

Results of the Campus Climate Survey, West Chester University, Spring 2005

INTRODUCTION

The Campus Climate Survey was administered to 40 stratified random sample classes in spring 2005. The courses were stratified by level (lower, upper, graduate) and by College (CAS, CBPA, CED, CHS, CVPA). The survey was also administered to several student clubs and to students in several resident halls. Because the mode of administration was not mutually exclusive (class, club, dorm) students were asked to only complete the survey once. Over one thousand surveys (1,072) were returned.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Almost one-third (32.0%) of the respondents were freshmen. Five percent (5.3%) were graduate students. Sixty percent (59.8%) of the survey completers lived in the dorms while another twenty-five percent (24.9%) lived off-campus. Only fourteen percent (14.1%) indicated that he/she commuted from home. Sixty-nine percent (69.1%) of the respondents were female while one percent (1.2%) identified him/her as transgendered. Most of the respondents were Caucasian (78.7%). However, the percent of Caucasian respondents was slightly lower than the spring 2005 enrollment (87.1%). The percent of respondents by racial group is illustrated in **Table 1**.

TABLE 1: Racial Group of Spring 2005 for Campus Climate Survey Respondents		
Racial Group	Count	Percent
Black	112	10.6
Native-American	8	0.8
Asian	22	2.1
Latino	22	2.1
Caucasian	844	79.7
Multiracial	39	3.7
Unknown	12	1.1
TOTAL	1059	100.0
Did Not Respond	13	1.2

About half of the respondents (50.4%) indicated that he/she graduated from a racially diverse high school. Eighty-one percent (81.3%) graduated from a public school. Black respondents were slightly more likely to attend public school (85.6%) than the other racial groups (Caucasian: 82.9%, Latino: 81.8%, Asian: 63.2%). Transgendered respondents were most likely to attend private, non-denominational (7.7%) high schools than male (3.6%) or female (3.0%) respondents

One-fourth (25.4%) of the respondents indicated that they were enrolled in a program in the College of Arts and Sciences. This does not parallel the spring 2005 enrollment. About forty percent (38.2%) of the students were enrolled in programs in the College of Arts in Sciences in spring 2005. Correspondingly, thirty percent (29.3%) of respondents indicated that they were enrolled in programs in the College of Education. However, only fifteen percent (15.3%) of the spring 2005 enrollment were enrolled in College of Education programs.

When asked which WCU activities do you participate, the respondents most frequently chose service organizations (19.6%). This was followed by off-campus/community activities (19.1%). The WCU activities and the corresponding percent of respondents are shown in **Table 2**.

TABLE 2: WCU Activities Spring 2005 for Campus Climate Survey Respondents		
WCU Activity	Count	Percent*
Service Organizations	96	19.6%
Off-campus/community activities	94	19.1%
Fraternities/Sororities	80	16.3%
Campus Based religious groups	74	15.1%
Student Leadership Positions	66	13.4%
Musical/Performance Groups	55	11.2%
Varsity Sports	17	3.5%
Intramural/Club Sports	9	1.8%

* Percent of all responses. Respondents could choose more than one activities

From **Table 2**, the large percent associated with service organizations and off-campus/community activities could be attributed to the large number student organization respondents coupled with those who are affiliated with fraternities and sororities.

ACADEMICS

Almost all of the respondents (88.7%) indicated that faculty members showed respect for him/her as a person. Latino and Asian respondents were most likely to indicate that faculty members showed regard (95.4% and 95.2% respectively). Male respondents (86.6%) were slightly less likely to indicate that faculty members showed respect for him as a person. On the other hand, the transgendered sample (92.3%) were most likely to say that faculty had respect for them.

Almost one-third of the respondents (29.1%) were ambivalent (indicated neutral) when asked about the multi-cultural and gender diversity of his/her textbooks. However, about one-fourth of the sample (25.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that text books used in class support contributions from scholars of different sexual orientations.

Sixty-nine percent (69.4%) felt that the faculty were interested in him/her as a student. That percent was slightly less for male respondents (66.7%) and considerably lower for Black respondents (60.8%). Seventy-one percent of respondents (71.2%) thought that faculty provided him/her with encouragement. The percent of Black respondents (59.4%) that thought the faculty provided them with encouragement was less than that of Caucasians (73.7%). Interestingly, only half (50.0%) of all respondents thought that the faculty had gone out of their way to help him/her. Asian respondents (21.1%) posted the lowest percent of strongly agree or agree responses for this item.

About three-fourths (71.2%) of the respondents thought that he/she had found adequate faculty role models. Transgendered respondents posted the largest percent of strongly agreed or agreed responses (69.3%) while males posted the smallest percent of positive responses (58.6%). Only fifty-nine percent (58.8%) of the Black respondents and fifty-six percent (55.6%) of the Asian respondents stated that they found adequate faculty role models. On the other hand, seventy-seven percent (77.3%) of the Latino faculty did indicate that they found adequate faculty role models.

As with other academic items, transgendered students were most satisfied with advising (69.3%). Slightly more than half (52.9%) of all the respondents were satisfied with his/her advising. Males (52.4%) and females (53.1%) were similarly satisfied with his/her advising. Asian respondents were most satisfied (63.2%) with his/her advising while only thirty-five percent (35.0%) of the Latino respondents indicated that he/she received good academic advising.

CAMPUS LIFE

Male and transgendered respondents were more likely to indicate that the residence halls encourage racial understanding (Male: 63.2%, Female: 56.7%, Transgendered: 66.7%). As a note of caution, less than ten transgendered students responded to this item. Three-fifths (58.2%) of the respondents indicated that the residence halls encourage racial understanding. Black respondents (48.5%) were least likely to agree while Caucasians were most likely (61.6%) to agree with this statement.

Several items asked how Resident Assistants (RA) dealt with racial, gender, and sexual orientation concerns. The percent of respondents by racial group that agreed or strongly agreed that his/her RA was skilled in dealing with these concerns is shown in **Table 3**.

TABLE 3: RA is skilled in dealing with....			
Racial Group	Racial Concerns	Gender Concerns	Sexual Orientation Concerns
Black	62.4%	65.2%	58.6%
Native-American	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
Asian	22.2%	22.2%	12.5%
Latino	35.7%	35.7%	33.3%
Caucasian	56.9%	56.9%	54.5%
Multicultural	58.1%	58.1%	61.3%
Unknown	50.0%	60.0%	40.0%
TOTAL	57.0%	56.9%	54.0%
Did Not Respond*	31.1%	31.2%	32.3%

* Did not respond to item or identify race group

Shown in **Table 3**, Black respondents (64.4%) were most likely to agree or strongly agree that his/her RA handled racial concerns adeptly. On the other hand Asian respondents (22.2%) were less likely to agree that racial concerns were handled skillfully by his/her RA. Similar response patterns were posted for gender concerns. Specifically, Black respondents (65.2%) were most likely to agree or strongly agree that his/her RA handled gender concerns adeptly while Asian respondents (22.2%) were less likely to respond favorably. For sexual orientation concerns, Caucasian respondents (61.3%) were most satisfied with how the RA handled sexual orientation concerns. Again, Asian respondents (12.5%) were the least satisfied with how the RA handled sexual orientation concerns.

Less than half of the respondents indicated that he/she were encouraged to interact with students of other racial groups (49.0%) or students of other sexual orientations (40.6%) during new student orientation. Transgendered respondents (37.5%) were least likely to state that they were encouraged to interact with students of other sexual orientations during new student orientation.

Respondents were more satisfied with the opportunity to interact with diverse groups at cultural events than with the opportunity to interact with diverse groups at new student orientation. Particularly, seventy-two percent (71.6%) of the respondents stated that the university sponsored cultural activities that promoted racial interaction and fifty-two percent (52.4%) said that university sponsored cultural activities that promoted interaction with students of other sexual orientations. Female respondents (72.7%) and Black respondents (73.1%) were most likely to indicate that the university sponsored cultural activities that promoted racial interaction.

Three-fifths (64.0%) of the respondents indicated that students from diverse racial backgrounds participate in student leadership. This result is similar with Black (63.9%) and Latino (63.2%) respondents. Asian (41.7%) and Native-American respondents (25.0%) were less likely to indicate that students from diverse backgrounds participate in student leadership.

STUDENT ISSUES

Survey respondents were asked if racism, sexism, and homophobia were issues on campus. The percent of respondents by racial group that agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements is shown in **Table 4**.

TABLE 4: ...is a NOT a major issue on this campus			
Racial Group	Racism	Sexism	Homophobia
Black	29.8%	28.2%	24.5%
Native-American	25.0%	12.5%	37.5%
Asian	47.1%	40.0%	16.7%
Latino	23.8%	26.4%	15.0%
Caucasian	53.0%	50.0%	37.8%
Multicultural	34.2%	33.3%	25.0%
Unknown	50.0%	58.3%	36.4%
TOTAL	48.9%	46.3%	35.2%
Did Not Respond*	7.6%	8.3%	9.7%

* Did not respond to item or identify race group

As seen in **Table 4**, Caucasian respondents are most likely not to perceive any problems with respect to racism, sexism, and homophobia. On the other hand, Latino respondents (23.6%) and Native-American respondents (25.0%) are least likely to agree that there is NO racism. Latino respondents (26.4%) and Native-American respondents (12.5%) also posted the lowest percent of strongly agree or agree responses to the NO sexism item. Male respondents (50.0%) were most likely to state that there was no problem with sexism on campus and females were least likely to state that there was no problem with sexism (30.8%).

One in seven respondents indicated that he/she was subjected to sexual harassment by another student. Latino respondents (18.5%) were most likely to state they were harassed by another student. No Native American respondent indicated that he/she was subject to sexual harassment. Unfortunately, the survey did not ask respondents to identify if the harasser was of same racial group. Only six percent (5.6%) of the sample stated that they were sexually harassed by a faculty member. Black respondents (13.7%) were most likely to state that they were harassed by a faculty member. Similar results were posted for harassment by an administrator or staff member. Only five percent (5.0%) of the respondents indicated that they were harassed by an administrator or staff member. Again, Black respondents (13.3%) were most likely to state that he/she had been harassed by an administrator or staff member.

SUMMARY

Administered during the last two weeks of the spring 2005 semester, over 1,000 Campus Climate Surveys were returned. Most of the respondents resided in the dorms. Not surprisingly, one-third of the respondents were freshmen. Only five percent of the respondents were graduate students. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents were female. One-fifth of the respondents were minority students.

Most respondents indicated that the campus encouraged racial understanding, faculty respect for students, and culturally diverse sponsored events. Although the responses were similar across gender groups, there were differences across racial groups.

Notably, Black respondents were less likely to indicate that the faculty had interest in him/her as a student. Differences across racial group also existed for perceptions of faculty encouragement and faculty exerting extra effort to help students. For both items, Caucasians posted the highest percent

of strongly agree or agree responses. Black students posted the lowest percent of strongly agree or agree responses for the faculty encouragement item while Asian respondents posted the lowest percent of strongly agree or agree responses for faculty going out of their way to help.

On the other hand, Black respondents were most likely to strongly agree or agree that the RAs handled racial and gender concerns adequately. Asian students were least likely to strongly agree or agree that the RAs handled these issues well. Interestingly, Caucasian respondents are least likely to think that there are problems with respect to racism, sexism, and homophobia on campus.

In sum, the spring 2005 Campus Climate Survey has elucidated some of the racial, gender, and sexual orientation concerns on campus. Mainly, the survey identified different perceptions among racial groups regarding faculty encouragement, staff ability to handle concerns, and the diversity of campus activities. The survey also reinforced that most respondents are satisfied with his/her interaction with faculty and staff and that the campus does offer diverse cultural activities.