

# the Lantern



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The Ohio

## Survey seeks to reveal attitudes toward gays

By Michelle A. Schwartz  
Lantern staff writer

A grant to study the attitudes of heterosexuals toward gay and lesbian students was given to Counseling and Consultation Services by the Office of Affirmative Action.

The \$8,625 grant was used to devise a survey that examines heterosexual attitudes and also asks gays about their experiences and concerns, said Louise Douce, assistant director of Counseling and Consultation Services.

Keith Oliver, graduate administrative associate who designed the questions for the survey and will record the results at the end of fall quarter, said the surveys are currently being distributed. Names for the survey were given to Oliver by the OSU poll, a university service that randomly selects names for surveys.

Douce said the purpose of the survey is to record the experiences and attitudes of many different people, which will then help the university develop programs to

make gays more comfortable at Ohio State.

She said about 10 percent of OSU's population is gay.

The biggest problem gay students who live in dorms face is isolation, said Douce.

The other biggest problems the students face are fear of harassment and physical threats, she said.

Douce said the fears are more prevalent than actual physical injuries.

Heterosexual OSU students do not generally threaten gay and lesbian students. But she said "the conservative attitude is gaining momentum again" on campus and it's scaring gays.

Verta Taylor, professor of sociology, said some people feel they have to act hostile toward gays or people will think they are gay. Taylor said she is reluctant to predict the outcome of the survey, but she thinks it will show the mixed

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feelings of the university community.

People need to be more informed about AIDS, Taylor said. The link between AIDS and gays has allowed heterosexuals to express their resentment toward gays more easily because they can blame the gays for the disease.

The Oct. 1 issue of *the Lantern* said students will receive pamphlets on AIDS in their UVC classes. The pamphlets will help

students understand the disease, alleviate fears and false rumors about AIDS, as well as provide information about how to decrease the chances of contracting the disease.

Taylor said teaching students about AIDS is a good idea because the right information could help calm the mass hysteria surrounding the disease.

Rhonda Rivera, professor of law and a member of the Board of Directors of Stonewall Union, a gay and lesbian civil rights organization, said people are less likely

to admit they are gay because of the AIDS scare.

She said it is important to include AIDS education in the UVC classes because young people are very sexually active and it's important that they know which sexual practices to avoid.

Brian, a member of the Ohio State Gay & Lesbian Alliance staff and a junior from Denver, Colorado, said prejudice against gays is usually generated by individuals and not the campus community as a whole. Brian asked that his last name not be used.