

Baylor students seek to remove gay ban from student code

The student senate has asked university officials to reconsider banning "homosexual acts" from its sexual misconduct code at the Baptist university.

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Baylor University's student senate voted last week to ask university officials to remove the current ban on "homosexual acts" in the school's sexual misconduct code.

The private, Baptist university's [current sexual misconduct policy](#) reads that "Baylor will be guided by the understanding that sexuality is a gift from the creator God," and that "missuses of God's gift will be understood to include but not limit to, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual assault, incest, adultery, fornication, and homosexual acts."

The student government will propose that the school replace the term "homosexual acts" with "non-marital consensual deviate sexual intercourse," [the Baylor Lariat reports](#).

The re-wording proposal will continue on to Baylor University Board of Regents, who will decide if it wants to accept the student senate's proposal.

The university did not respond to phone calls and e-mails left Wednesday morning.

Student advocates of the rewording told the *Lariat* the change does not necessary advocate homosexuality; rather, it is a more inclusive term than its predecessor.

"It is not saying that Baylor is OK with homosexuality, or that students will all of a sudden be more welcoming," Sophomore Jailyn Parnell told *The Lariat*. "It is saying that we are not going to pinpoint homosexuals. It is saying that homosexual acts are wrong but heterosexual acts committed outside of marriage are also wrong. It is making it more equal."

Other students said they believed the rewording would help gay students on campus feel less ostracized.

"This is not just about a technical change," senior Grant Senter told the newspaper. "This is about the entire picture of the university and what it means to be a homosexual on campus. Are you protected? Do we care for you? Do we reach out to you with Christ's love? At this point no. What I think this bill does is take a step towards a more caring, Jesus-loving community."

If students are found in violation of the university's current sexual misconduct policy, the school "shall offer counsel and assistance to the individual so that the sanction imposed may be a catalyst for redemption in his or her life," according to the school's website.

The university's stance on homosexuality has been a source of debate for many years.

In 2011, the university declined to officially recognize a Sexual Identity Forum on campus, [though students continued to meet unofficially](#).

In 2003, George W. Truett Theological Seminary student Matt Bass claims he lost his scholarship after telling friends he was gay even though he was in accordance with all other academic policies and attended a Baptist church. The university's alleged actions [sparked demonstrations and fierce debate on campus](#).