

Ground Rules for Participation in *IUP Safe Zone* Orientation:

PLEASE READ PRIOR TO THE ORIENTATION

It is the hope of the facilitators that your involvement in the *Safe Zone* program will be an educational process. Each participant will enter the training with varying experiences, knowledge and understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) issues. The facilitators encourage each of you to set a personal goal to be open to new ideas and viewpoints. You will have the opportunity to hear from different people who will, hopefully, frame information in such a way that each of you will be able to walk away with new understandings. It is the belief of the facilitators that the best educational environment will be an interactive one. For this reason, you will be strongly encouraged to participate; however, you will not be pressured to disclose more than you are comfortable sharing. Keep in mind, however, that the more actively you participate, the more you are likely to learn.

A primary goal of the *Safe Zone* program is to establish a network of people who are supportive of GLBT individuals. Because of the stigma which society attaches to sexual orientation and gender identity, privacy is a key component in the *Safe Zone* program. When individuals seek out *Safe Zone* members, they need to feel that the information they have shared will be treated with respect and will not become an object of gossip. Similarly, in order that participants in the *Safe Zone* training feel as comfortable as possible, you are asked to agree to respect others' privacy with regard to personal information that is revealed during the training. Examples might include someone's sexual orientation (unless they make it clear that they are 'out'), something they may share about a family member (e.g., that an uncle had gender reassignment surgery), or even a question they ask which suggests to you that the individual is not very knowledgeable on this topic. You are certainly welcome to share with others outside of the training any information that you may learn in general, or about yourself, as well as information that others indicate is for public consumption. The facilitators will work to maintain an environment that is respectful and open and will encourage attendees to respect others' privacy. However, it is important that you recognize that the facilitators are not able to guarantee that all participants will abide by these recommendations.

It is important that you plan to attend for the full seven hours. If there is a conflict, please discuss this with Rita Drapkin, *Safe Zone Committee Coordinator*, in advance (357-2621 or rdrapkin@iup.edu). Contact Dr. Drapkin also if you have questions with regard to these ground rules that you wish to discuss prior to the orientation. If you feel that you are unable to follow these ground rules, we suggest that you not attend the training at this time.