IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE BOSTON
University more LGBTQIA-inclusive
for faculty and staff, a new task force
has begun studying and collecting ideas
about what other universities are doing,
with the aim of drafting a plan for BU
to improve programming, recruitment,
retention, professional development,
and network-building for the University
community.

“This University has a complicated
legacy and history around diversity
issues,” says Judi Burgess, BU’s director
of labor relations and cochair of the
task force along with Karen Warkentin,
a College of Arts & Sciences professor
of biology and of women’s, gender, and
sexuality studies.

“When I was hired, there was a
point, maybe in my second year as a
junior faculty, when the Gay-Straight
Alliance at BU Academy was banned,”
Warkentin says. “Those situations sent
a message that LGBTQ faculty and staff
are not valued and not welcomed. It was
like, ‘We want your work, but don’t want
to know about your personal life and we
consider it personal.’”

Now, both women say, times have
changed—dramatically.

“Our understanding of community
at work, and the value of workforce
diversity, has really shifted over a
decade,” Warkentin says. “Different
people with different life experiences
and different perspectives bring value
to the workforce and the environment,
more creative solutions. And enabling
people to be
their whole
selves at work
increases their
productivity.”

She adds,
“We want to
send a message
that all kinds
of people are
welcome here
and valued here.... Our deliverable will
be a report, with a set of recommenda-
tions, from within the University, as
well as best practices from outside the
University.” DM

A new task force, aimed
at making BU more
LGBTQIA-inclusive
for faculty and staff, is
collecting ideas for a plan
to improve program-
ning, recruitment,
retention, professional
development, and
network-building for the
University community.

SNAP

ACTOR MICHAEL DOUGLAS
SPAKS AT BU
In a career spanning 50 years,
actor Michael Douglas has
starred in such classic films as
Wall Street, The China Syn-
drome, and Fatal Attraction,
and won nearly every award
in the industry, including two
Oscars and an Emmy. Douglas
came to BU in November to
accept another: the Bette Davis
Lifetime Achievement Award,
presented by BU’s Howard Got-
lieb Archival Research Center
and the Bette Davis Founda-
tion. Douglas’ papers and other
career memorabilia are housed
at the Gotlieb Center.