



**Blanket Tax Standing Committee 2015-2016**  
**Report on Review of New Blanket Tax Application**  
**Queer Resource Center (QRC)**

**Abstract**

Queer Resource Center (QRC) is a registered student organization with the mission to promote queer visibility, support, and advocacy on and around the Rice University campus. Visibility: Provide a physical safe space that raises awareness of our presence on campus. Support: Dynamically meet the needs of the community through programming, resources, and education. Advocacy: Promote policies and programs that seek to recognize all experiences and celebrate all identities relating to gender and sexuality at Rice and beyond. The Blanket Tax Committee has reviewed QRC's application and recommends the Student Senate **not approve** QRC's request for subsidiary status.

**Evaluation**

X.A.4.c and X.A.4.e of the Student Association Bylaws establishes criteria for the Blanket Tax Standing Committee to consider when reviewing an application for the creation of a new blanket tax. The Committee must find that an organization's proposal satisfies all of the criteria in order to recommend approval of that proposal. The Committee presents its findings with regard to each criterion below.

1. Would the requested funds benefit the student body and the Rice community?

The Blanket Tax Standing Committee finds that the requested funds would benefit all of the student body and the Rice community although they cater to a very specific niche that has previously gone unattended. The committee feels that they benefit the student body by supporting, making visible, and advocating on behalf of an often overlooked community of students, faculty, staff, and community members. The committee also feels that ensuring the wellbeing and safety of every member of the rice community to be a top priority in ensuring a world-class educational environment.

2. Would the requested funds contribute to the organization's mission, purpose, and goals?

The Blanket Tax Standing Committee finds the funds will contribute to the organization's mission, purpose and goals by financially supporting their events and advocacy.

3. Does the organization have a strong financial need?

The Blanket Tax Standing Committee does not find that QRC has a strong financial need as they are a new organization founded Spring 2015. The Committee feels that there is too much unknown regarding their financials to feel comfortable with appropriating student monetary resources to QRC.

4. Have all other reasonable means of acquiring funding been exhausted?

The Blanket Tax Standing Committee finds that QRC has not exhausted all means of acquiring funds. The committee recommends QRC coordinate with the wellbeing center and/or other wellbeing institutions on campus for funding. The committee also feels that the wellbeing community in total should approach the Blanket Tax Committee for funds as one united wellbeing resource.

5. Is the organization's financial need long-term and annual?

The Blanket Tax Standing Committee finds that QRC's financial need is not long-term and annual as of now, as they are a new organization with little financial experience.

6. Proper Budgeting

The Blanket Tax Committee does not find QRC's budgeting appropriate or reasonable as they submitted a printout of their banner account without any details regarding budgeted events or monetary expenses.

**Conclusion**

As thoroughly discussed above, the Blanket Tax Standing Committee finds that the QRC proposal to be a subsidiary organization with access to blanket tax funds does not satisfy all of the review criteria. This alone is sufficient for a recommendation to **not approve** the proposal.

As such, formally, The Student Association Blanket Tax Standing Committee for the 2015-2016 academic year hereby recommends that the Student Senate **NOT APPROVE** the Queer Resource Center.

Respectfully submitted, Sai Chilakapati  
Chair, Blanket Tax Standing Committee

**QRC Formal Response**

No Formal Response Given.

**Organization Name:** The Rice Queer Resource Center

**Year Founded:** Spring 2015

**Name and Email of**

- **President:** Nicholas Hanson-Holtry (nbh2@rice.edu)
- **Treasurer:** Zoe Matranga (zgm1@rice.edu)
- **Advisors:** Catherine Clack (clack@rice.edu) and Kathleen Gould (kgould@rice.edu)

**Number of Active Members:**

- holding some kind of leadership role: 19
- non-leadership roles: approximately 20 additional members

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Queer Resource Center is to promote queer visibility, support, and advocacy on and around the Rice University campus. Visibility: Provide a physical safe space that raises awareness of our presence on campus. Support: Dynamically meet the needs of the community through programming, resources, and education. Advocacy: Promote policies and programs that seek to recognize all experiences and celebrate all identities relating to gender and sexuality at Rice and beyond.

**Current Constitution:** see attached (constitution.pdf)

**Current and Previous Year Budget:** see attached (budget.pdf)

**Current Funding Sources**

We receive \$500/year from The Office of Multicultural Affairs, and we were initially founded based on a one-time grant of \$5000 from SA40k. Since then we have applied for (but not yet heard back regarding) SAPP funding. In the future, we plan on continuing to apply for funding from a variety of sources.

**Explanation of Request for Funds**

Our SA40k funds are depleting, our SAPP funding is uncertain, and our \$500/year from Multicultural is insufficient to complete all the projects and host all the events we want to as a Center. The main reason that these sources of funding are not sufficient to sustain the QRC is because they are either one-time grants or too small. Priority access to the Blanket Tax General Pool will aid long-term sustainability of the QRC in that we would have consistent access to the appropriate level of funding required to sustain our current level of activity as a resource-providing Center.

**Hypothetical Budget With Priority Access**

I imagine that our expenditures would remain approximately the same. The main difference is that such expenditure patterns would remain stably-funded instead of consistently having to dip into the (quite limited and already depleting) SA40k funds, as discussed earlier.

**Evidence of Financial Practices**

Funding for projects and events are done on an individual basis and re-voted on each year by the privileged members of the QRC. As such, there are many events we can expect to continue hosting from year to year (namely Pride Week, Queer Monologues, awareness events, social mixers, etc) but nothing is certain since each year we require proposals to be re-evaluated. For a history of all the votes that the QRC has taken this year, you can view all our meeting minutes at [queer.rice.edu/qrc/documents](http://queer.rice.edu/qrc/documents).

### **Proposed Amendments to Constitution**

I believe, if granted Priority Access, the QRC would gladly pass any necessary amendments to our constitution that would qualify us for such access, including acquiescing to yielding election of our primary leadership members to the student body or SA senate. In drafting these amendments, however, we would request the assistance of the SA Parliamentarian.

### **Benefit to the Student Body**

The QRC is not a club serving an extracurricular role; the QRC is a resource center filling a niche role on campus that had previously gone unattended. We don't require a lot of funding to do what we do, but what we do is critically important to the climate of this campus in ways that most clubs are not. We benefit the study body by supporting, making visible, and advocating on behalf of an often overlooked community of students, faculty, staff, and community members. Granting the QRC Blanket Tax Organization status would ingrain the QRC into the culture and structure of Rice University and ensure that we can continue to provide these services to the student body.

### **Miscellaneous Additional Information**

The QRC does not require a lot of funding, perhaps only on the order of \$2000/year. (We're assuming the details of this proposal will be worked out with the Blanket Tax Committee at a later time.)

Additionally, it is important to note that formally supporting the QRC and the queer community at Rice by granting us Blanket Tax Organization status would very publicly and permanently voice the SA's support for the Rice queer community and all that the QRC aims to do in terms of visibility, support, and advocacy thereof. Given the dedication to diversity this campus embraces, such a public and meaningful statement would not go unnoticed and would certainly earn the SA the gratitude of several external queer organizations in Houston, the Rice Alumni Pride association, etc.

Lastly, we believe that the best way to pursue Blanket Tax funding for the QRC would be for us to jointly apply with the WRC for some kind of "student-lead resource center blanket tax." We hope that the WRC has submitted their own Blanket Tax application; however if not, a discussion with the Blanket Tax Committee about such a proposal would be most welcome.

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**Budget Status**

<b>Fund: C51607 - Queer Resource Center</b>	<b>Org: 599000 - Multicultural Affairs</b>
<b>Default Program: STU</b>	
<b>Fiscal Year: 2015 / Fiscal Period: 14 (YREND) / YTD</b>	<b>Prog: ALL / Actv: ALL / Locn: ALL</b>

Account Summary							
Acct	Title	Budget	Period Activity	YTD Activity	Encumb Balance	Memo. Rsrv.	Avail Balance
<b>50</b>	<b>External Sales</b>						
51100	Interest Allowed/Received	.00	.00	1.82	.00	.00	1.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>External Sales</b>	.00	.00	1.82	.00	.00	1.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>Revenues</b>	.00	.00	1.82	.00	.00	1.82
<b>70</b>	<b>Supplies &amp; Expenses</b>						
70100	Supplies & Expense	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
70310	Business Meetings	.00	.00	1,021.95	.00	.00	-1,021.95
70860	Entertainment Expenses	.00	.00	179.75	.00	.00	-179.75
70877	Student Organization Events	.00	.00	-5,000.00	.00	.00	5,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>Supplies &amp; Expenses</b>	.00	.00	-3,798.30	.00	.00	3,798.30
<b>80</b>	<b>Transfers Between Funds</b>						
80400	Other Voluntary Transfers, Net	.00	.00	-493.21	.00	.00	493.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>Transfers Between Funds</b>	.00	.00	-493.21	.00	.00	493.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>Expenditures + Transfers</b>	.00	.00	-4,291.51	.00	.00	4,291.51
<b>Net</b>	<b>Revenues - Expenditures (Excludes Transfers)</b>	.00	.00	3,800.12	.00	.00	3,800.12
<b>Net</b>	<b>Revenues - Expenditures - Transfers</b>	.00	.00	4,293.33	.00	.00	4,293.33

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**  
 Amounts shown in the Memo Reservation column are not encumbered funds.  
 These funds will not roll forward to the next fiscal year.

Transaction Detail									
Acct	Trans. Date	Pd.	Doc. Code	Doc. Ref.	Vendor Inv.	Type	Check No.	Description	Amount
<b>No transaction detail data available for this fund/orgn/fsyr/fspd</b>									

**Labor Encumbrance Detail**

**You do not have security to view labor encumbrance detail.**

**Please contact Administrative Systems for assistance.**

**Fringe Benefit Detail**

**You do not have security to view fringe benefit detail.**

**Please contact Administrative Systems for assistance.**

**Open Encumbrance Detail**

<b>Encumb</b>	<b>Acct</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Trans Date</b>	<b>Orig Amount</b>	<b>Adjust</b>	<b>Liquidations</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<b>Total Open Encumbrances:</b>				.00	.00	.00	.00

Encumbrances closed as of this date will not appear on this list, even though they may have still been open during the period queried. See encumbrance activity for details.

**Memo Reservations Detail**

<b>Acct.</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Term Date</b>	<b>User ID</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>No memo reservations detail data available for this fund/orgn/fsyr/fspd</b>						

Go to Memo Reservations Entry Screen

Only allows you to view/modify memo reservations that you have entered.

**Computed Fund Balance**

<b>Account</b>	<b>Account Title</b>	<b>Amount</b>
30020	Control Revenue Actual	1.82
30040	Control Expenditures Actual	3,798.30
30080	Control Transfer Actual	493.21
<b>Computed Fund Balance:</b>		4,293.33

If control totals do not agree with account summary information above, there may be activity on other organization codes for this fund.

Computed fund balance does not include memo reservations, nor does it include any labor or fringe encumbrances. See above account summary section for details.

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# The Rice Queer Resource Center

October 2, 2015

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# 1 Mission and Purpose

## 1.1 Introduction and History

The need for a resource center dedicated specifically to queer issues at Rice University is both immediate and historic. Currently, according to U.S. News and World report, Rice University is the only top 20 university in the U.S. that does not have a resource center of this kind. As we look towards the second century of our university's future, this unique position is not one we want to maintain. The differences in visibility, resources, support and advocacy for queer students at Rice versus comparable institutions are striking and need to be addressed both quickly and boldly.

Rice's mission statement emphasizes that the university "seeks to fulfill this mission by cultivating a diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders across the spectrum of human endeavor." We believe that this mission cannot be adequately accomplished without taking gender and sexuality diversity into account. Currently, the lack of visible and institutionalized resources for queer members of Rice's community does not only hurt existing community members but also discourages potential queer community members from joining in Rice's mission.

However, the need for a queer resource center is also one that has a long history on Rice's campus and is now a coordinated effort among several different existing organizations and resources. In fact, a 2004 article from the Houston Chronicle detailed the plan for Rice to open a center very similar to the one we are currently proposing.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality professor, Brian Riedel, proposed a LGBT Coordinator staff position in 2007 which was rejected.

In 1979, the Rice Gay/Lesbian Support group, a precursor to Queers and Allies, was first started and recognized by the Student Association. Since then, support for queer students on campus has only grown, including the Ally training program as well as a special QPR training to help LGBT individuals. Last semester, Query was formed in response to the need for a more intimate space focused on both academic discussions and advocacy/activism on campus. Also, students began working with the Student Wellbeing Office to coordinate more visible resources and support, resulting in Rice's first Pride Week supported by a Rice institution since the original resource center disbanded. The week included events and discussion hosted by Query, Queers and Allies, and the Student Wellbeing Office.

We, the founding members of the Queer Resource Center, envision a campus where student organizations, university institutions, academic departments, and all other facets of the university have a centralized organizing resource to work together to promote queer visibility, support and advocacy within our community.

## 1.2 Mission Statement

The mission of the Queer Resource Center is to promote queer **visibility**, **support**, and **advocacy** on and around the Rice University campus.

**Visibility:** Provide a physical safe space that raises awareness of our presence on campus.

**Support:** Dynamically meet the needs of the community through programming, resources, and education.

**Advocacy:** Promote policies and programs that seek to recognize all experiences and celebrate all identities relating to gender and sexuality at Rice and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Rice-to-open-resource-center-for-gay-students-1573424.php>



## **2 Organizational Structure**

### **2.1 Membership**

#### **2.1.1 General**

Any person affiliated with the Rice community is implicitly a member of the Center. Any individual in the Rice community who wishes to become more involved with the inner workings of the Center may attend meetings, volunteer for the Center, and/or run for a leadership position.

Should a member of the organization disregard the Center's policies or disrespect the organization, that member may be asked to present their story to the officers of the Center. The presiding officers then vote on the removal of the member. A 2/3 majority is required for expulsion. Following a decision, the student will be notified in a timely manner.

To comply with university requirements, at no time shall fewer than half of the organization's leadership be student members, only student members who are not on Disciplinary Probation or otherwise prohibited from holding office in a registered student organization shall be eligible to seek and hold office.

#### **2.1.2 Privileged Membership**

All facilitators, the treasurer, and the president will be considered privileged (voting) members of the Center. Each committee, the treasurer, and the president are each granted one vote (ie, co-facilitators of the same committee do not receive more than one vote).

### **2.2 Leadership**

#### **2.2.1 General**

The Queer Resource Center is to be headed a president.

The funds of the Center are to be managed by a treasurer.

The goals and efforts of the Center are to be split among several committees. These committees, which may range from activism to event-planning and education, are to be headed by one facilitator or two co-facilitators. The number of committees and the specific goals of any particular committee should be flexible, shifting over time to dynamically meet the needs of the Rice community. After the initial establishment of the Center, adding or removing a committee from the Center requires an official vote (see 2.2.5).

Club members may be members, facilitators, or co-facilitators of as many committees as they desire. However, the roles of president and treasurer should at no time fall upon the same individual.

#### **2.2.2 Officers**

The duty of the president is to oversee the activities and efforts of the Queer Resource Center on a large scale, to both attend and lead all facilitator meetings, and, when necessary, to delegate unallocated tasks to the facilitator in the best position to complete the task. The president should also serve as the primary point of contact when reaching out to other clubs, organizations, and the administration.

The duty of the treasurer is to oversee and manage the funding that the Center is given, to record all purchases, and to aid any committees aimed at fund-raising and securing additional funds for use of the Center, or take point in this effort if no such committee exists.

The duty of a facilitator is to oversee the specific committee of which they are the facilitator. In doing so, the facilitator is to make decisions on events, speakers, training, etc, as they see fit and as assigned to them by the president.

The removal process of an officer is the same as the removal of a member.

### **2.2.3 Faculty Sponsors**

The Center is to be run with **direct oversight** from the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Student Wellbeing. The Center is to have at least one sponsor from each Office who is a member of the Rice faculty or staff and who plans to be at Rice for the full academic year. It is envisioned that these sponsors will meet periodically with the president to discuss the current state and goings on of the Center, as well as to provide input on plans for upcoming events and proposed changes to the Center.

Additionally, both Offices should required an end-of-year report from the Center, summarizing the work done in the past academic year and plans for the work to be done in the upcoming year. We hope that the Queer Resource Center will become ingrained part of both Offices and the Rice community as a whole, persistently and uncompromising a presence and active force on campus, resilient to the changing students and staff who might be working with the Center at a particular point in time.

### **2.2.4 Elections**

Elections will take place during the second semester of each academic year.

Elections for facilitators are only to be performed by the members of the committee of which the facilitator is running for office. The composition of a particular committee is to be determines by those who see themselves as the members of that committee. Ambiguous membership is to be resolved by the president. A 2/3 majority vote of these individuals is required for the election of a facilitator. In the event that a consensus cannot be reached, more than one individual can run as join co-facilitators, or the president can appoint a facilitator (or several co-facilitators).

The offices of treasurer and president are to be voted on by the privileged members of the Center only. Both quorum and a 2/3 majority vote is required for a successful election.

The president will inform all members of the Center that a vote to elect new officers will be occurring no less that one week before the vote is to take place.

### **2.2.5 Decision Making and Voting**

If a quorum of the Center can easily come to a decision on an issue that concerns more than one committee, no official vote is required. Any time a committee or individual requests Center funds, an official vote is required.

If an official vote is required, the voting process is similar to that of voting in an election. A quorum is required, only privileged members may vote, announcements of the vote will be made at least 24 hours in advance of the decision to be made, and a 2/3 majority vote is required to reach a final decision.

### **2.2.6 Quorum**

If at any given meeting of the Center, if one facilitator from 3/4 of the committees are present, the president is present, and the treasurer is present, then that group shall act with the full authority of the Center.

## **2.3 Meetings**

Meetings will be held as frequently as necessary at the digression of the president. It is suggested that meetings take place no less frequently than biweekly, and that the location of the meetings take place in the QRC Office Space.

These meetings are open to all members of the Center, regardless of position. Non-officers may attend meetings at their leisure, with no requirement of participation. Privileged members are expected to attend all meetings. Excessive unexcused absences may be sufficient reason for disciplinary review.

The Center meetings will not use any official rules of order; however, the president is to be seen as the presiding authority over the meeting and is expected to set the agenda and tone of the meeting. Meetings will be a discussion-based open forum, which allows all members, regardless of position, to express their thoughts and feelings. Each facilitator, as well as the treasurer and president, will have an opportunity to share the affairs of their committee or duty, and call to vote any matters they see fit.

## **2.4 Financial Procedures**

### **2.4.1 General**

There shall be neither dues required of members nor fines imposed on members as a result of misbehavior.

The duties of the treasurer are explained in section 2.2.2.

### **2.4.2 Club Funds**

All funds gathered by the organization must be deposited into a club account through the Office of Multicultural Affairs within one business day of their receipt.

Any member of the Center can request and spend funds. The approval of such a fund allocation always requires an official vote (see 2.2.5).

### **2.4.3 Misuse of Funds**

The sponsor shall refer to the relevant University office(s) any member reasonably suspected of spending Center funds without authority, failing to deposit Center funds appropriately, or otherwise misusing or abusing Center funds.

## **3 Other Policies**

### **3.1 Nondiscrimination Policy**

This organization shall not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, age, disability, or veteran status.

While this Center is oriented towards serving the needs of the queer community on Rice's campus, membership is in no way limited to individuals who identify as queer. On the contrary, allies are a valued and integral part of the organization, and are welcomed and encouraged to get involved.

### **3.2 Anti-Hazing Policy**

This organization shall not engage in any form of hazing, as defined by the Code of Student Conduct and any other applicable Rice University rules and regulations.

### **3.3 Conflict of Interest Policy**

The business of this organization shall not be conducted in any manner that creates a conflict of interest or the reasonable appearance thereof.

### **3.4 Approval of Contracts**

No commitments or contracts shall be made by any member of this organization on behalf of this organization without the approval of both the sponsor and a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

### **3.5 Subordination to the SA**

This organization shall recognize the primacy of the Student Association Executive Branch, the Student Senate, and ultimately, the Student Association. This organization shall be bound by the requirements of the Constitution of the Student Association and any associated rules and regulations. This constitution and any bylaws or policies adopted by this organization are subordinate to the Constitution of the Student Association.

### **3.6 Approval by SA Parliamentarian**

Amendments approved by the membership shall be submitted to the Student Association Parliamentarian. Amendments may not take effect until they are approved by the Parliamentarian or the Student Senate in accordance with the Constitution of the Student Association. The Date of Last Revision on the title page of this constitution shall be updated to reflect the date of approval by the Parliamentarian or Senate.

### **3.7 Sponsor Replacement**

If the sponsor resigns, is replaced, or is otherwise unable to continue serving as the sponsor for the remainder of the academic year, the organization shall select a new sponsor and notify the Office of Student Activities of the change within 15 class days.

### **3.8 Upkeep of the Constitution**

#### **3.8.1 Annual Review**

After each annual election of facilitators, the constitution should be reviewed in its entirety by a quorum of the Center to ensure the accuracy of the information and that it reflects the goals of the Center at the given time.

#### **3.8.2 Amendment**

Any proposed amendments to this constitution should be submitted in writing to the president, who will then disseminate an announcement of the proposition to the facilitators.

### **3.8.3 Notice**

The president will inform the facilitators that a vote to approve an amendment will be occurring no less than one week before the vote is to take place.

### **3.8.4 Voting Requirements**

A 2/3 majority of the privileged members of the Center is required to approve and enact an amendment to this constitution.

Amending the bylaws and the constitution require the same procedure.

### **3.8.5 Approval by the SA**

Proposed amendments to this constitution should be reviewed by the Student Association Parliamentarian. Amendments to the organization's constitution can only be adopted by a 3/4 vote with prior notice having been given at the previous meeting. Before going into effect, the amendment must be approved by the Student Association Parliamentarian and ratified by the Student Association Senate. The Date of Last Revision on the title page of this constitution shall be updated to reflect the date of the Senate's ratification.