



Unpacking the GSA Toolbox

Course Description: Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) are clubs run by and for students. These clubs would not be possible without the advisors who spend time every day with LGBTQ and Allied students. Advisors work behind the scenes with school administrators, facilitating trips, and empowering students to lead these important clubs.

Students need a faculty or staff advisor to start a GSA (school counselor, librarian, teacher, school nurse). This advisor needs to be supportive of LGBTQ students and have time in their busy schedule to attend meetings the students will have throughout the year. Advisors provide a critical role in continuity for an organization as student leaders will change from year to year. As the faculty advisor, your primary role is to empower these students.

At the end of this course, participants will reflect on new learning in this course and develop an implementation plan to utilize in their work.

Clock Hours / Continuing Education Units: 10

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the legal obligations of faculty advisors as outlined by the federal Equal Access Act
- Demonstrate an awareness of the role of Gay-Straight Alliances in building safe and supportive learning environments
- Create a plan to address issues related to trans and racial inclusion of a GSA
- Develop strategies to ensure students are successful and are supported in local GSAs
- Develop new lessons that can be used in the classroom and professional development setting

Course Requirements: To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a non-passing grade

Getting Started:

- After registering for the course, you will be sent an email with the website address, password and course key you need to access your online course, along with login instructions.
- Access each assignment through the course home page. All assignments will be submitted through the Moodle platform on each respective assignment page.
- Please save a backup copy of all course assignments and completed work.

Course Outline:

Lesson Number	Lesson Description	Clock Hours
1	Introductions and Overview: Take the time to get to know the class layout, read over the Help section, and review any other materials present in the class to get started. Take your time!	0.2 Hours
2	Discussion: What is a GSA? – In this lesson, participants will examine several resources on what GSAs are and why they are important to LGBTQ students.	0.85 Hours
3	Discussion: Rights of LGBTQ Student in High School – In this lesson, participants will read articles and handouts from the American Civil Liberties Union on LGBTQ student rights in high school.	0.85 Hours
4	Discussion: The Importance of Intersectional GSAs – In this lesson, participants will examine several resources on what intersectionality is and its importance in GSAs.	0.85 Hours
5	Discussion: Trans Inclusive GSAs – In this lesson, participants will read about the Transgender Day of Remembrance, as well as materials on creating inclusive GSAs for transgender and gender non-conforming students.	0.85 Hours

6	Discussion: Anti-Racist GSAs – In this lesson, participants are given reading and activity assignments on creating anti-racist GSA groups. In addition, they will watch a TedX Talk by Peggy McIntosh on race and inclusivity.	0.85 Hours
7	Discussion: Holding the First Meeting – In this activity, participants will read handouts on holding a successful GSA meeting from GLSEN. In addition, they will learn about the basics that should be covered during meetings so everyone feels safe and included.	0.85 Hours
8	Discussion: Day of Silence – In this lesson, participants will read about the Day of Silence from GLSEN, the importance of the day, and the importance of student activism.	0.85 Hours
9	Discussion: Fundraising – In this lesson, participants will read materials from GLSEN and other organizations on GSA groups organizing action campaigns and the challenges associated with fundraising.	0.85 Hours
10	Course Reflection: In this lesson, participants will write a summary of their reflections throughout the course, including new learnings	1.00 Hours
11	Implementation Plan: For this final portion of the course, participants will develop a lesson that can be utilized in the classroom, homeroom period, or professional development training that encompasses the new learnings within this course.	2.00 Hours
TOTAL HOURS		10 Hours

Student Requirements and Assessment: No outside materials will be required for the completion of this course.

Participants will be assessed in three different ways:

- Quizzes:** Participants are required to complete a series of electronic quizzes to assess their understanding. Participants can earn up to 64 points total for the course. Each quiz may be taken up to three times, with the highest score recorded in the final grade. All quizzes must be completed in order to earn credit.
- Course Reflection:** Participants will be required to write a reflection summarizing their new learnings within the course. Participants can earn up to 10 points total for the reflection. The reflection will be graded using the following rubric:

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Makes connections to the other content and real-life that are supported by reference(s) and/or example(s)	2
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	1
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	1
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the reflection	6
Total Points Possible		10

- Implementation Plan:** Participants will construct an implementation plan for how their new knowledge can be directly implemented into the classroom, training setting, or professional development environment. Implementation plans will be graded using the following rubric:

Grading Rubric for Implementation Plan		
		Points
Background Information	Lesson / Title Identified	1
	Target Audience and Subject/Course Setting Identified	1

	Learning Goals are measurable objectives students are expected to meet by the end of the lesson.	2
	Lesson Ties to Specific State Standards for Students, Educators, or Professionals	2
	Materials Listed	1
Lesson Plan	<i>Engage</i> : Lesson hooks audience and introduces lesson effectively.	5
	<i>Explore and Explain</i> : Lesson actively engages participants in learning new material using best practices.	5
	<i>Evaluate</i> : Lesson effectively assesses participant understanding.	5
Implementation	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized. No or few grammar and spelling errors	2
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	2
Total Points Possible		26

Grading Scale:

100-80% (80-100 Points)	Pass
79%-Below (<80 points)	No Pass

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please email academy@iowasafeschools.org or call 515.381.0588.

Professional Development: Prior to purchasing a course registration, it is your responsibility to ensure that National Safe Schools Convening Online Academy coursework satisfies the license renewal requirements for your state and/or district.