



Diversity Climate

September 2001

Purpose

This survey asked students their thoughts about the climate for diversity at the university as well as their reactions to specific diversity events of Spring 2001.

Implications/Highlights

A quarter of respondents thought that racism was a problem on campus and half felt the university administration was willing to discuss these concerns. Most students said they themselves were comfortable talking about racial issues. Students described their personal experiences and observations of discrimination. Those who were here Spring 2001 gave feedback on their participation and reactions.

Participation Rate

Survey Total: N = 961
(701 Phone; 260 Web)

Phone N = 701 (60%)
agreed to participate

Phone N = 462 (40%)
did not agree to participate

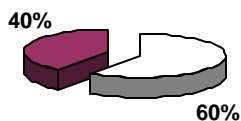


Figure 1. Phone participation rate

Findings

A quarter of respondents (26%) felt racism was a problem while nearly half (49%) judged that the administration was open to discussing racism concerns. Most were comfortable talking about racial issues.

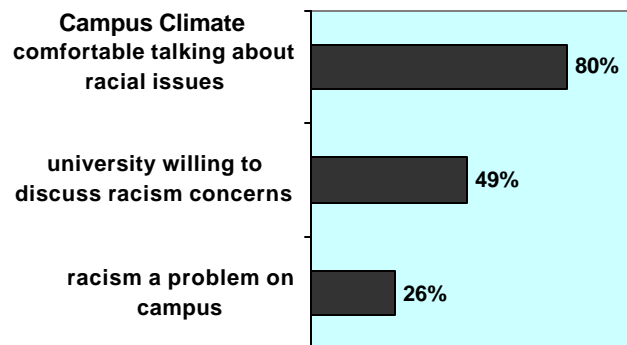


Figure 2. A quarter of respondents thought that racism was a problem on campus, half felt the university was willing to discuss concerns and a majority were comfortable talking about racial issues

*Statistically significant at the .05 level

Of those who felt they had a basis of comparison, a fourth to a third of students saw an increase in the number of minority faculty, staff, speakers, and activities on campus since coming to the university.

Minority Presence On Campus Improved

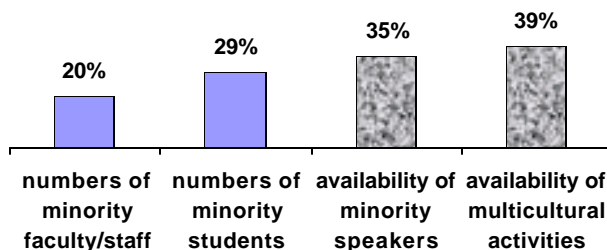


Figure 3. One-fifth to one-third of the students saw progress in the presence of minority faculty, staff, students, speakers, and activities since coming to campus

A majority of students socialized with other students from a different racial background; many had had an instructor or had worked on class projects with others from different racial groups.

Student Experiences With Others From Different Racial Backgrounds

- 58% socialized with others from different racial background
- 43% had instructors from different racial background
- 39% worked on class projects/others from different racial background
- 32% instructors included multicultural materials
- 23% instructors included racial issues in class discussions
- 20% had roommates from different racial background

A fourth (29%) agreed that mandating required courses on diversity was an effective method to prepare students to live and work in their communities after graduating college.

Requiring Courses On Diversity

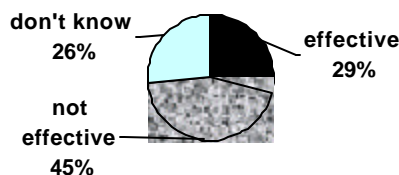


Figure 4. Slightly more than one-fourth of students said that requiring diversity courses would help them after graduating

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Student Affairs

Overall, one-fifth of the respondents (21%) agreed that affirmative action was still needed. There were differences by gender,* minority status,* class standing,* and whether students were comfortable discussing racial issues.*

Felt Affirmative Action Still Needed

Male (14%)	Minority (35%)
Female (28%)	Non-Minority (14%)
New Students (18%)	Comfortable (23%)
Sophomores (23%)	Not Comfortable (17%)
Juniors (24%)	Neutral (12%)
Seniors (22%)	

The need to continue affirmative action was supported by more of those who were on campus Spring 2001 who participated in the diversity events (32%) than of those who did not participate (19%); the same is true for those who felt these events addressed their personal diversity issues (44%) than who felt these events did not address their diversity issues (22%) or that they did not have any diversity issues (15%). *

Students were asked how often they had personally experienced or observed discrimination on campus based on gender, racial/ethnic background, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and being older or disabled.

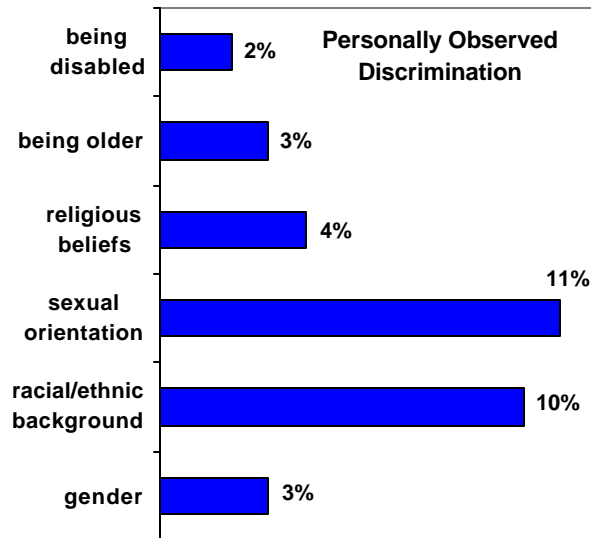


Figure 5. Some respondents personally experienced or observed discrimination on campus based on gender, racial/ethnic background, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and being older or disabled

There were differences based on class standing.

Experienced/Observed Discrimination Based On:

	first year	sophomores	juniors	seniors
gender*	2%	4%	4%	5%
race*	4%	15%	10%	12%
sexual orientation*	7%	11%	10%	17%

Respondents were questioned about their personal experiences based on their own racial/ethnic background.

Personal Experiences Based On Own Racial/Ethnic Background

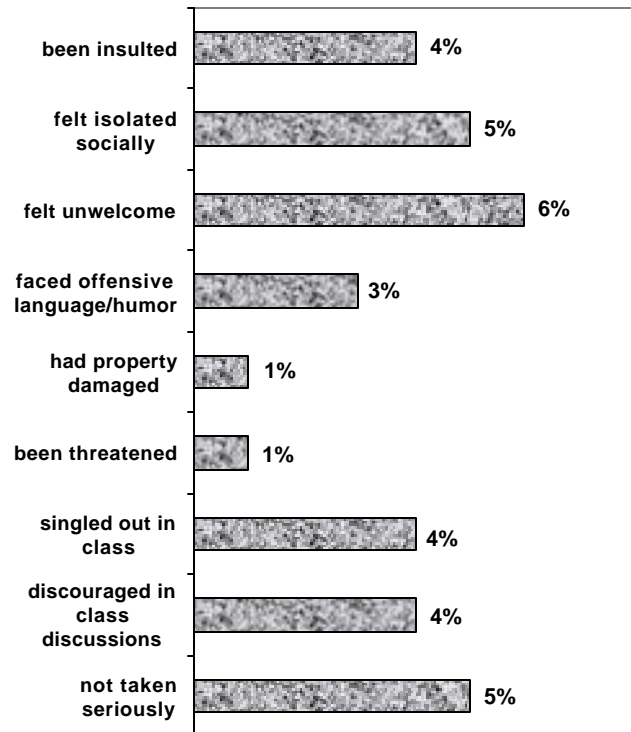


Figure 6. From 1 to 6 percent of students said they personally experienced because of their racial/ethnic backgrounds

Students who identified themselves as minority or biracial were more likely than those who identified themselves as non-minority to:

<u>feel they were not taken seriously*</u>	<u>feel unwelcome*</u>
6% minority	13% minority
3% non-minority	1% non-minority
<u>feel singled out in class *</u>	<u>feel isolated*</u>
9% minority	10% minority
1% non-minority	1% non-minority
<u>feel discouraged in class discussions *</u>	<u>feel insulted*</u>
7% minority	8% minority
2% non-minority	2% non-minority

Racism Is A Problem

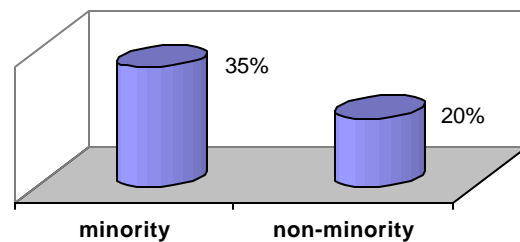


Figure 7. Minority students were more likely than non-minority students to feel that racism is a problem

*Statistically significant at the .05 level.

Two-fifths of the survey respondents felt informed or very informed (44%) of university channels or resources in place to handle diversity questions or concerns.

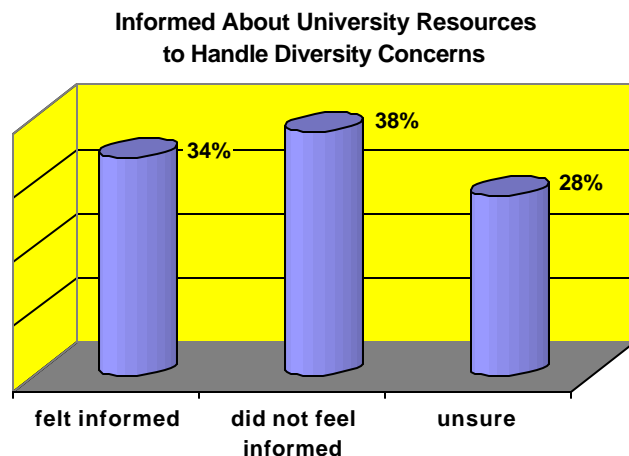


Figure 8. One-third of the respondents felt informed about university resources to handle diversity questions or concerns

At this point in the survey, only those on campus Spring 2001 were invited to continue with the survey. (N = 563)

A majority of students here last Spring semester felt informed about the anti-hate rally (54%) and the "Village" sit-in at the student union (61%). Fewer felt informed about resolutions or outcomes agreed upon by the students involved and the university (23%) or the discussions about mandatory courses on race (28%).

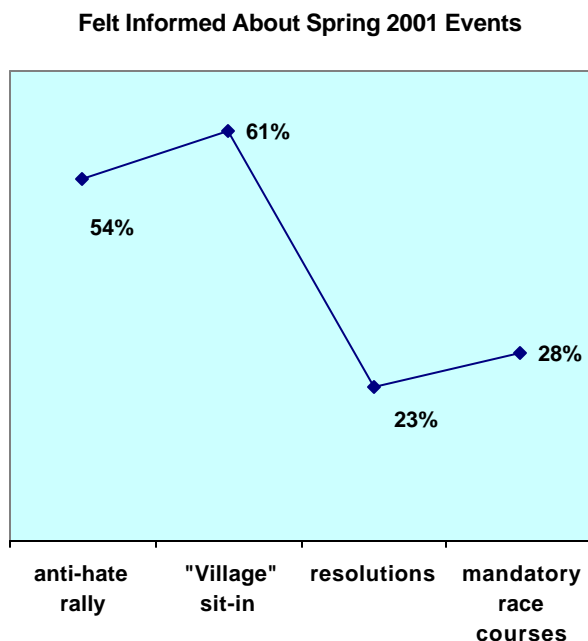


Figure 9. More of those on campus Spring 2001 felt informed about the anti-hate rally and "Village" sit-in than about the outcomes of discussions or requiring mandatory race courses

Students got information about last Spring's events most often through Collegian coverage (54%), friends directly involved (37%), friends indirectly involved (25%) and class discussions (14%). When asked what other ways they learned about the events, individuals mentioned:

- email notes from the university president, vice president of Student Affairs and student groups
- flyers and posters on campus
- walking through the student union
- national and local TV coverage
- personal involvement
- dailyjolt website
- general conversation
- chalk on sidewalk

Some students indicated that the Spring 2001 events increased their feeling connected to the university community (23%), their willingness to discuss their own viewpoints on racial issues and concerns (42%), and their sense of fear and uneasiness (18%).

Personal Impact of Spring 2001 Events

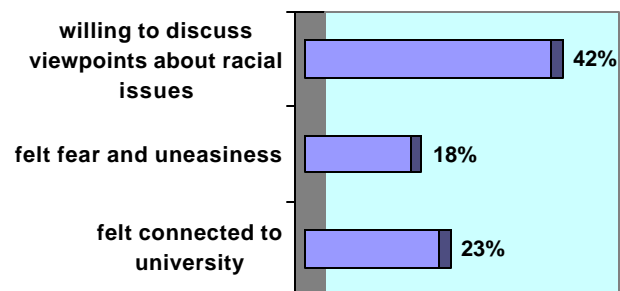


Figure 10. Personal impact of Spring 2001 events as reported by students

Women were more likely than men and minority students were more likely than non-minority students to say that the Spring 2001 events resulted in their being more willing to discuss their own viewpoints about racial issues and concerns, * their feeling a sense of uneasiness and fear, * and their feeling connected to the university.

Differential Impact of Spring 2001 Events Based On Gender and Minority Status

	female	male	minority	non-minority
willing to discuss own viewpoints	51%	21%	51%	39%
sense of fear	23%	14%	24%	15%
feeling connected	29%	16%	33%	20%

*Statistically significant at the .05 level.

Over a third of the respondents (39%) who were on campus last Spring said they participated in the specific events covered in this survey.

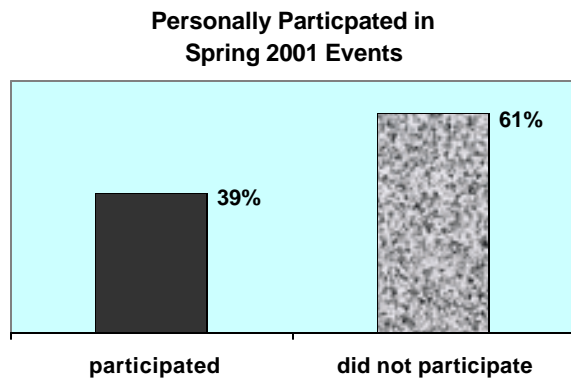


Figure 11. Over a third of the students on campus Spring 2001 said they participated in specific diversity events

Students were asked open-ended questions on why they did or did not participate

Why Did You Participate?

- “felt showing racial unity was important for those discriminated against and the discriminators”
- “felt need to voice solidarity and show support”
- “had friends involved”
- “to make sure both sides were heard”
- “it is important to stand for something as a person and I felt the need to get informed and make my own decision when the information had been presented”
- “curiosity”
- “sounded like a step in the right direction”
- “because I felt the voice of students needed to be heard”
- “sense of connection”
- “I felt the university was not protecting every student who needed protection”

Why Did You Not Participate?

- “very busy with exams, classes, projects and work”
- “initially believed in the case and then felt cause was lost...there was a problem but disagreed with goals being set”
- “problems with way Black Caucus used threats to leverage themselves”
- “I think the demands of the Village were self-centered, were not for multi-cultural advancement but for black advancement only...other races like Asian, Hispanic...not represented...reverse racism”
- “didn’t agree that racism was a problem on campus”
- “situation blown out of proportion”
- “too scared”
- “issues and problems being argued were too one-sided”
- “I was made to feel uncomfortable when I voiced my opinion which didn’t completely agree with what was being said”

Those who *did participate* in the Spring 2001 Diversity events were more likely to have experienced or observed discrimination, more likely to have interacted with other students, roommates, and instructors from backgrounds that differed from their own, and were more comfortable discussing racial issues.

Those who *did not participate* in the Spring 2001 Diversity events were more likely to feel that the university was open to discuss racism concerns and less likely to feel that racism was a problem on campus, that affirmative action was needed, that mandatory race courses would be effective in preparing students for community life after graduation.

Differences Between Those Who Did/Did Not Participate in Spring 2001 Events

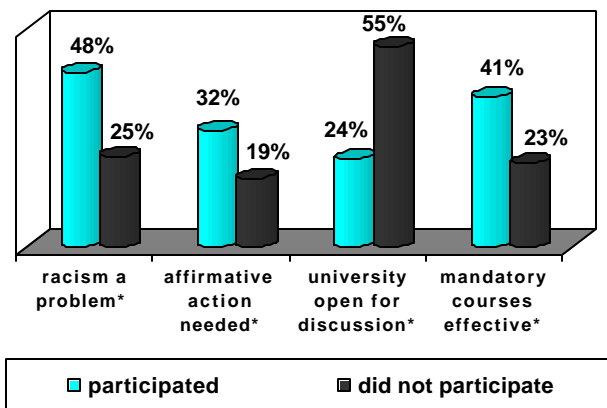


Figure 12. Those who participated in specific Spring 2001 Diversity events differed from those who chose not to participate

A random sample of students who did not have current phone numbers on record were sent email notices inviting them to take this Diversity Climate survey online.

Difference Between Those Who Responded Via Web or Phone

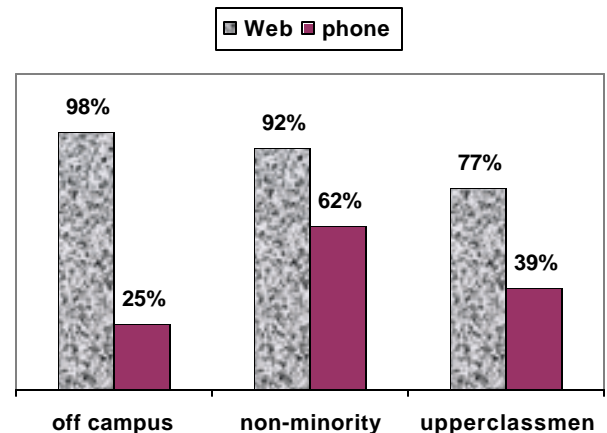


Figure 13. There were differences between students who responded to the survey via the Web or over the phone.

*Statistically significant at the .05 level.