

**Faculty Information Literacy Stipend
Final Report**

Name: Ashley Stone

Course: EPL 7380 – History of Higher Education

Semester: Fall 2023

Introduction: I have had my history of higher education students visit the University Archives to help them better understand primary documents/sources and to begin thinking about what types of things are kept in archives and what might be missing. This is a starting point for the historical research projects that I have had them do. Still, I have wanted to deepen their interaction with the archives, so when Joan asked if I would be interested in working on a project like this I jumped at the opportunity. This new project allowed students to dive deeper into the archives, ask more questions, and be more hands on with the archives, all of which further the goals of the course particularly the following two:

- Learn about the resources available within the University Archives for the study of the history of American Colleges and Universities
- Explore the history of College

Finally, each group identified potential archival sources that they wish they could have had access to that could create a more full picture of the event.

Combined these products made up 35% of the students overall grade (15% for the overview, 15% for the Class Facilitation, and 5% for the recommendations for additional sources).

Results and impact on student learning:

I was able to invite Joan to the facilitations. We were both very impressed with the work that the

students produc.1 (l) 201-6n-8t-5()-2 (.)] A.3 (rC1-3.3 (d)-3.3 (d)-9d-8t1 (A)103-7)-5 (e)-6r-2.8)J (3)C1-3c) (d)

Future Research (5%) – Each group will submit a short plan for how the archives could

(Hecht, 1983).

We found it telling that the results of the SMU Board of Governor's review of GLSSO (Clements, 1984) were missing. Given the board's position that GLSSO should not be a recognized student organization (Clements, 1984), we suspect they hoped the issue would go away if they took it out of the spotlight. They were successful, as recognition of GLSSO did not come until 1991 (Campus Life, 1991). Events such as a university sponsored dinner at which a "strongly anti-gay speaker spoke against recognition" of GLSSO (Moxley, 1983, para. 1) indicate the university leadership were either anti-LGBTQ or scared of backlash from alumni and donors.

Historical Context

Overall, SMU's failure to recognize the GLSSO showed how behind the university was in supporting LGBTQ students. The modern fight for queer equality began in the late 1960s, most famously at Compton's Café in San Francisco and the Stonewall Inn in New York City (Blumenfeld, 2022). Soon after, LGBTQ student groups began forming at institutions like Columbia, Cornell, MIT, and Stanford. While many universities like the University of Texas at Austin refused to recognize these organizations at first, these incidents occurred about 10 years before the GLSSO's push for recognition at SMU (Blumenfeld, 2022; Trevino, 2016).

By 1980, universities across the country already had officially recognized LGBTQ student organizations, including those affiliated with the United Methodist Church (UMC) like SMU (Finnin, 1982). At that time, the UMC's position on same-gender relationships called for

bigotry across the nation and at SMU (Beauchamp, W., 1983). Pointing to the AIDS crisis, one SMU student senator in the first vote for GLSSO recognition argued that supporting the organization would jeopardize the health of the entire campus community (Beauchamp, B., 1983). Indeed, at the time of Senate debates on the GLSSO, members of the Texas Legislature in Austin were debating “a bill to protect Texans from the spread of AIDS” by jailing people for “homosexual acts” (Beauchamp, B., 1983, para. 5). Though the bill never passed, it highlights how the fear of AIDS ignited anti-gay sentiment, especially at SMU.

Contemporary Context

Though the GLSSO no longer exists under that name, SMU currently has several organizations and resources to support LGBTQ+ undergraduates. The Women & LGBT Center of Student Affairs (Southern Methodist University, 2023b)

of their efforts. Tollie also spearheaded SMU's first annual Pride Visibility Day to welcome queer students and allies, educate the community, and celebrate the fact that queer people belong at SMU (Southern Methodist University, 2022).

References

- Beauchamp, B. (1983, Nov 24). Gay students battle for recognition at SMU. *The Advocate*.
- Beauchamp, W. (1983, Aug 7). A 2d AIDS epidemic. *The New York Times*.
- Blumenfeld, W. J. (2022, Oct 13). A brief early history of LGBTQ studies in the United States. Campus Pride. Retrieved Nov 22, 2023, from <https://www.campuspride.org/a-brief-early-history-of-lgbtq-studies-in-the-united-states/>
- Campus Life. (1991, Apr 28). Southern methodist student senate gives gay group official standing. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/04/28/nyregion/campus-life-southern-methodist-student-senate-gives-gay-group-official-standing.html>
- Clements, W. P. (1984). Letter to SMU President L. Donald Shields, Student Body President Homer B. Reynolds, III, and Student Body Vice President Thomas E. Davey, Jr. Southern Methodist University Archives.
- Finnin, W. M. (1982). Letter to James E. Caswell, Dean of Student Life. Southern Methodist University Archives.
- Furnish, V. P. (1983). Letter to Joe Dooley, Student Body President. Southern Methodist University Archives.
- GLSSO. (1983). A bill to implement a gay and lesbian student support organization. Southern Methodist University Archives.
- PRIDE WAS A RIOT 7
- Hannum, L. (2022, May 5). SMU students commemorate LGBTQ+ history and community with exhibit, film, and pride visibility day. SMU Residence Life & Student Housing. Retrieved Nov 22, 2023, from <https://blog.smu.edu/rlsh/2022/05/05/smu-students-commemorate-lgbtq-history-and-community-with-exhibit-film-and-pride-visibility-day/>
- Hecht, P. (1983, Dec 14). SMU gay rights debate enters national limelight. *Dallas Times Herald*.
- McDermott, C. (1983, Apr 20). Opponents of group win struggle with 17-11 vote. *The Daily Campus*.
- Miller, M. (1983, Apr 20). Shields won't give opinion on GLSSO. *The Daily Campus*.

Moxley, R. S. (1983, June 9). Shields find Caswell, Gallagher innocent of wrongdoing. *The Daily Campus*.

Read, C. (1984). Presentation to the faculty senate. Southern Methodist University Archives.

Ritz, D. (1984a, Apr 27). Registered status given to, taken from GLSSO. *Dallas Gay News*.

Ritz, D. (1984b, Feb 24). SMU refuses again to recognize gay campus group. *Montrose Voice*.

Roberts, D. C. (1983). Letter to Robert Rios and Leslie Cooper, GLSSO co-chairs. Southern Methodist University Archives.

SMU Alumni. (1984). Letter to SMU President L. Donald Shields. Southern Methodist University Archives.

PRIDE WAS A RIOT 8

SMU Faculty Senate. (1984). Resolution #4 of the faculty senate 1983-84. Southern Methodist University Archives.

SMU Spectrum [@spectrum_smu]. (n.d.). Posts [Instagram Profile]. Instagram. Retrieved Nov 22, 2023, from https://www.instagram.com/spectrum_smu/

SMU Student Senate. (2023). 108th senators. Retrieved Nov 22, 2023, from <http://www.smustudentsenate.com/senators-1>

Southern Methodist University. (2022, Apr 5). Event: April 29, Pride Visibility Day. Retrieved Nov 22, 2023, from <https://blog.smu.edu/dedmancollege/2022/04/05/event-april-29-pride-visibility-day/>

Southern Methodist University. (2023a). LGBT programs.

<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/WomenandLGBTCenter/LGBT/LGBTPrograms>

Southern Methodist University. (2023b). Women & LGBT Center organizations.

<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/WomenandLGBTCenter/StudentOrganizations>

Stoltze, F. (1983, Oct 5). Senate denies recognition for GLSSO. *The Daily Campus*

Student Senate Organizations Committee. (1983). Recommendation on the recognition of gay & lesbian student support organization (GLSSO). Southern Methodist University Archives.

The Hilltop Pride. (2023). About us. <https://thehilltoppride.com/about-us/>

Trevino, V. (2016, Oct 21). History of UT's LGBT community. *The Daily Texan*. Retrieved Nov 22, 2023, from <https://thedailytexan.com/2016/10/21/history-of-uts-lgbt-community/>