

Civility 98

October 1998



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Purpose

This survey replicates the 1995 Civility study of Ernest Boyer's six components defining an effective campus environment published in 1990 by the Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching.

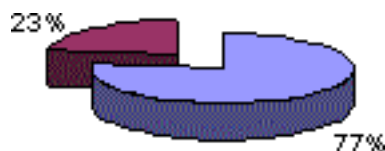
Highlights

Undergraduates in 1998 were more likely to indicate that the University Park environment fit the measures of "civility" with one exception. Fewer students in 1998 felt that Penn State was a "disciplined community."

Students stated that educational information about legal, financial, or health consequences would be more likely than the rationale for rules to encourage community members to abide by regulations.

Participation Rate

- N = 640 (77%) agreed to participate
- N = 188 (23%) did not agree to participate



Findings

- A higher percentage of undergraduate students in 1998 than in 1995 felt that the University Park environment fit positively with five of the six overall measures of "campus

civility." However, fewer of the 1998 students than those in 1995 (42% vs. 46%) felt that Penn State is a "disciplined community" where obligations and behaviors are regulated for the good of the group.

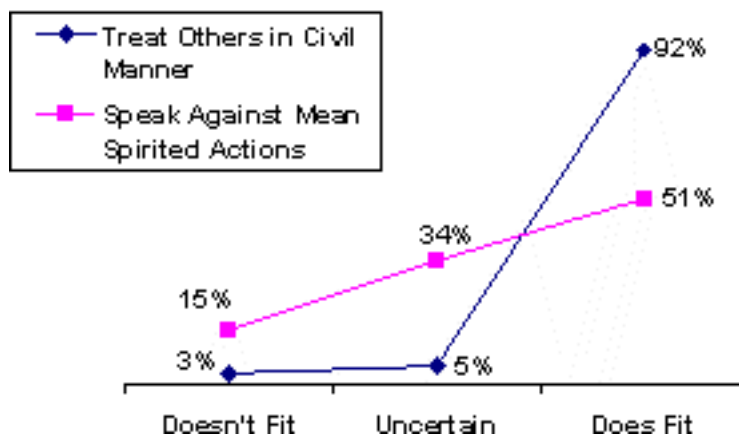
Civility Measures for the University Park Environment

Principle	1998	1995
Celebrative	87%	70%
Open	70%	53%
Purposeful	63%	57%
Caring	59%	54%
Just	57%	49%
Disciplined	42%	46%

Disciplined Community

● A fifth (21%) of the students in 1998 reported having violated some legal standard while 12% said they failed to abide by an academic or social policy while at Penn State. Almost all (92%) felt an obligation to treat others in a courteous and civil manner; half (51%) said they spoke out to oppose actions that were mean spirited.

Treatment of Others



● Students were asked about the effectiveness of various educational information in encouraging community members to abide by regulations. Two thirds thought information about legal, financial, and health consequences would be effective educational approaches.

Effectiveness of Educational Information Explaining Regulations

67% legal consequences

65% financial consequences

- 64% health/personal consequences
- 51% rationale for rules and regulations

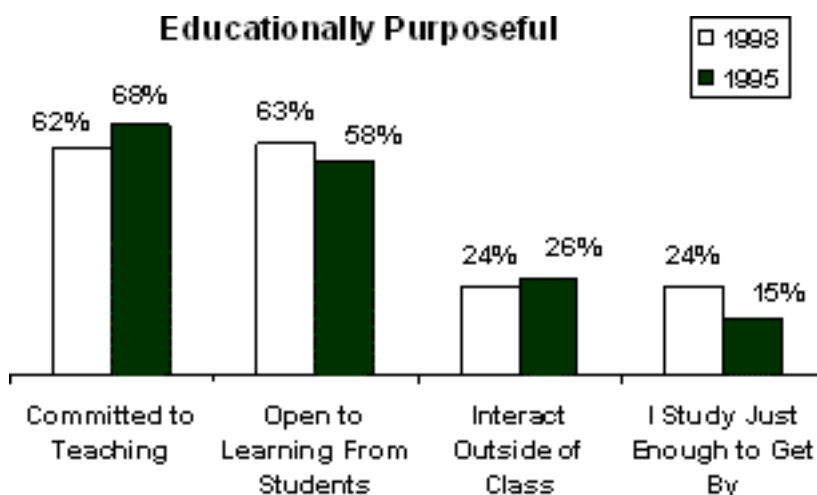
Caring Community

More students in 1998 than in 1995 stated they felt their needs were considered when decisions were made at Penn State (24% vs. 17%); more reported doing volunteer service (33% vs. 26%) and having a sense of belonging (54% vs. 50%) while about the same number said they were 'just a number' (35% vs. 33%).

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1995</u>
I'm Just a Number at PSU	35%	33%
Sense of Belonging	54%	50%
I Do Volunteer Work	33%	26%
My Needs Are Considered	24%	17%

Educationally Purposeful Community

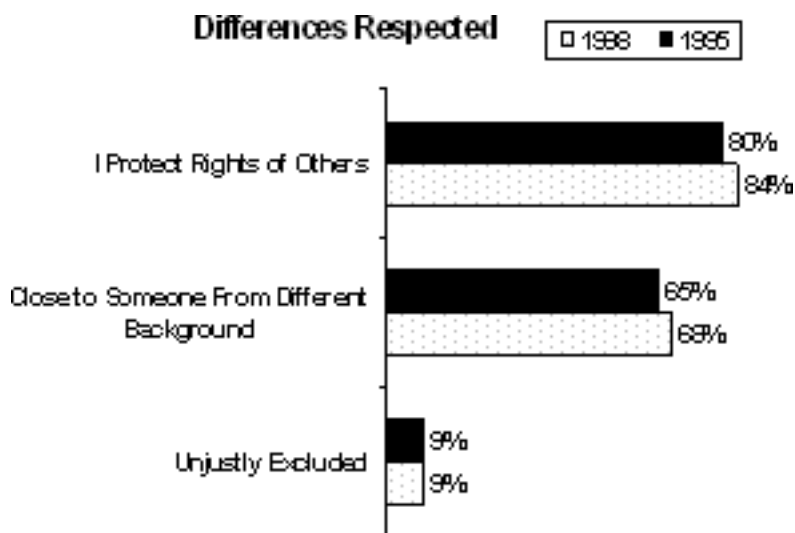
Fewer of the students in 1998 than in 1995 (62% vs. 68%) felt their instructors were committed to teaching while more (63% vs. 58%) said their instructors were open to learning from their students. About the same number (24% vs. 26%) said they interacted with instructors outside of class. More students in 1998 (24% vs. 15%) say they study just enough to 'get by.'



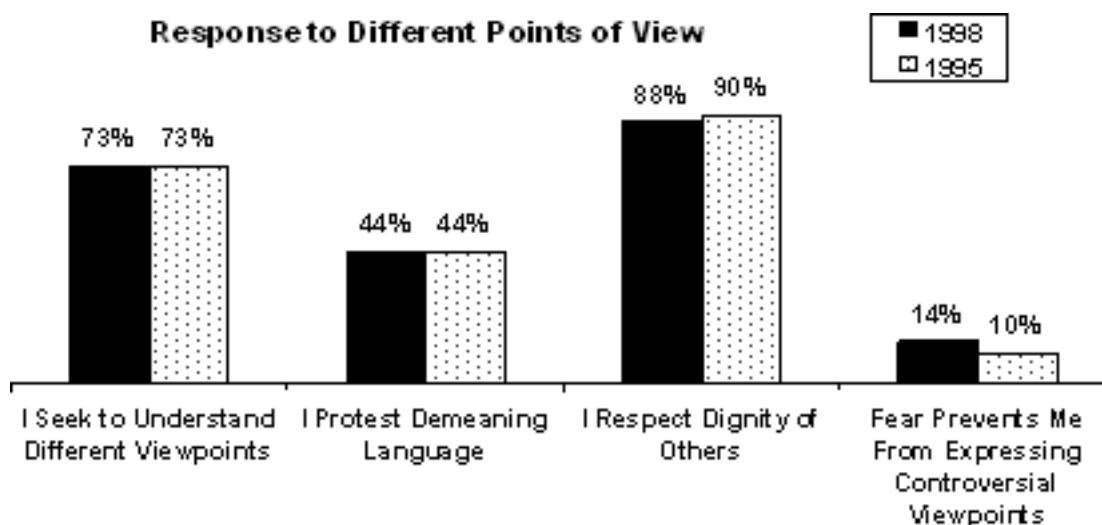
More of the students in the 1998 study than those in the 1995 study (40% vs. 27%) said they participated in out-of-class intellectual or cultural activities.

Just Community

● The same number of students in both studies said they had been unjustly excluded from some opportunities available on campus (9% vs. 9%), had developed a close relationship with someone from an ethnic and cultural background different from their own (68% vs. 65%) and had acted to protect the rights of others (84% vs. 80%).



Open Community



Celebrative Community

● More of the students in the 1998 study than those in the 1995 study felt University Park reflected a "celebrative community."

- 59% vs. 46% Participating in ceremonies makes me feel part of PSU
- 50% vs. 42% Academic and athletic successes are celebrated in proper balance
- 41% vs. 31% I have attended celebrations honoring PSU students, faculty, staff or alumni
- 41% vs. 36% I want to know more about PSU history and traditions

Overall Campus Climate

- Those students (60%) who said they found the campus climate to be "supportive" were significantly more likely to feel that the University Park environment 'fit' all of the Boyer six dimensions of civility.
- Underclass freshmen and sophomores were significantly more positive than upperclass juniors and seniors on five of the six civility measures.
- Women were significantly more likely than men to feel campus was "caring," "just," and "disciplined."
- Minority students were significantly less likely to feel that the campus reflected a "just" environment.

Significant Differences

Dimension	Ethnic	Gender	GPA	Underclass Upperclass	Supportive Campus
Celebrative				*	*
Open				*	*
Purposeful				*	*
Caring		*		*	*
Just	*	*		*	*
Disciplined		*	*		*

(* Statistically significant at the .05 level)

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