakdown	The gender breakdown will vary with each group.
Cultural backgrounds, races, ethnicities, nationalities	The backgrounds will vary with each group. Of note, many of the participants have been from small-town Pennsylvania.
Primary language	The primary language of participants is English.
Cultural views towards education Student/teacher	All of the participants are undergraduate students. Many of them have no experience with social justice/inclusivity issues, which can lead to discomfort, self-consciousness, and lack of confidence when dealing with these topics.
Employment status	Each participant is employed as a Community Assistant (Resident Assistant) at a small branch campus of a major university.
Socioeconomic status	The participants' socioeconomic status varies.
Traditional/non-traditional/ first-generation learner?	The participants are traditional undergraduate students. Their status as first-generation learners varies.
Geographic location(s) & time zones	Ideally this will be an online training to be done prior to a group discussion during Community Assistant orientation. The school is in Eastern Standard Time.
Internet connectivity? Access to technology?	The participants all have internet connectivity (they not only have it in their dormitories, but they are required to have it during the summer months as well).
Other?	

	<b>COGNITIVE &amp; PRIOR KNOWLEDGE CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>LEARNER DETAILS</b>
	Education Level and prior achievements	The participants will all be undergraduate students in their sophomore, junior, and senior years.
	Do they meet prerequisite skills required?	There are no prerequisite skills.
	Prior knowledge/proficiency related to subject/content	Most of the students have little experience with the content.
	Learning Styles	The participants' learning styles vary.
	Computer/Information literacy	The participants are all very computer literate.
	Familiarity with Web 2.0 tools	Unknown.
	Online experience	The participants have all grown up with technology, and are very Internet-savvy.
	Learning Disabilities	We have no access to this information.
	Cognitive Disabilities	We have no access to this information.
	Other:	
	<b>PHYSIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>LEARNER DETAILS</b>
	Emotional: beliefs, habits of thinking, curiosity level, creativity	There are people with conservative views, can't seem like it's pushing an agenda – politically neutral. Some people feel attacked in discussion.
	Are basic needs being met?	Yes
	Any medical issues that may impede participation?	We have no access to this information.
	Physical disabilities	We have no access to this information.
	Environmental sensitivities	We have no access to this information.
	Athletic? Tendencies toward competition?	Fear of being wrong, ignorant, bigot, confrontational
	Other:	

AFFECTIVE & SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS	LEARNER DETAILS
Motivation level – is the course required or optional?	
Attitudes toward self	In regards toward this subject matter, unsure. 3 hour conversation with no background info.
Relationships	At the point of training, they all know each other. Can be cliquy, everyone has at least an acquaintance relationship
Interests/hobbies	Varied. Only thing that really ties together is that they are students and CAs
Other:	Criminal justice, English, education, chem, bio, psych

\* Chart constructed from information found in Smith, P.L., & Ragan, T.J. (2005) *Instructional design* (3rd ed.).