

## SECTION 2 WORK ENVIRONMENT

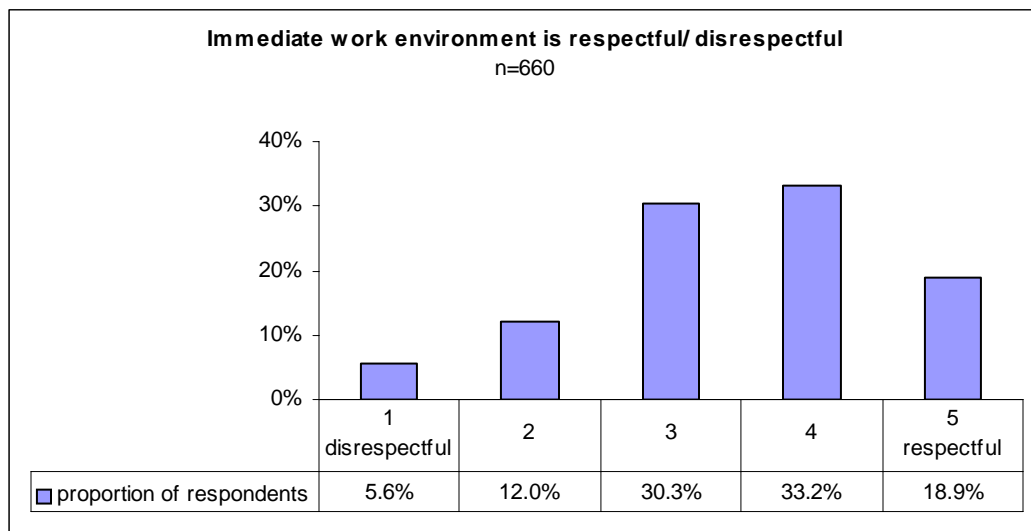
This section focuses on the work environment within A&F, with specific attention to how job classification, disability, language, race, sex, and sexual orientation affect employees' experience of social justice and injustice in the workplace.

### Work climate

When employees were asked to comment about the respectfulness and friendliness of their overall work environment, only about half (52.1%, n=344) gave it an actively positive rating of 4 or 5.

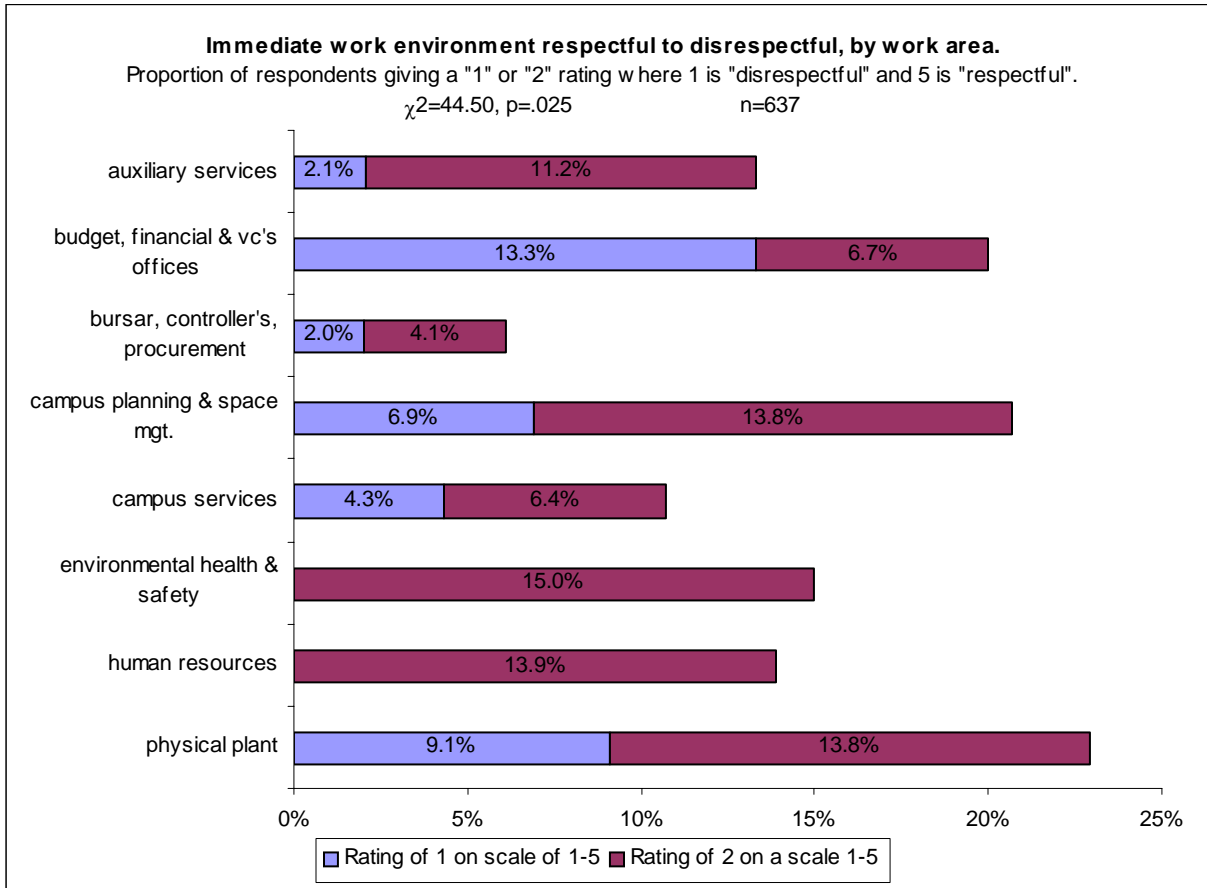
The survey asked employees to rate their immediate work environment on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 was "disrespectful" and 5 was "respectful." About half of the respondents (51.9%, n=331) gave their work environment a rating of 4 or 5. See Figure 2.1 for an illustration of responses to this question.

Figure 2.1



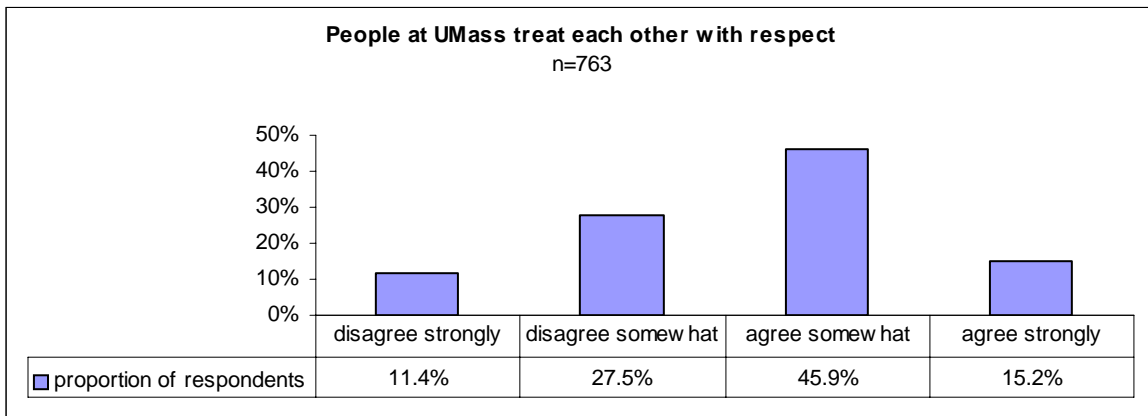
Employee opinions about the respectfulness of their workplaces also varied significantly by work area. As Figure 2.2 illustrates, one-fifth or more of Budget, Finance, and Vice Chancellor's offices (20.0%, n=3), Campus Planning (20.7%, n=6), and Physical Plant (22.9%, n=68) employees gave their immediate work environment a 1 or 2 rating, where 1 was disrespectful and 5 was respectful.

Figure 2.2



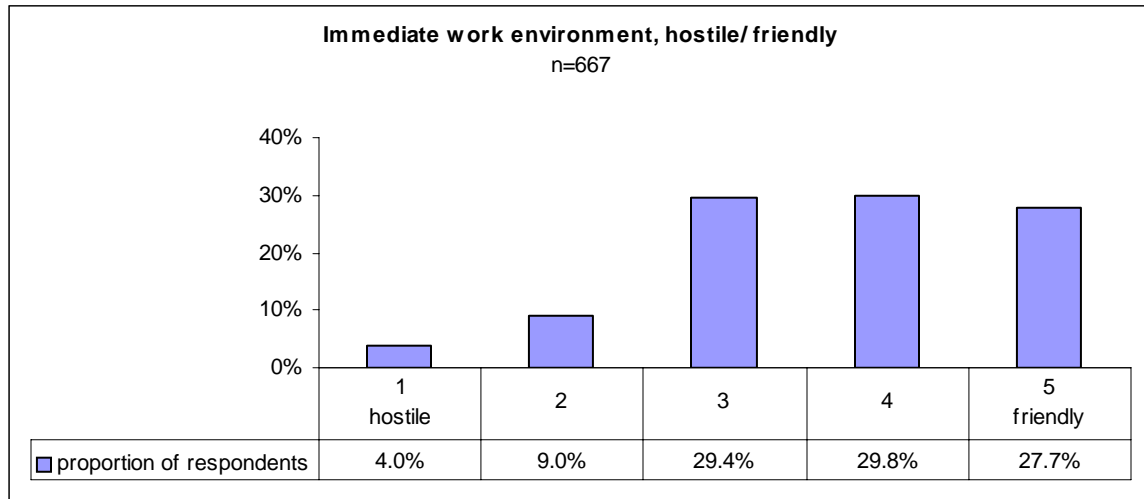
The issue of overall respect in the workplace was also addressed in another question. Over one-third of respondents (38.9%,  $n=297$ ) disagreed "strongly" or "somewhat" with the statement "People at UMass treat each other with respect." (See Figure 2.3.)

Figure 2.3



On another measure, employees were asked to rate their immediate work environment on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was “hostile” and 5 was “friendly.” Over one-half of respondents (57.5%, n=384) gave their work environment a rating of 4 or 5. (See Figure 2.4.)

Figure 2.4



When examined by race, the proportions of the various groups that felt the campus was friendly varied considerably<sup>1</sup>. 3 of 9 Latinos (33.3%), 325 of 558 Whites (58.3%), 19 of 27 Asians (70.4%) and 10 of 14 Blacks (71.4%) gave their immediate work environment a rating of 4 or 5.

There are many scenarios that can contribute to a person perceiving a work environment as friendly or hostile. They might include a physical or a social environment that create stress or tension.

An employee described a working environment in which too many staff were crowded into a small place:

*“There’s a lot more tension where...[another participant] punches in ...in the morning and how you are treated might set the whole dynamics of the day.”*

Other employees described a social environment where bantering was commonplace. What one person sees as joking may appear discourteous to another.

*“If you didn’t know the party, you would say oh my God that’s awful. But a lot of them are joking around and all the parties are involved, I don’t see a whole lot of harm in that, cause I’m usually the one instigating all of those*

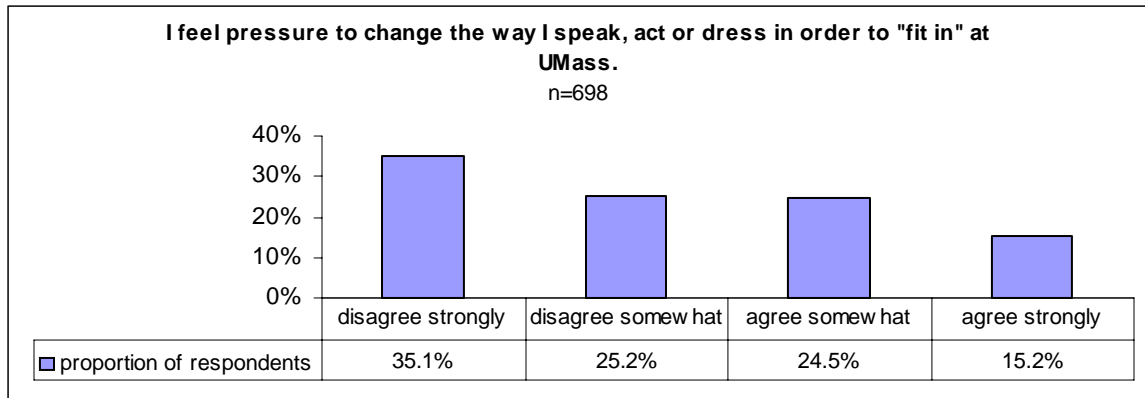
<sup>1</sup> Although not statistically significant, perhaps due to the small sample size of most racial groups other than White, the pattern of difference across racial groups is deemed too important to exclude from mention.

*things. But if someone is from the outside witnessing something for the first time it can seem like a hostile environment.”*

*“I think there is an issue of common courtesy on this campus.”*

Another kind of measure of comfort was evaluated when over one-third of respondents (39.7%, n=277) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” with the statement “I feel pressure to change the way I speak, act, or dress in order to “fit in” at UMass.” (See Figure 2.5.)

Figure 2.5

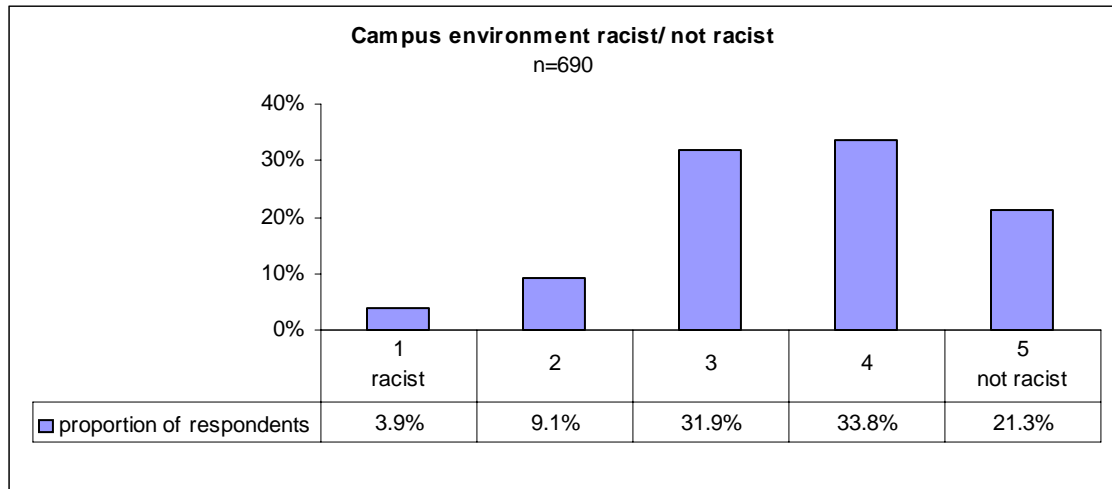


Respondents were asked to rate the campus on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 was “racist” and 5 was “not racist.” Slightly over one-half of respondents (55.1%, n=380) gave the campus a rating of 4 or 5. (See Figure 2.6.)

When examined by race, the proportions of employees who rated the campus as “not racist” (a 4 or 5 rating) are quite different.<sup>1</sup> 4 of 16 Blacks (25.1%), 3 of 8 Latinos (37.5%), 15 of 28 Asians (53.6%) and 334 of 579 Whites (57.7%) indicated that the campus was not racist.

<sup>1</sup> Although not statistically significant, perhaps due to the small sample size of most racial groups other than White, the pattern of difference across racial groups is deemed too important to exclude from mention.

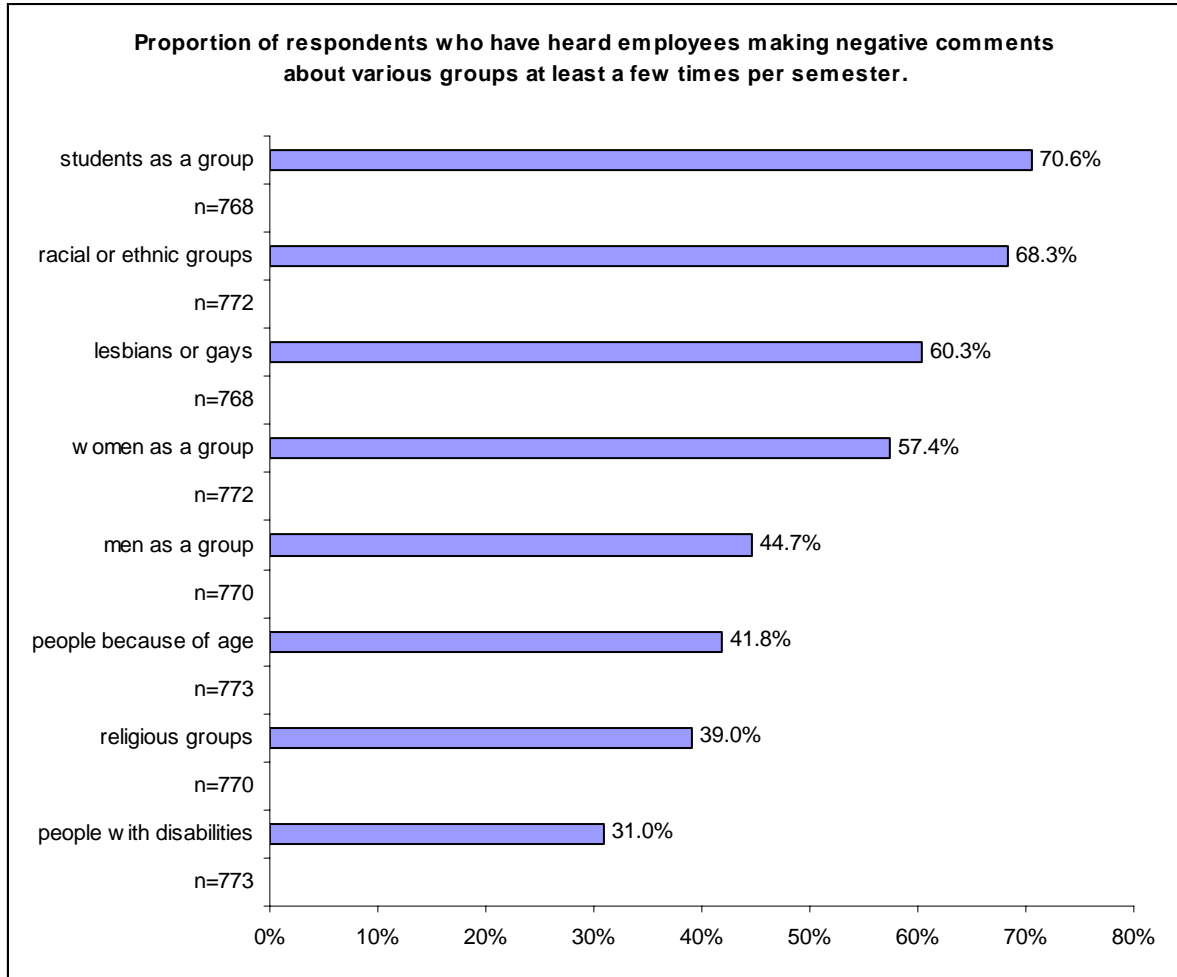
Figure 2.6



When A&F employees responded to holistic questions about their work environment, only about half described it as actively positive in terms of respect, friendliness, and an absence of racism.

The survey included a battery of questions which asked respondents to categorize the number of times per semester that they heard employees make negative remarks about various groups of people. The choices were “almost daily”, “a few times per week”, “a few times per month”, “a few times per semester”, or “never.” Figure 2.7 illustrates the proportions of respondents who had heard negative remarks about each of the groups at least a few times per semester. It is worth considering the cumulative effects of hearing various groups disparaged.

Figure 2.7



## Relations with co-workers

If the goals of an organization have become part of its culture, they should be apparent in the relationships among co-workers. Within A&F, employees generally spoke positively about their relationships with co-workers.

Most respondents (85.1%, n=632) agree “strongly” or “somewhat” that “my co-workers appreciate my work contributions.”

When asked to rate their agreement with the statement “My co-workers treat me with respect,” 81.5% of respondents (n=622) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat.” One employee described the environment among co-workers this way:

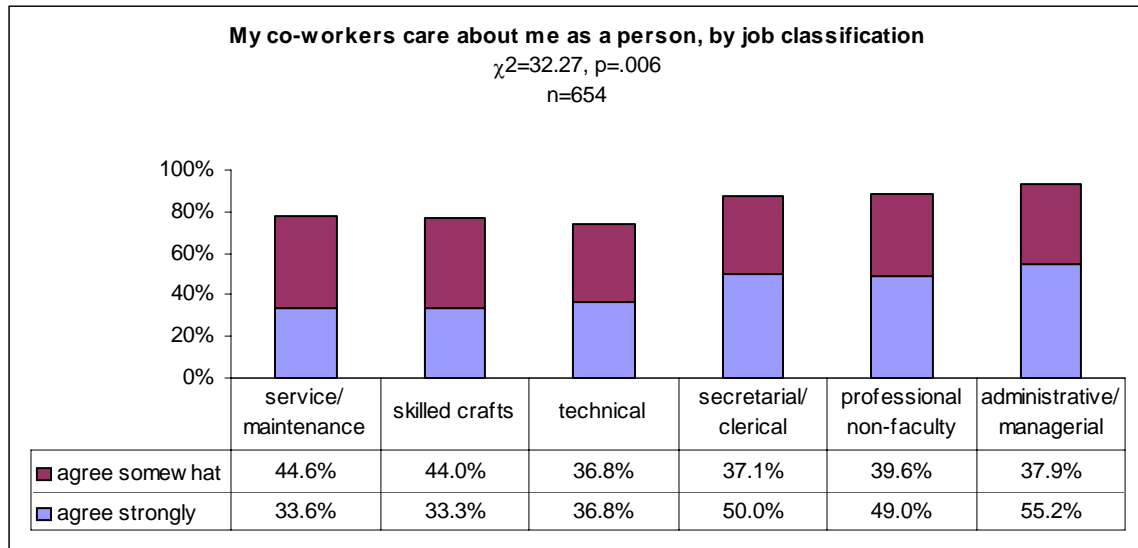
*“My department is very supportive, nobody’s afraid you know, to ask somebody who might seem smart, or nobody’s acting stuck up or refusing to communicate with each other.”*

Focus group informants also talked about some of the challenges when a problem did arise between peers, and about how hard and important it can be to speak out when an issue arises.

*“The hardest thing that I ever did, but no I don’t have a problem with it, was the first time I looked someone who made a joke about a lesbian. And I just looked at him and said ‘that’s not funny, I don’t want you to say that in front of me anymore.’ That was very hard to do, but now I have no problem with it. I think we have to start there. I think we have to take some responsibilities and make our co-workers responsible”*

One trait that makes it possible to speak out is when workers feel that they have substantial positive relationships within the workplace. 81.7% of all respondents (n=613) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” with the statement “My co-workers care about me as a person,” with significant differences in responses between job classification groups. Administrative managerial personnel were most likely and technical personnel least likely to agree that their co-workers cared about them personally. See Figure 2.8 for a more detailed illustration of responses to this question.

Figure 2.8



In spite of the overall positive tone, not everyone believed that they were cared about and respected by co-workers. These concerns were expressed in various ways during focus groups. A theme was the use of offensive or disrespectful language.

*[You said that someone used the 'N' word?] Yes they do it all the time. It doesn't bother me. I'm used to it."*

*"Things aren't done so much as said that are offensive. Sometimes meanly,... and sometimes just completely right over the head- just don't even realize what they are saying."*

Most employees described a positive relationship with their co-workers. However, the statistics and focus group comments remind us that about one-fifth of employees did not feel that they were cared about or respected by their co-workers.

### Intersections

Everyone falls into many social categories and has many social identities, and every person is a unique combination of those identities. The impact of those identities may either enhance or limit an individual's experience within A&F. In the interest of clarity we have chosen to focus our analyses largely on the opinions and experiences of individual identity groups, including job classification, ability and disability, language, race, gender, and sexual orientation. However, it is important to be aware that an individual person's experience will be modulated by the intersections and compounding of multiple social identities.

## Job Classification

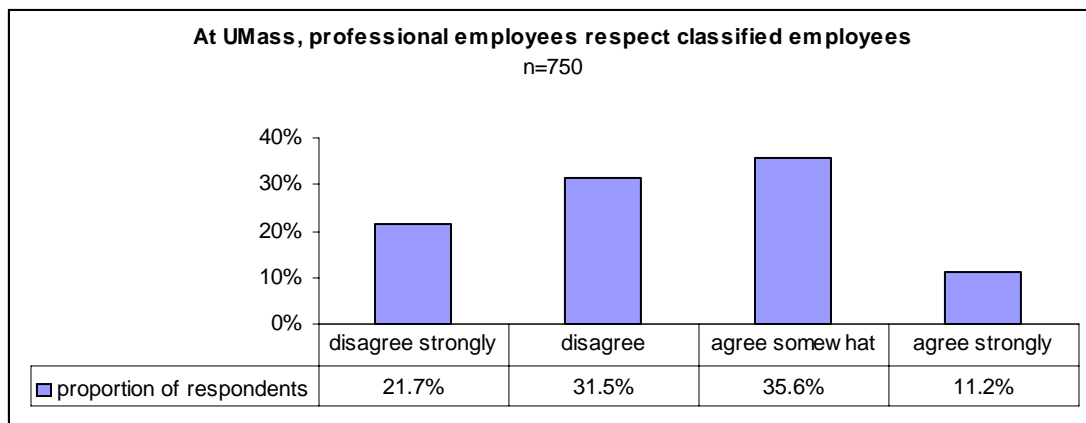
*"Once a clerk, always a clerk"*

*"You don't have to be a different color. 'Oh, you're a custodian'."*

It is clear that job classification is a powerful and powerfully-felt category among A&F employees. An examination of questions dealing with respect indicates that many A&F workers do not feel respected by others in their workplaces, and that many feel that there are real biases about people in various job classifications. Because the survey did not include questions about socio-economic class, we are not able to further examine whether some of these job classification issues may be acting as a proxy for more global issues of class.

The survey asked people to rate their agreement with the statement "At UMass, professional employees respect classified employees." Less than half of A&F respondents (46.8%, n=351) agreed with the statement, suggesting that a lack of respect for classified employees is perceived to be wide-spread. See Figure 2.9.

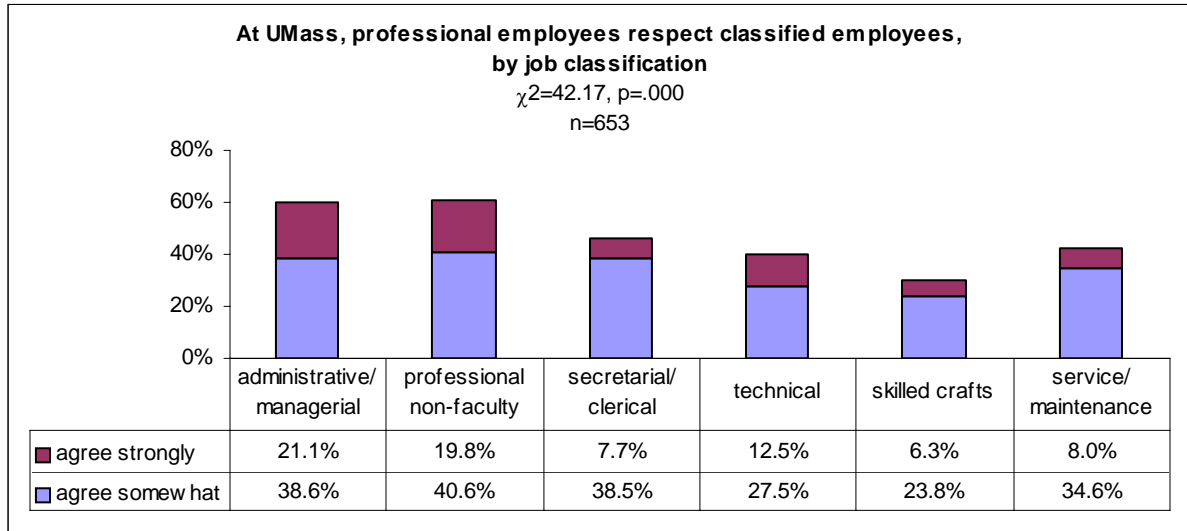
Figure 2.9



Professional employees were significantly more likely than classified workers (60.7%, n=113 v. 40.7%, n=218) to report that professionals respected classified workers ( $\chi=37.42$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

When further examined by job classification, administrative/ managerial and professional non-faculty workers were most likely, and skilled craft workers least likely, to agree that professionals respected classified employees ( $\chi=42.17$ ,  $p=.000$ ). (See Figure 2.10).

Figure 2.10



Comments from focus group participants supported the idea that many classified employees do not feel respected.

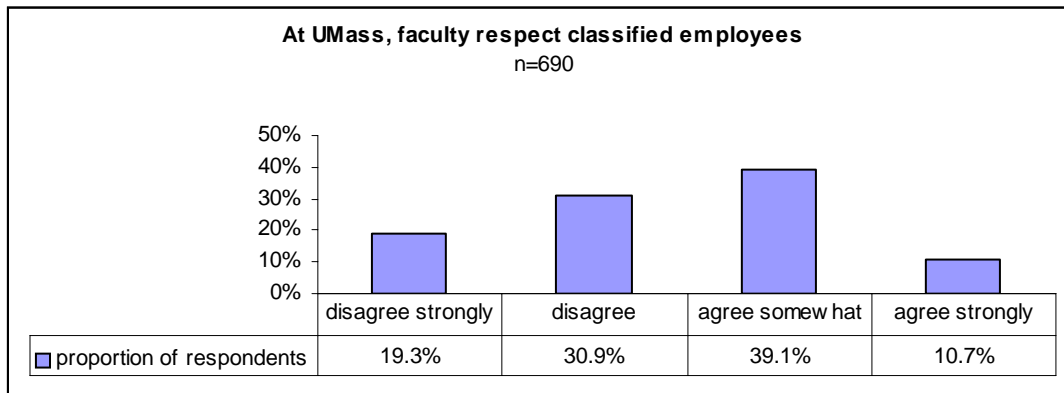
*"There is definitely a class system going on".*

*"Professional staff who think they're on top of the food chain by virtue of their intellect rather than by political appointment "*

*"I think that because we're classified that we are thought of differently than other groups, but I don't think we're as powerful as the professionals...our thoughts aren't as meaningful."*

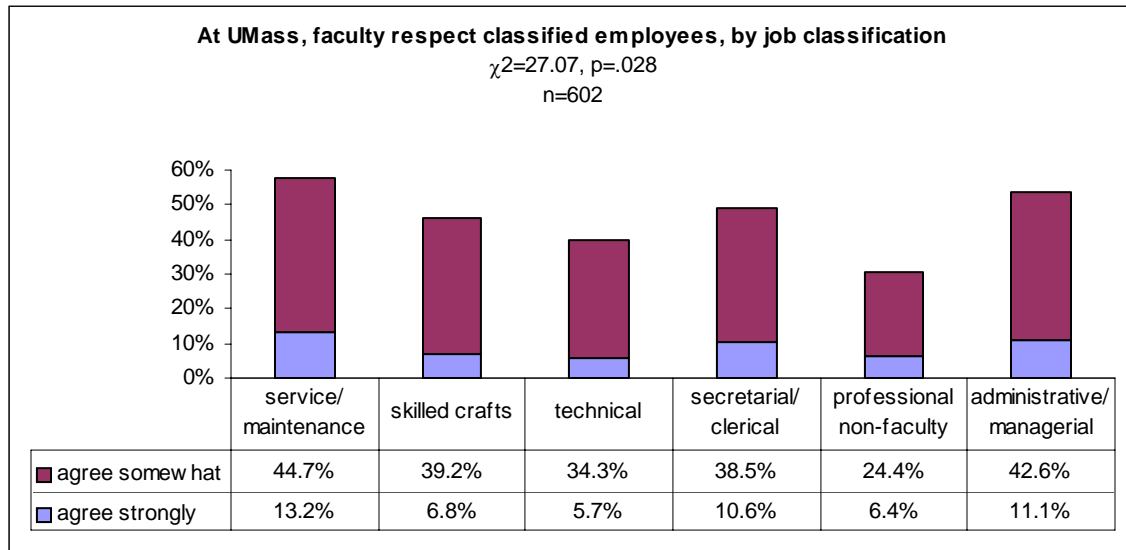
Only half of A&F survey respondents (49.8%, n=344) agreed "strongly" or "somewhat" with the statement "At UMass, faculty respect classified employees." See Figure 2.11.

Figure 2.11



When responses to this statement were analyzed by job classification, it was found that service/ maintenance workers were the most likely (57.9%, n=149) and professional non-faculty the least likely (30.8%, n=24) to agree that faculty respect classified workers. See Figure 2.12.

Figure 2.12



Focus group members brought up issues of respect time after time. People talked about the classification terminology as a problem.

*"It's just something that has bothered me for as long as I've worked here. Some of us are called 'professionals', and some of us are called 'classified'. I think we all are professional people, and I just don't like those terms...I just find that offensive."*

*"...if we are support staff, call us that, but don't call us classified because I think of classified as part of classism....And it just eats me up."*

Another person discussed how the nature of "support" jobs and the lack of respect fed upon each other in ways that are corrosive to one's work experience.

*"I think the magic word here is serve. And I think we do a lot of serving and the lack of recognition for what we do is expected and in many ways you're controlled. And many, many days of not feeling valued...they lose self-esteem in themselves for not being valued..."*

A comment from one focus group member highlighted the idea that powerful stereotypes are active here; stereotypes which can become accepted even by those at whom they are focused. The employee spoke about the experience of:

*"...being a classified member, having folk not listen to you, including classified staff..."*

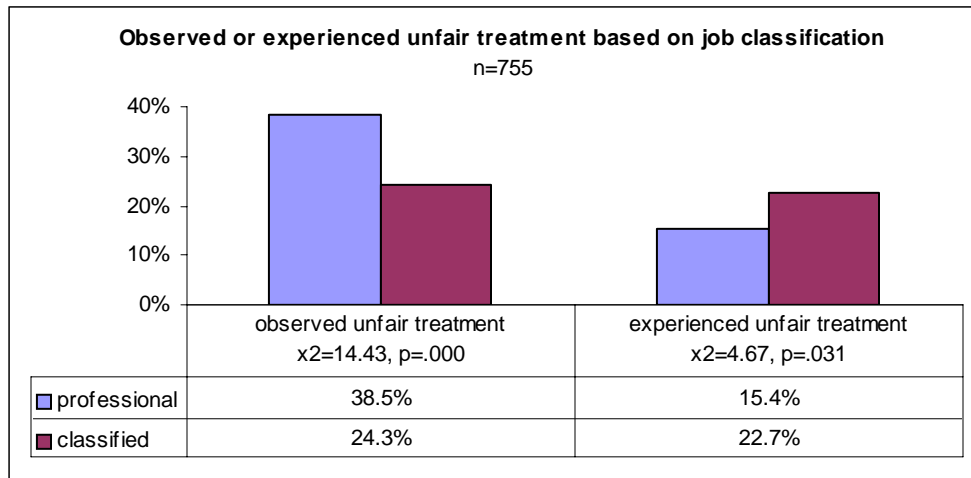
The survey also asked A&F workers to rate their agreement with the statement “At UMass, classified employees respect professional employees.” About two-thirds of respondents (62.5%, n=464) agreed.

When responses to this question were examined by race, it was found that 39 of 42 Asians (92.9%) agree that classified employees respect professionals. 11 of 17 Blacks (64.7%), 7 of 11 Latinos (63.7%), and 362 of 599 Whites (60.5%) agreed.<sup>1</sup>

A&F employees were asked whether they had observed or experienced “Unfair treatment because of one’s job classification.” Over one-quarter of respondents (27.6%, n=217) reported that they had observed unfairness based on job classification. 20.3% (n=159) said that they had themselves experienced this kind of unfairness.

When responses to this question were analyzed in relation to whether the respondents were professional or classified workers, an interesting pattern appeared. Professional workers were significantly more likely than classified workers to say that they had observed unfair treatment based on job classification. Classified workers were significantly more likely than professional workers to say that they had experienced unfairness based on job classification. (See Figure 2.13)

Figure 2.13



Comments from focus group members made it clear that unfairness can take many forms, some of them subtle and difficult to pin down despite their power to hurt or threaten.

*“I don’t think that harassment means ugly words or directly saying something about or to someone. I think in many ways tone, we hear tone, I think that the tone people use can be very hurtful.”*

<sup>1</sup> Although not statistically significant, perhaps due to the small sample size of most racial groups other than White, the pattern of difference across racial groups is deemed to important to exclude from mention.

An employee who attended a required, semester-long Supervisory Leadership Development Program (SLDP) pointed out the discrepancy in privilege that allowed some upper level managers to attend a shorter session.

*“One thing that most profoundly hit home was regarding the initial push for everyone who was a supervisor to go to SLDP. Most of us went for a whole semester: then they held an executive session that was much shorter”*

A classified staff member speaking about an experience with a professional staff member said:

*“...I always respected that unspoken classified/professional. I always respected that and I just didn't feel like I could say to this person, look knock it off...I just felt my job would be in jeopardy if I did that...but mostly unspoken. The way you're treated. The way you're looked at.”*

## Ability and Disability

Employees were asked whether they had observed or experienced “Unfair treatment because of one’s disability.” 8.4% (n=66) of respondents reported that they had observed and 6.4% (n=50) said they had experienced unfair treatment based on disability. Although these numbers may seem small, it is worth remembering that 11.7% of the respondents (n=89) identified themselves on the survey as persons with disabilities

It is not clear whether people had access issues in mind when they responded to the question about unfair treatment due to disability. Comments gathered in the focus groups make it evident that physical access on the UMass campus is seen as a serious issue.

*“...it is a very difficult campus to navigate and negotiate, from round door knobs which I can't open...”*

*“...but you know at the campus center every thing is downhill, which means its up on the way out. It's a rocket ship going down. Everything is just so inconvenient, elevators don't work and they stay broken forever.”*

*“Handicapped parking needs to be near buildings, it can't be 300 feet away”*

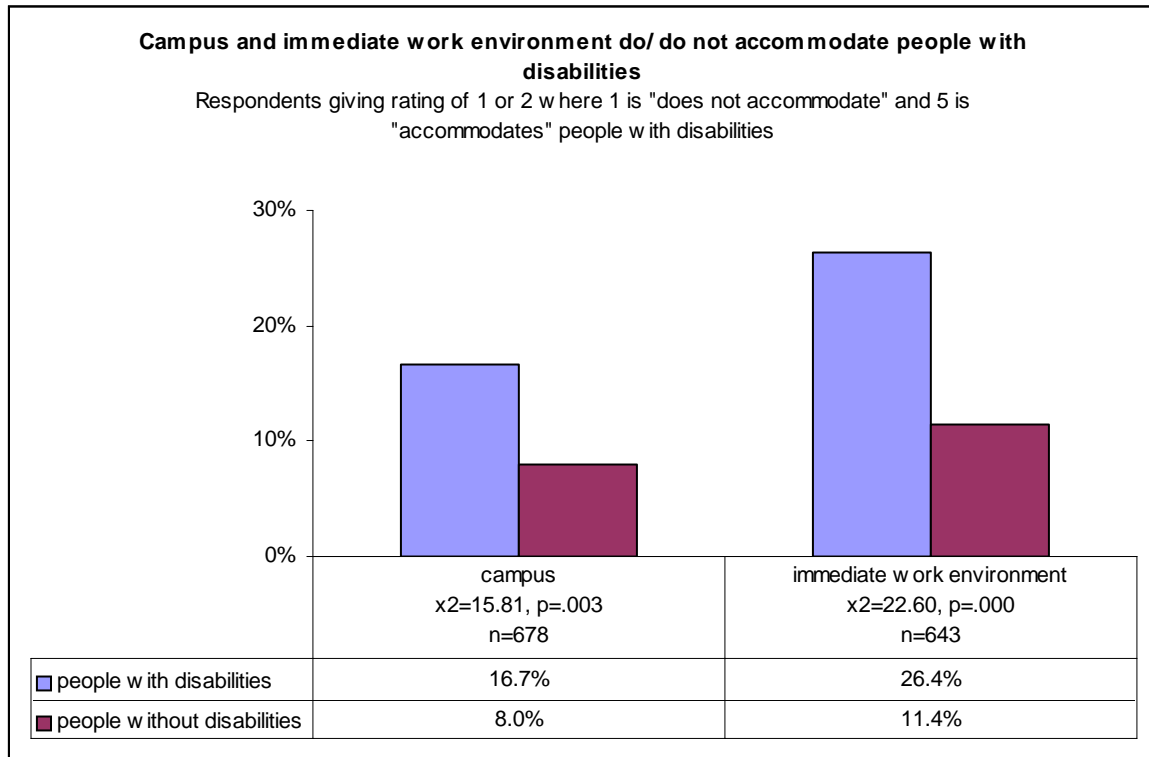
*“...State is not going to give me handicap placards, I just don't need it out in the real world, I need it on this campus.”*

There are many, and many kinds, of accommodations which may be needed for people with disabilities. Perhaps this is the reason that opinions about the success of accommodation structures on the UMass campus are so wide-ranging.

People with disabilities perceived both the campus and their immediate work environments as less accommodating than did people without disabilities. Survey respondents were asked to rate the campus on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was “does not accommodate people with disabilities” and 5 was “accommodates people with disabilities.” People with disabilities were twice as likely as those without disabilities (16.7%, n=13 v. 8.0%, n=48) to give the campus a rating of 1 or 2 ( $\chi^2=15.81$ ,  $p=.003$ ).

When the same 1 to 5 scale was applied to immediate work environments, a similar pattern appeared. People with disabilities were more than twice as likely as those without disabilities (26.4%, n=19 v. 11.4%, n=65) to give their work environments at 1 or 2 rating, where 1 is “does not accommodate people with disabilities” ( $\chi^2=22.60$ ,  $p=.000$ ). See Figure 2.14 for a graphical comparison of responses to these two questions.

Figure 2.14



In focus groups, several people with disabilities talked about positive examples of accommodations that they had seen in their departments for people with disabilities:

*“Good support for someone with mental illness”*

*“They never tease in front of the supervisor...he would deal with it immediately”*

*“They accept different kinds of people. No matter what diversity or disability”*

*“Working under the supervisor I have now ...is excellent...many of them [co-workers] have been very helpful and not angry to take the time to explain things to me...”*

*“...supervisor could accommodate reduced weight lifting post-surgery.”*

On the other hand, several people (including some who had talked about positive experiences) talked about more troubling or frustrating experiences.

*“I can't climb the stairs so I had to take the freight elevator. That worked okay until someone came along and said that using the freight elevator for passengers was prohibited,...so consequently it was very unsettling for me...we are all entitled to get to our workplaces and back home.”*

*"...if I say something and I think it is clear, A) I can't hear what is being said to me because my hearing is going downhill or B) the person who says it thinks they are being extremely clear on what they are saying, and I'm standing there saying 'I still don't understand', sometimes I think I'm very stupid the way I'm looked at and treated because I don't understand what the person is trying to tell me..."*

During the focus groups we heard from several individuals, from different parts of A&F, who were dealing with issues related to hearing loss and deafness. One person with hearing loss made a point demonstrating that equal treatment is not always simple.

*"...we've all been assigned cell phones...they gave me one, but of course, what good is it gonna do me?"*

Informants talked about disrespectful behaviors they had seen or experienced in response to people with hearing losses.

*"...have told me they mimic my voice, which is offensive.."*

*"...co-worker refused to look at him when talking to him...he [the co-worker] has to understand that he's deaf and he [the co-worker] didn't want to..."*

*"...fun is made of sign language... it would be the equivalent of walking up to you and saying "goo, goo, ga, ga"...they move their fingers in random ways and joke around at me..."*

Another topic which came up in the discussion of hearing loss was that of the need for sign language interpreters. Some employees reported that there was a real effort made to supply interpreting services as they were needed, but most seemed to agree that more was needed.

*"Interpreters are scheduled for us when we have a scheduled meeting, but it's for times that you are not expecting to need someone that it is tough..."*

*"I would love to see a full time interpreter in our department."*

*"...training is a bit of a problem for me because I would need to schedule an interpreter..."*

*"Supervisor has been trying to have interpreter for folks who need it"*

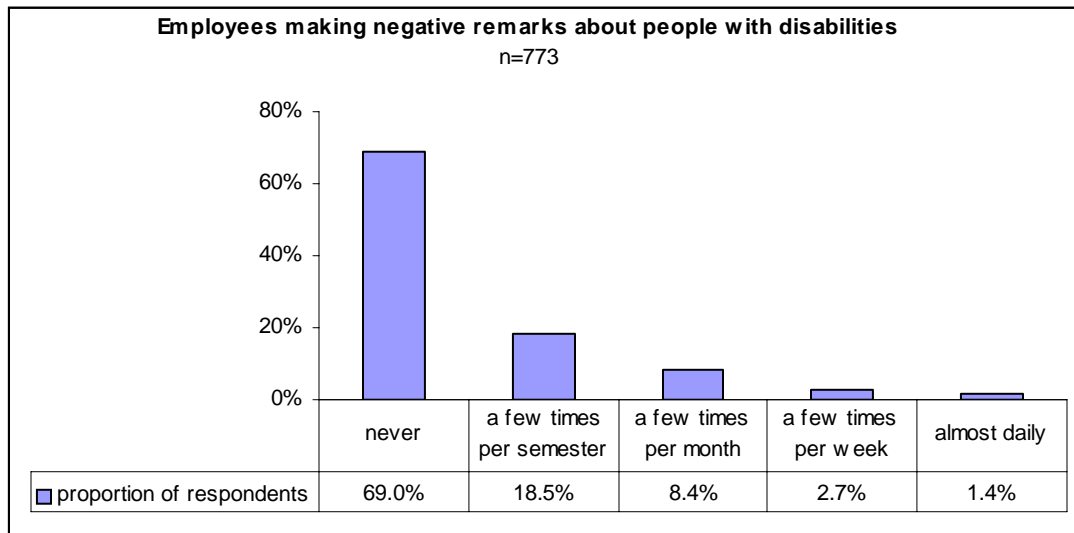
Other respondents talked about some of the problems they experience when interpreting services are not available or are inadequate.

*"...it becomes a problem because when people realize they can't communicate with me they decide to drop things."*

*“I was always trying to catch up and learn everything that people already knew.”*

Another measure of the experience of working on the campus is how often people hear negative remarks about people with disabilities. The survey asked people how often they heard “Employees making negative remarks about people with disabilities”: about two-thirds of respondents (69.0%, n=533) said that they “never” heard such remarks, 18.5% (n=143) heard them a few times per semester, and the remaining 12.5% (n=97) heard them more frequently.

Figure 2.15



When responses to this question were further analyzed, it was found that people with disabilities and classified staff were more likely to report hearing negative comments. People with disabilities were more than twice as likely (61.8%, n=55 v.26.8%, n=178) to report that they had heard negative remarks about people with disabilities at least a few times per semester ( $\chi^2=46.78$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

Professional staff were significantly more likely than classified staff (77.7%, n=150 v. 65.8%, n=363) to report that they “never” heard negative remarks about people with disabilities ( $\chi^2=12.50$ ,  $p=.014$ ).

It also bears mentioning that not all disabilities are visible or easy to notice. Mental illnesses, learning disabilities, heart conditions and many other “physical” conditions may pass unnoticed by any but medical experts. This does not, of course, mean that these conditions do not cause real problems and require real accommodations. One staff member with a disability talked about the challenges of “coming out” about that disability.

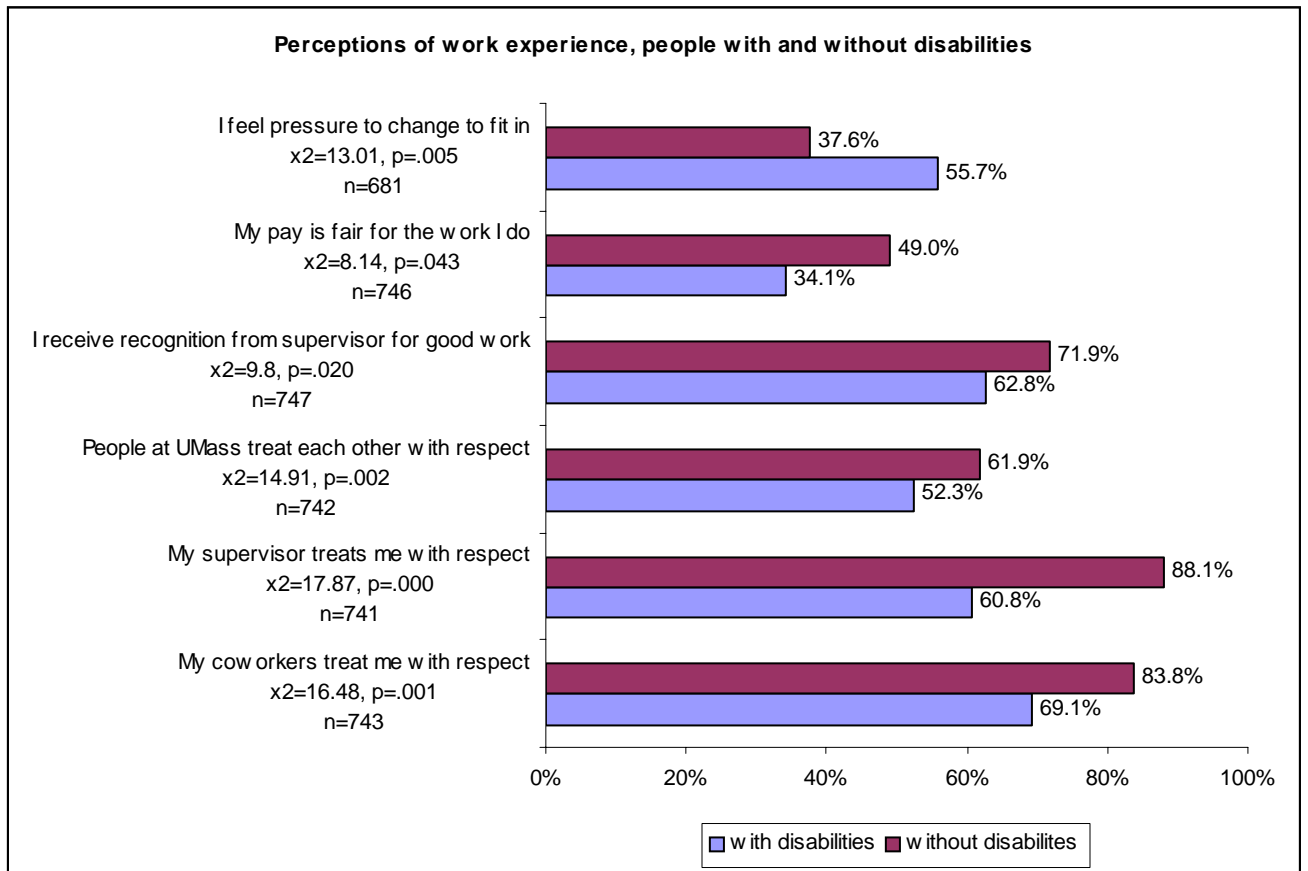
*“Like I said in the past a lot more have to come out in the open, we don’t express ourselves, if we don’t express ourselves we are just going to get*

*stepped on and stepped on, it's going to get harder to come out forward and express ourselves”*

One more way to look at the experience of people with disabilities is to see how they perceive issues of their work experience that have no specifically-stated relationship with their disability. Figure 2.16 compares the perceptions of people with and without disabilities on a number of parameters of their work life at UMass. In each case, there is a statistically significant difference between the responses of the two groups.

People with disabilities were less likely to feel respected by their co-workers or supervisor, and less likely to agree that, as a whole, people at UMass treat each other with respect. They were also less likely to feel that their pay is fair, or that they receive recognition from supervisors for good work. People with disabilities are also more likely to say that they feel pressure to change in order to fit in at UMass.

Figure 2.16



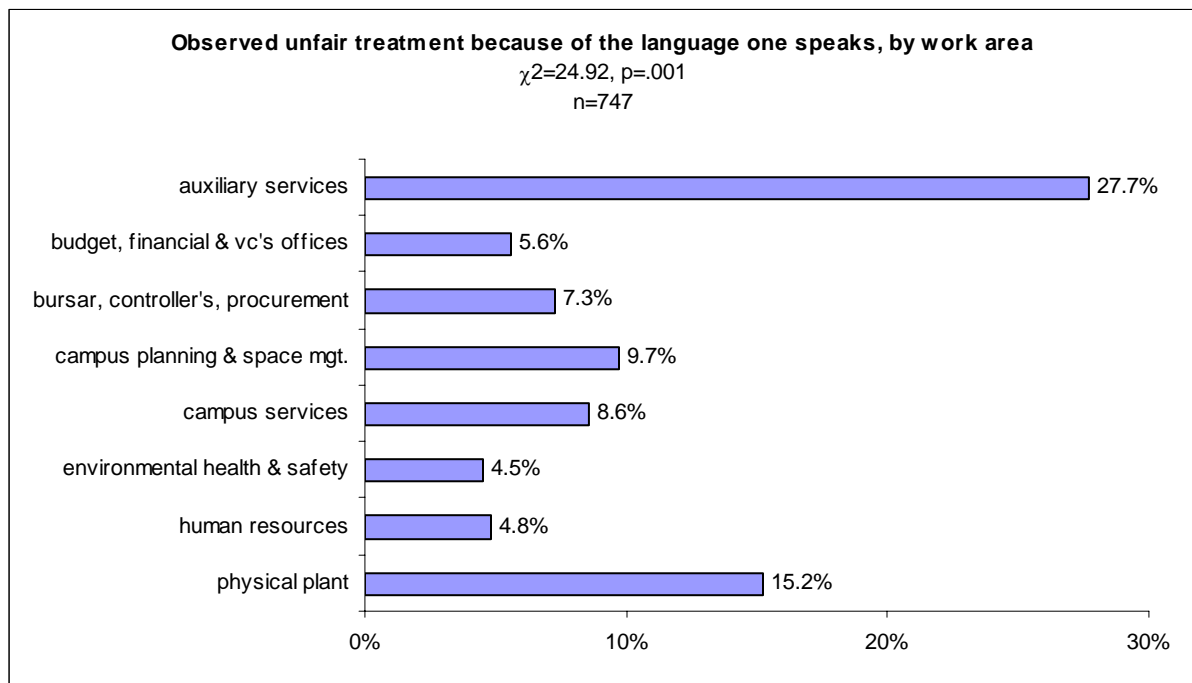
## Language Differences

Survey respondents were asked whether they had observed, and also whether they had experienced, “unfair treatment because of the language one speaks.” 14.8% (n=116) reported that they had observed, and 7.4% (n=58) that they had experienced, unfairness because of their language.

Individuals for whom language is a barrier are not randomly scattered across the workplace. It is not surprising, therefore, to note that the issues created by language barriers vary by work area, by job classification, and by whether one is a person of color.

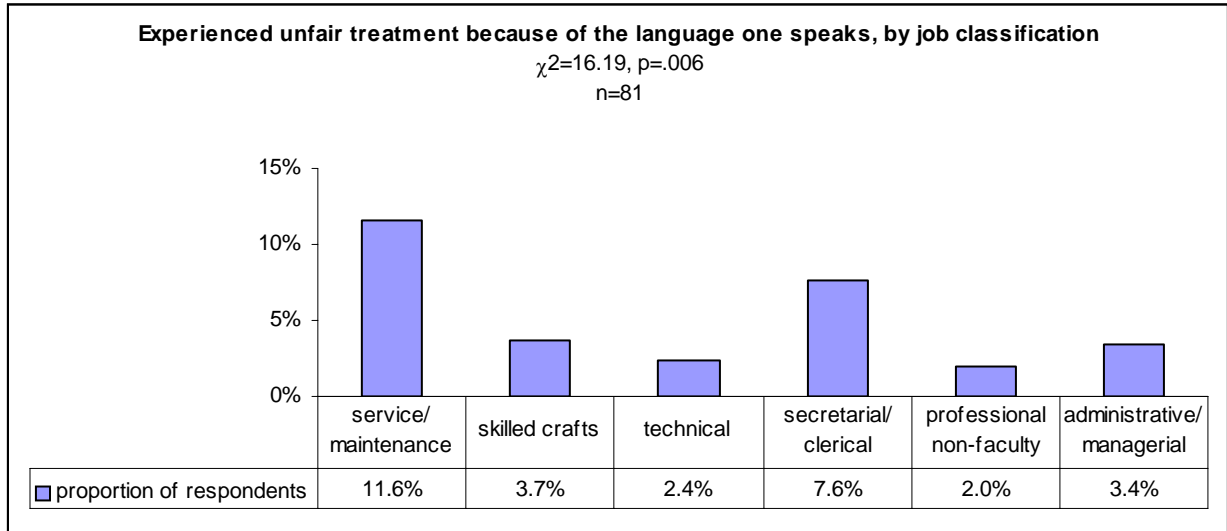
Auxiliary services and physical plant workers were significantly more likely than those in other work areas to report having observed language-related unfairness in their workplaces. (See Figure 2.17)

Figure 2.17



Service/ maintenance and secretarial/ clerical workers were more likely than those in other job classifications to say that they had actually experienced unfairness based on language. See Figure 2.18.

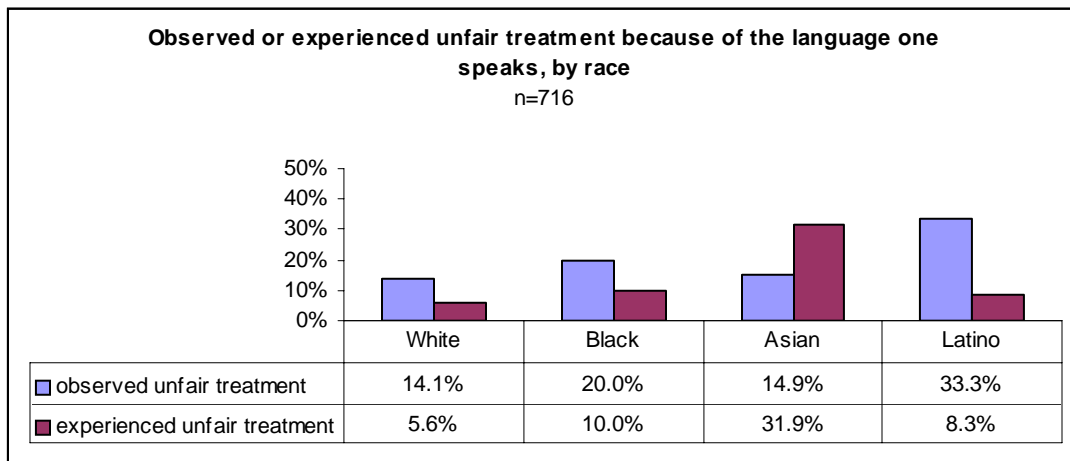
Figure 2.18



People of color were significantly more likely than Whites to report having “experienced unfair treatment” because of language: 17.7% (n=20) of respondents of color and 5.1% (n=32) of White respondents said they had experienced that unfairness ( $\chi=25.76, p=.000$ ).

When the responses of people of color are divided into more discrete racial groups, they appear to represent quite different experiences with language barriers. While the highest proportion of Latino respondents reported observing language unfairness, the highest proportion of Asians said that they had actually experienced unfairness based on language. (See Figure 2.19)

Figure 2.19 <sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Although not statistically significant, perhaps due to the small sample size of most racial groups other than White, the pattern of difference across racial groups is deemed to important to exclude from mention.

In discussing language barriers, several focus group members talked about the kinds of accommodations to non-English speakers (or those not proficient in English) that they have experienced or observed in their workplaces.

*“Our department has tried to be accommodating by giving tests in a person’s native language.”*

*“Our department attempted to deal with language concerns with ambassador program. It did seem to help...while it was more inclusive...it was also volunteer which can be too much to ask.”*

Comments from focus group participants also pointed out some of the ways in which employees’ languages can effect their work experience and career advancement. One informant talked about one of the day-to-day annoyances.

*“The intercom makes language more difficult...folks make comments about they way people talk...it is very hard to understand...”*

Others discussed how personally hurtful and divisive people’s responses to language barriers can be.

*“Put downs and ‘learn to speak English’ remarks that goes on the fly. They are hurtful.”*

Some employees brought up the fact that students’ responses to language differences are also a part of employees’ work experience.

*“...sees student customers being disrespectful of non-English speaking workers.”*

*“Students are demanding the staff be English speaking. Intolerance extensive.”*

Another theme of the discussion of language barriers in the focus groups was their impact on employees’ professional opportunities.

*“Language is a barrier that creates limitations to promotions. For example one person on our staff has taken the test several times but can’t pass it because of language barriers. Even when the test can be taken in your own language it is hard to learn the information when you don’t speak the language.”*

*“Better language skills could create more opportunities. There are a few really good staff who would make wonderful supervisory staff but for their language skills.”*

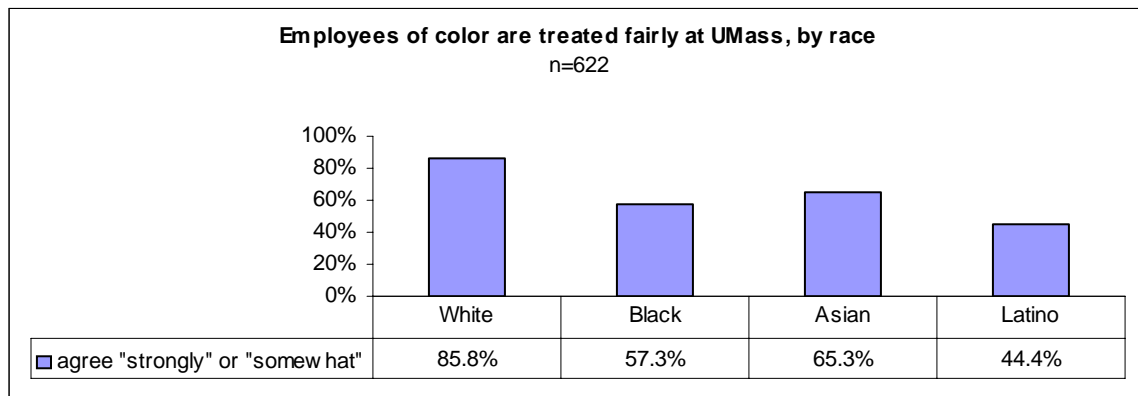
## Race

Of the 751 people who indicated their race on the survey, 624 (83.1%) identified themselves as White. Because such a large proportion of the survey sample is White, the only way that the chi square test of significance could be used to explore racial differences was by grouping all respondents who did not identify as White together as “people of color”. In some cases, there were statistically significant differences between “people of color” and Whites. They are indicated as such, and most are summarized in Figure 2.21. As mentioned in the introductory material, what “statistically significant” means in this context is that we can feel a measurable level of confidence (95% when significance is measured at the .05 level as has been done in this report) that the differences indicated between groups are really related to the groups and are not coincidences or accidents of the data collection process.

The weakness with simply lumping all respondents who did not identify as White as “people of color” is that this assumes that all people of color have the same socio-cultural experience where their race is concerned. Such an assumption is without foundation. We feel it is important to acknowledge and, where possible, learn from the differing experiences of different racial groups. At the same time, the small numbers of Black, Asian, Latino or Native American<sup>1</sup> respondents mean that our data does not permit us to make the “statistical significance” statements. Thus, we cannot generalize from “Latinos who actually took our survey” to “Latinos who work at A&F”. The pattern of difference across racial groups is too important to exclude from discussion and consideration, even though these differences are not statistically significant.

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statement “Employees of color are treated fairly at UMass.” Most employees (81.8%, n=560) agrees “strongly” or “somewhat”. (See Figure 2.20)

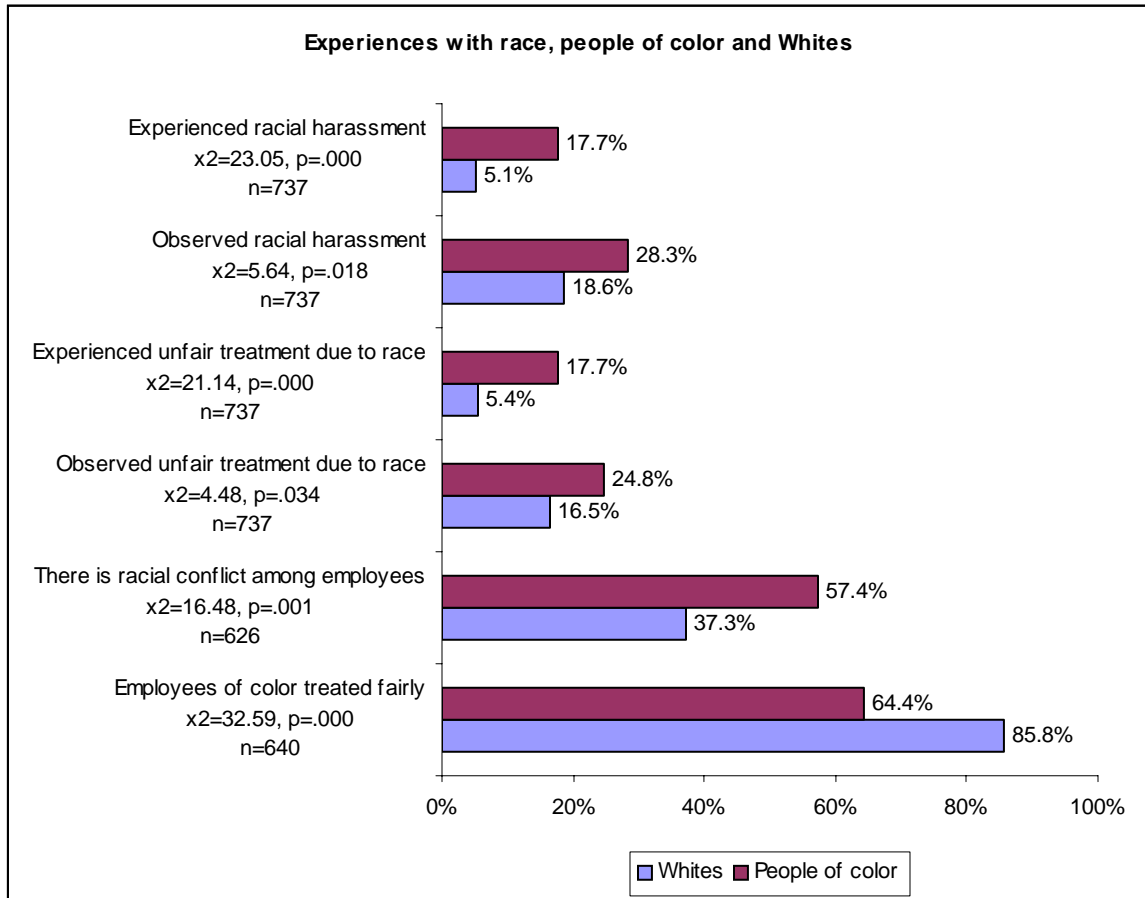
Figure 2.20



<sup>1</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, discrepancies between the number of individuals who identified themselves on the survey as Native American and the number of Native Americans indicated in the divisional demographics led to the decision to exclude the Native American category from analyses by race.

However, when responses to this question were analyzed further, it became clear that people of color had a significantly different perspective than did Whites. 64.4% of employees of color (n=67) and 85.8% of White employees (n=460) agreed that people of color are treated fairly at UMass. (See Figure 2.21)

Figure 2.21



The survey asked A&F employees whether they had observed or experienced “unfair treatment because of one’s race/ ethnicity, and whether they had observed or experienced “racial /ethnic harassment.” Figures 2.22 and 2.23 compare the responses of individuals of different ethnicities.

Figure 2.22

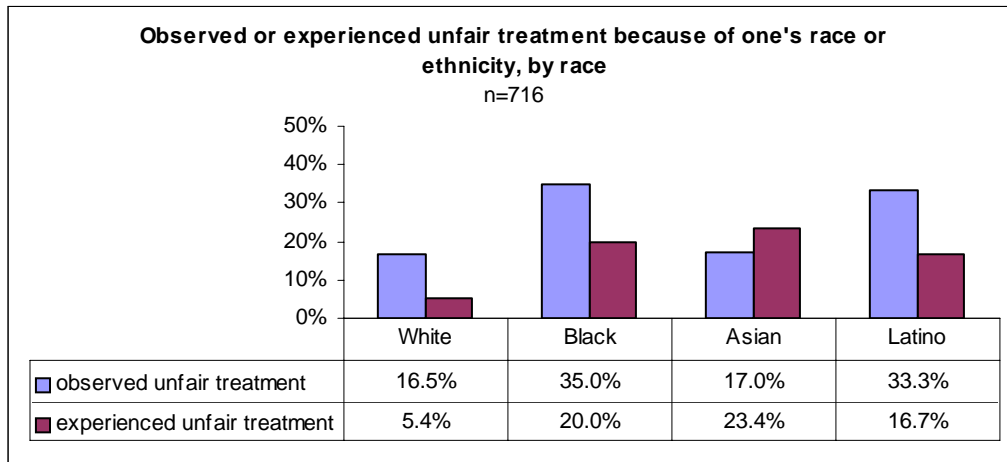
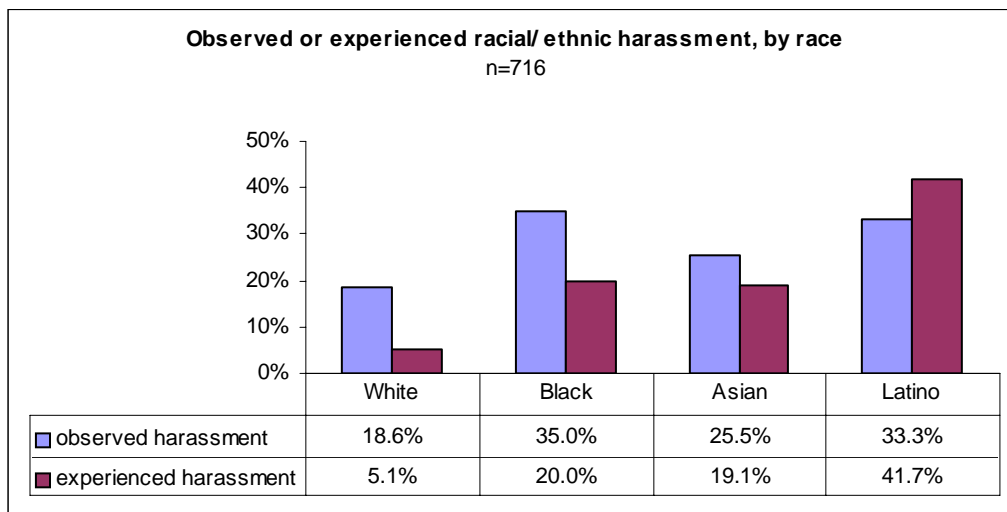
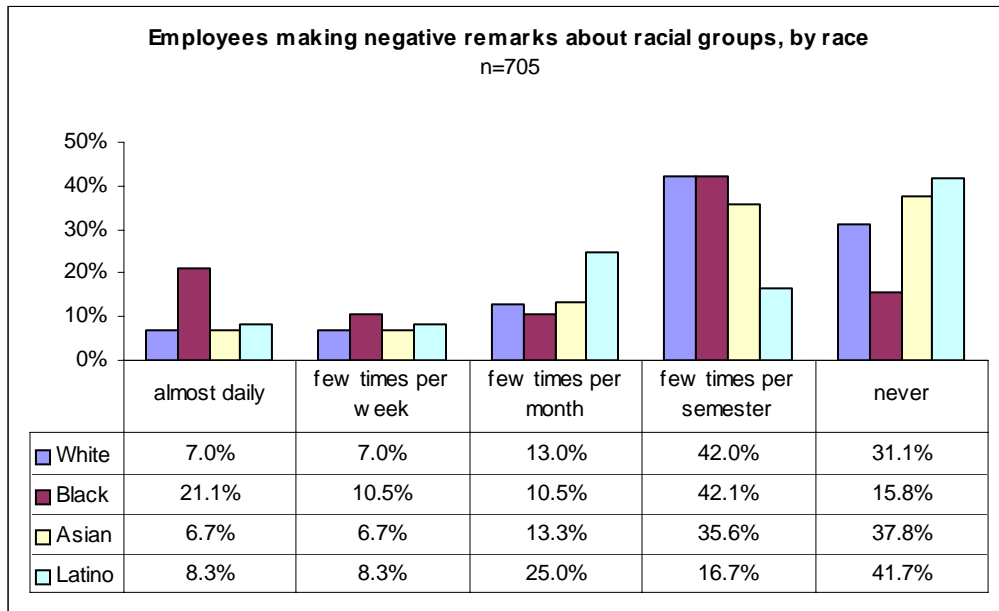


Figure 2.23



A&F workers were asked to estimate how often they heard “employees making negative remarks about particular racial or ethnic groups”. Figure 2.24 summarizes the responses to this question, by respondents’ race.

Figure 2.24



The survey asked A&F workers to rate both their immediate work environment and the campus as a whole on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 was “racist” and 5 was “not racist”. The responses of individuals of different races are summarized in Figures 2.25 and 2.26.

Figure 2.25

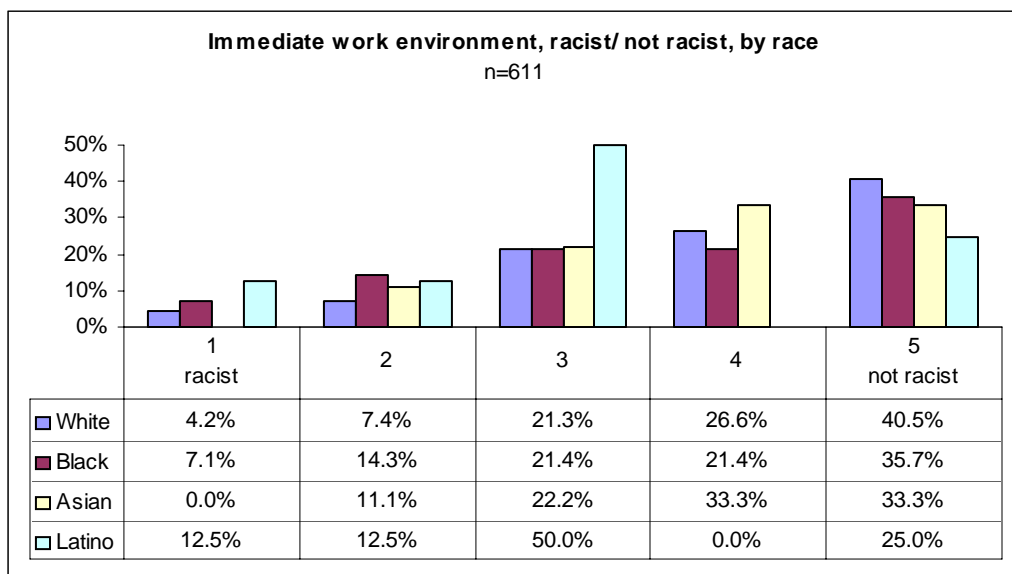
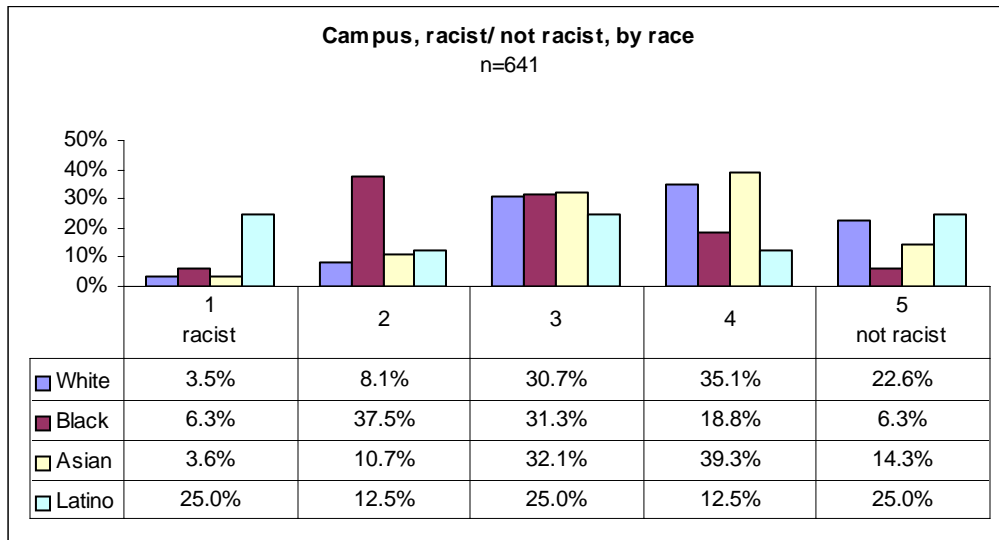
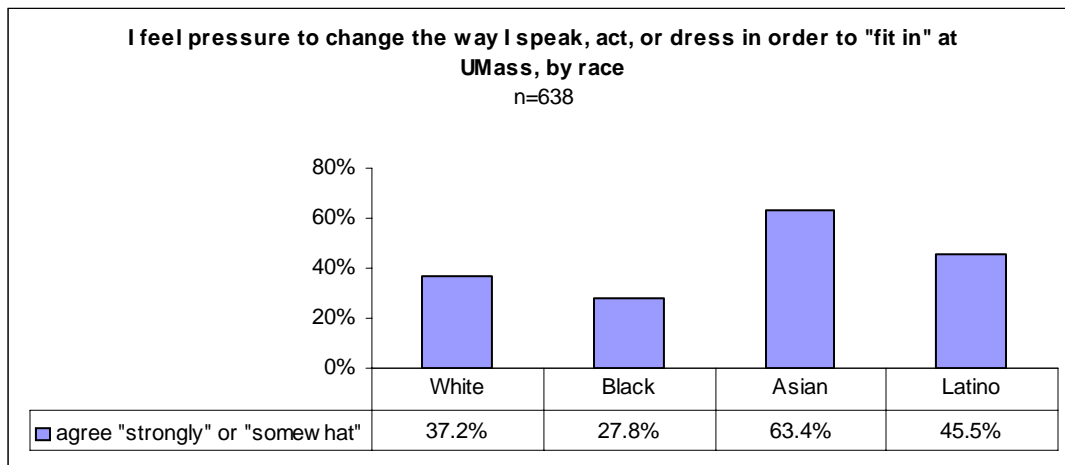


Figure 2.26



The survey also asked employees to rate their agreement with the statement “I feel pressure to change the way I speak, act, or dress in order to “fit in” at UMass”. Figure 2.27 illustrates responses to this question by respondents’ race.

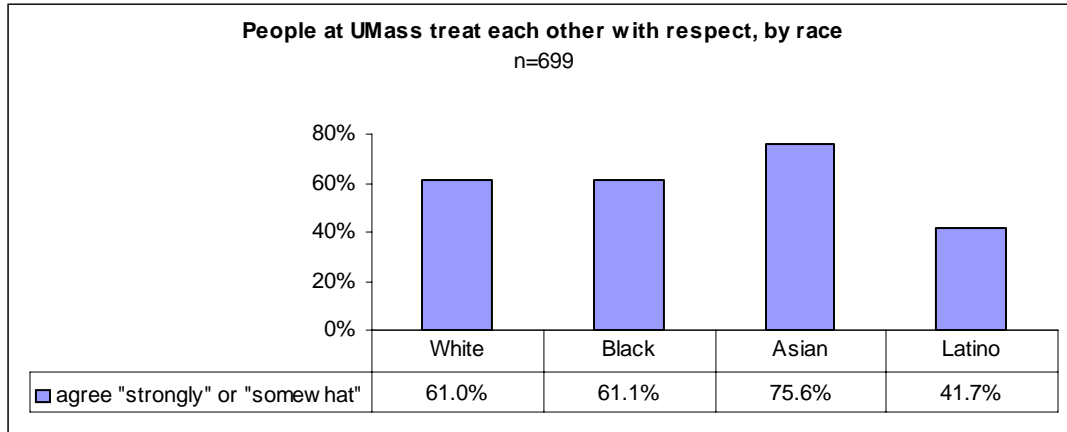
Figure 2.27



The survey included several questions probing respondents’ sense of how respect is distributed and experienced in their UMass workplace.

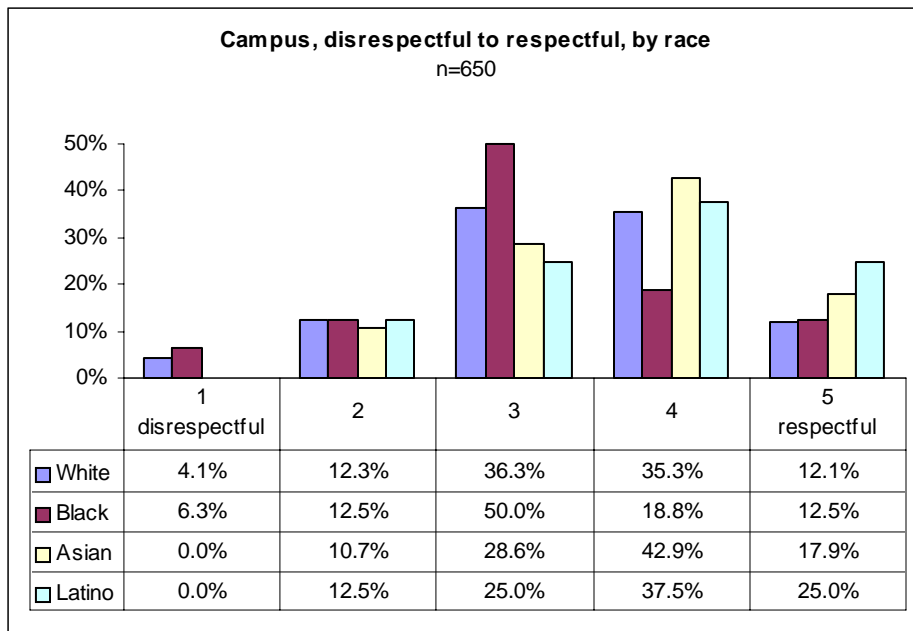
A&F employees were asked to rate their agreement with the statement “People at UMass treat each other with respect”. People of color were significantly more likely than Whites to agree “strongly” with the statement (24.0% v. 13.1%) ( $\chi^2=10.04$ ,  $p=.018$ ). Figure 2.28 illustrates responses by race.

Figure 2.28



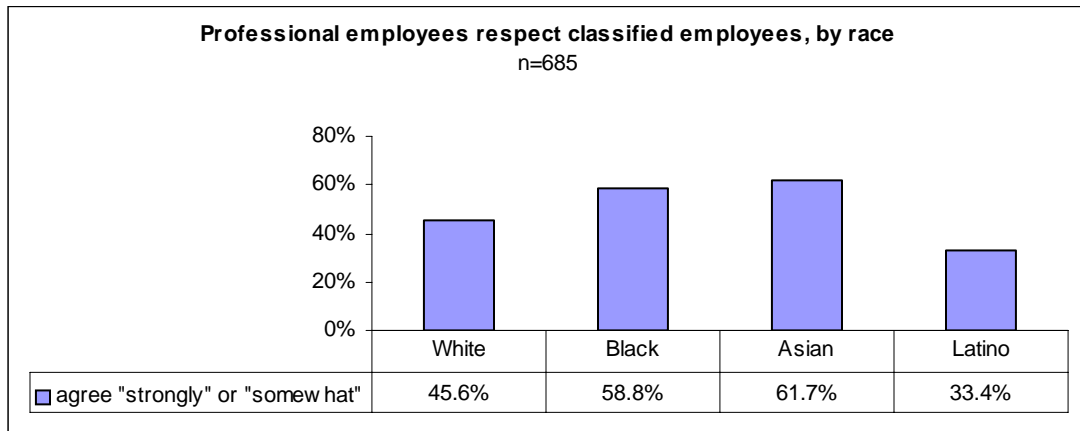
Another item asked respondents to rate the campus on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was “disrespectful” and 5 was “respectful”. Figure 2.29 shows the responses of employees of different races to this question.

Figure 2.29



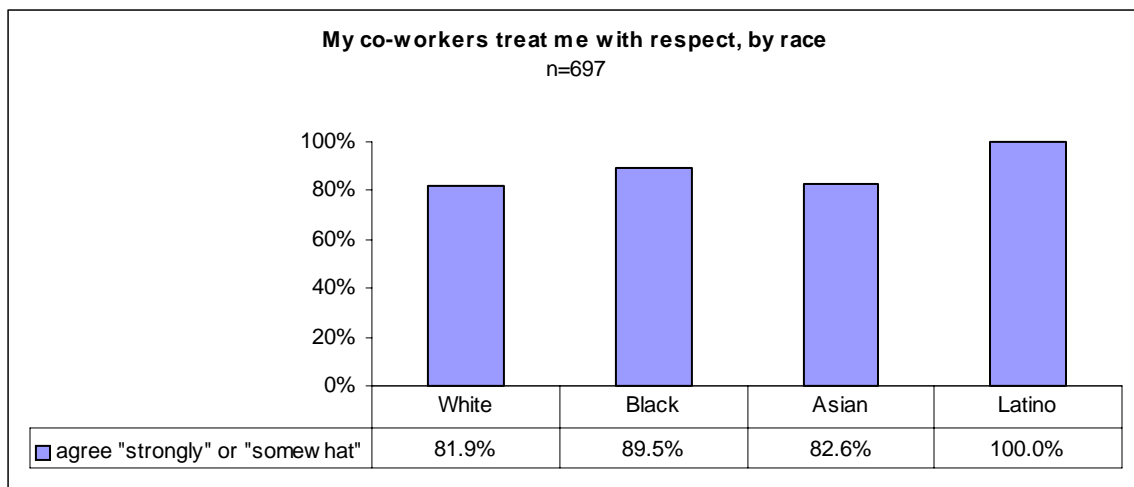
Another measure of respect is how different categories of employees behave in regard to each other. Figure 2.30 illustrates, by race, employee agreement with the statement “Professional employees respect classified employees”.

Figure 2.30



One of the more positive responses, overall, was how most A&F employees feel about their relationships with co-workers. Figure 2.31 illustrates, by race, respondents' agreement that they are treated with respect by their co-workers.

Figure 2.31



Some sets of responses indicate that people of difference races experience community and diversity at UMass differently than others. Figure 2.32 illustrates responses to the item that asked respondents to rate their agreement with the statement "Overall, employees at UMass are socially and culturally diverse". Figure 2.33 illustrates responses to the statement "UMass places a lot of emphasis on having a socially and culturally diverse staff".

Figure 2.32

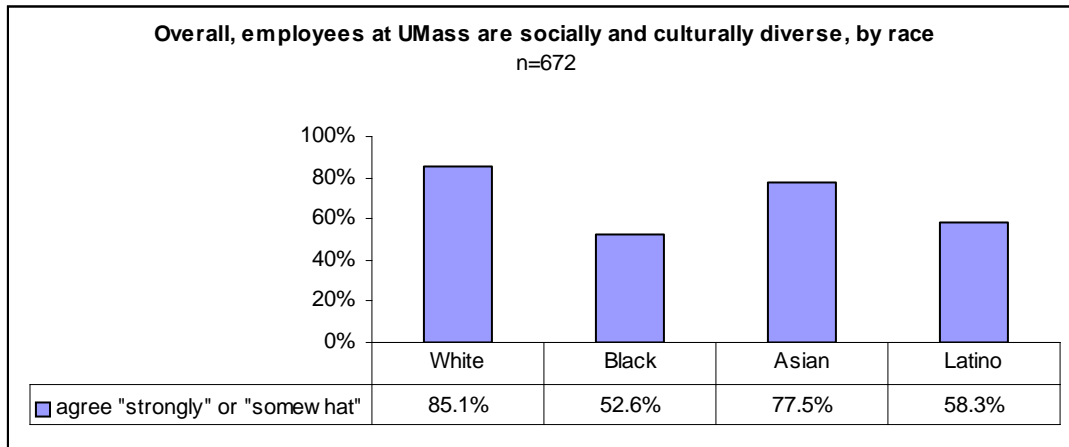
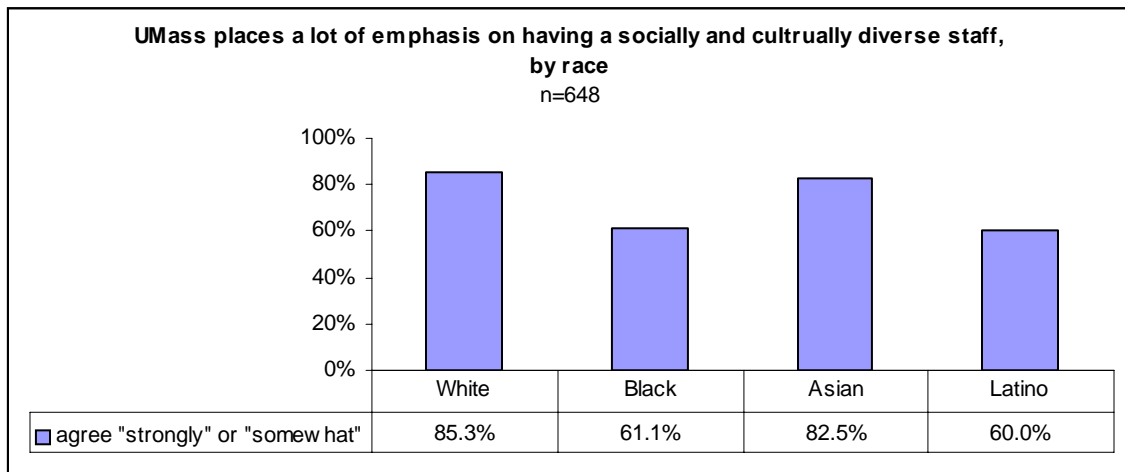


Figure 2.33



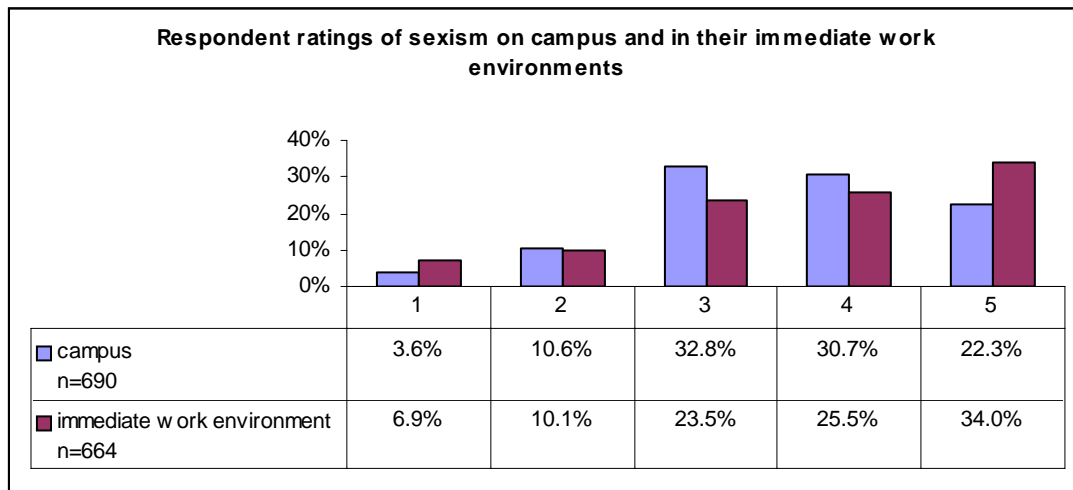
## Gender

*“ They (supervisors) listen to four, five, six, seven men, but you want to put your two cents in, it’s get out of my way, I have no time for you....you almost feel like Ms. Nobody.”*

Almost three-quarters of respondents (72.3%, n=526) agree “strongly” or “somewhat” with the statement “Women employees are treated fairly at UMass.” However, despite this general perception, responses to other questions about the treatment and experience of women suggest that there are still some problems with sexual equity on the UMass campus.

A&F employees were asked to rate both the campus and their immediate work environment on a scale where 1 is “sexist” and 5 is “not sexist.” Just over half the respondents (53.0%, n=380) gave the campus a rating of 4 or 5. A slightly higher proportion (59.5%, n=395) gave their immediate work environments a 4 or 5 rating. See Figure 2.34

Figure 2.34



When perceptions of the campus and work environment were analyzed by race, a smaller proportion of Blacks than of other respondents gave the campus a positive rating. 6 of 16 Blacks (37.5%) gave the campus a rating of 4 or 5, where a 1 is “sexist” and a 5 “not sexist.” 4 of 8 Latinos (50.0%), 14 of 27 Asians (51.8%) and 315 of 581 Whites (54.2%) gave the campus a 4 or 5 rating.<sup>1</sup>

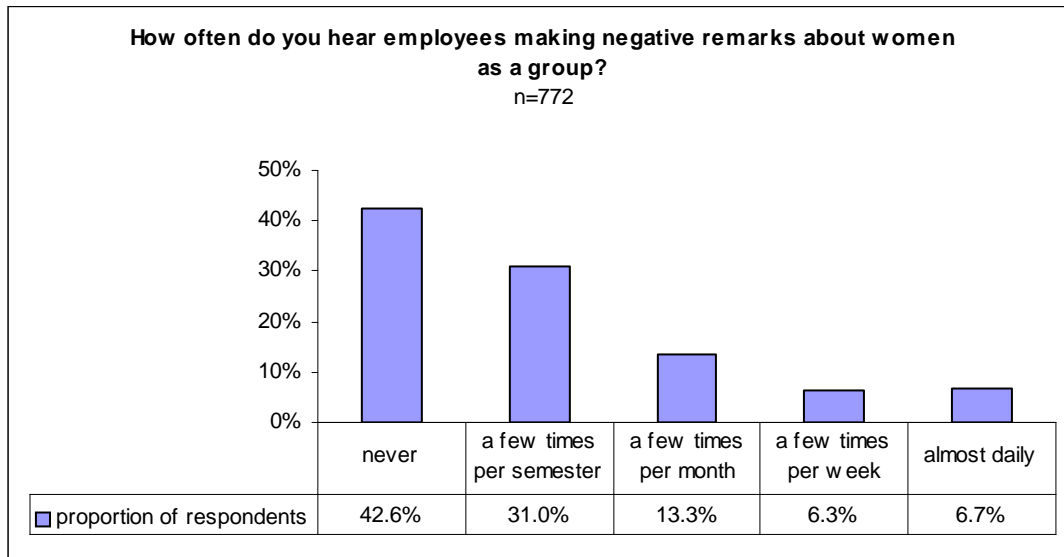
When the same scale was applied to sexism in the immediate work environment, response patterns again varied by race, with the highest proportion of Asian respondents giving their immediate work environments a positive rating. 20 of 28 Asians (71.4%),

<sup>1</sup> Although not statistically significant, perhaps due to the small sample size of most racial groups other than White, the pattern of difference across racial groups is deemed too important to exclude from mention.

336 of 557 Whites (60.3%), 7 of 14 Blacks (50.0%) and 4 of 9 Latinos (44.4%) giving a 4 or 5 rating to their immediate work environments.<sup>1</sup>

Respondents were asked how often they heard “Employees making negative remarks about women as a group.” Figure 2.35 illustrates the responses among A&F respondents overall.

Figure 2.35

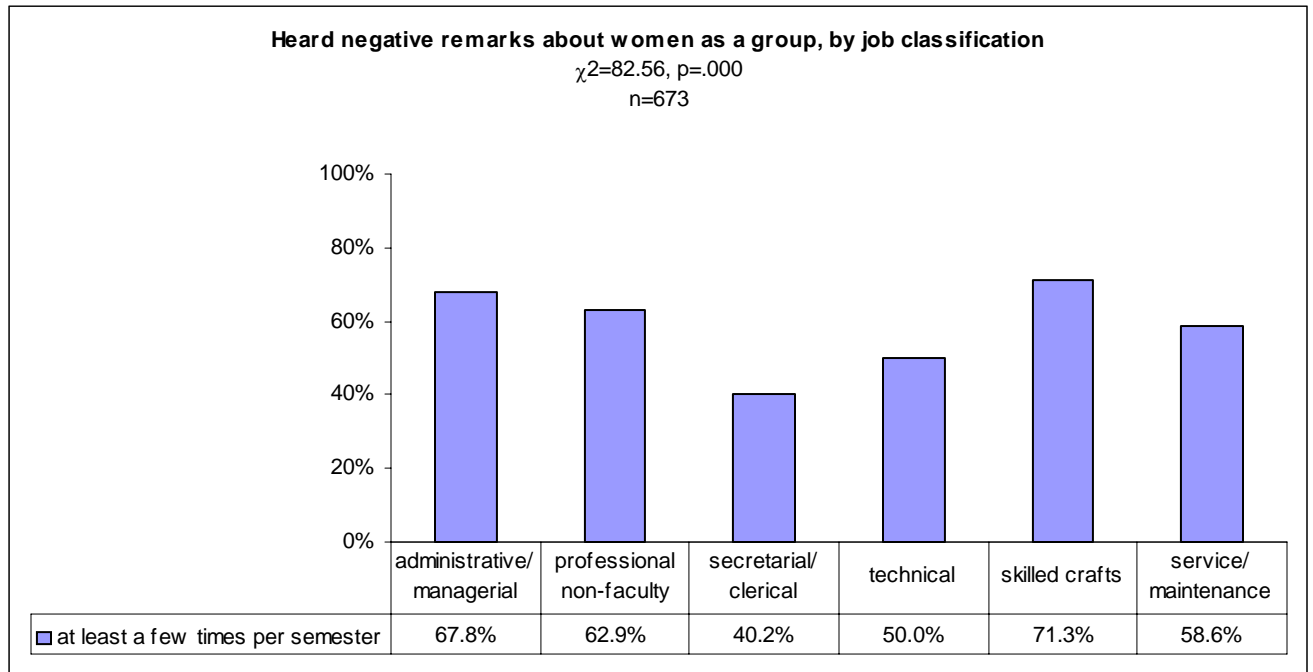


There are significant differences in how people in various job classifications were likely to answer this question. Professional were significantly more likely than classified staff (45.1% v. 26.4%) to report that they had heard negative comments about women “a few times per semester”, while classified staff were more likely than professional employees (30.1% v. 16.0%) to hear such comments “a few times per month” or more regularly ( $\chi^2=28.35, p=.000$ ).

Over 70% of skilled workers, and over 60% of administrative / managerial and professional non-faculty employees reported hearing negative remarks about women as a group at least a few times per semester. (See Figure 2.36)

<sup>1</sup> Although not statistically significant, perhaps due to the small sample size of most racial groups other than White, the pattern of difference across racial groups is deemed too important to exclude from mention.

Figure 2.36



Negative remarks about women can take many forms, including obscene or sexual comments and those that are demeaning. One woman described her experience in her department.

*"Professionals within our department refer to us as the 'hens'...when we go into the staff meeting, it's the hens that are meeting and I don't think this is very professional...very inclusive"*

Survey respondents were asked two sets of questions about how they had been treated which relate to gender. One set asked whether they had observed or experienced "unfair treatment because of one's gender" and the other asked whether they had observed or experienced "sexual harassment."

One fifth of respondents (20.5%, n=161) reported that they had observed "unfair treatment because of one's gender", and 10.8% (n=85) said that they had experienced such unfairness. Comments from focus group members suggest that unfairness can take many forms, some of them overt and others subtle. It is important to note that it is not necessarily men who were described as being unfair to women. One informant talked about her observations regarding women's treatment of other women.

*"I had a lot of difficulty with a group of women from...who were very close to the ears of administration, and seemed to put up a lot of stumbling blocks [for other women]."*

Other employees discussed patterns of employment, and the power of visibility and numbers in shaping women’s and men’s experience in various employment arenas.

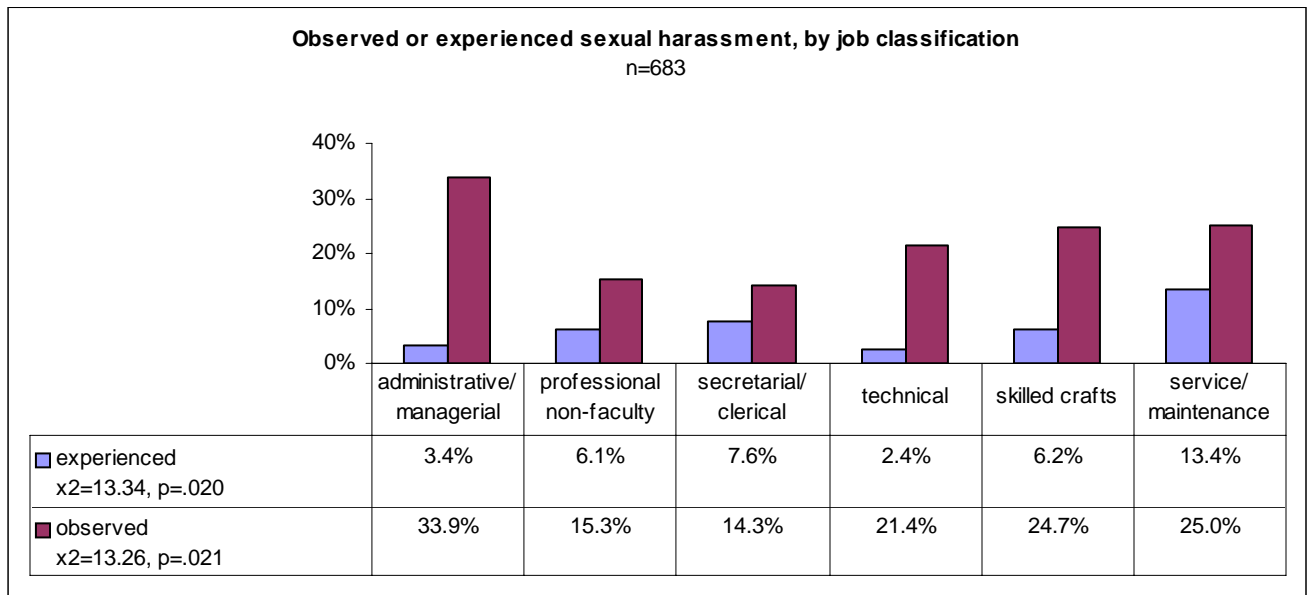
*“...the women are grouped in the administrative side. There are few women in the [named profession] positions and there are no women in the [named profession] ...side of the group... Women are falling further and further away from the visible positions and lower and lower in terms of rank...”*

*“But the fact remains that the people in positions who make the decisions tend to be for the most part White males.”*

When A&F employees were asked whether they had either observed or experienced sexual harassment, almost one-quarter of respondents (22.2%, n=174) reported that they had observed it and 9.0% (n=71) said they had experienced it. Women were more than twice as likely as men to report that they had experienced sexual harassment (13.7%, n=42 v. 6.0%, n=27) ( $\chi=13.07$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

Reports of observing or experiencing sexual harassment varied significantly by job classification, with administrative/ managerial workers most likely to observe (33.9%, n=20) and service maintenance workers most likely to experience (13.4%, n=38) harassment. (See Figure 2.37)

Figure 2.37



A male staff member spoke about the behavior of another man on staff and the way he treated women:

*“Some of the mature women were rebuffing a little bit. Not too seriously because then you create a tension in the workplace which is just another problem...After a while he noticed he could pick on the students and maybe the younger employees, but the older women who know how to handle themselves, he just*

*calls them names such as bitches and such....But I have seen some students, female students, who feel very uncomfortable...they did not know where to go.”*

## Sexual orientation

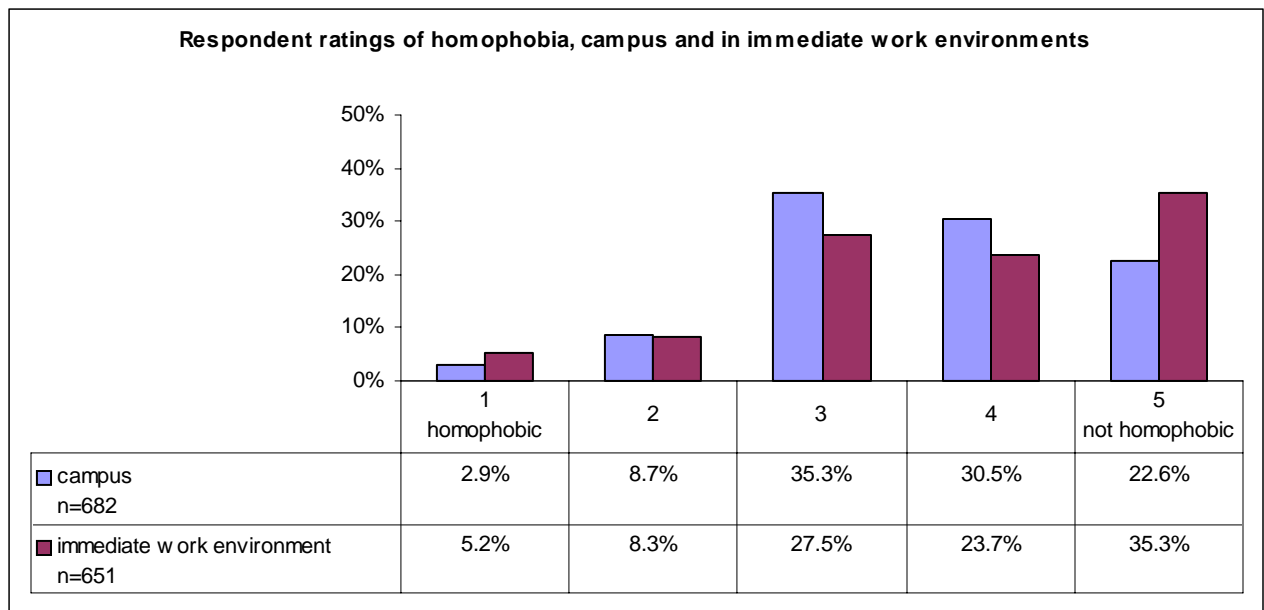
*“I often feel like I need to hide the fact that I’m a Lesbian from my clients until they get to know me. Generally then it is not an issue.”*

*Focus group member*

Twenty individuals, 2.9% of the respondents, identified themselves on the survey as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Given that there is a social stigma attached to being lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and that sexual orientation (unlike race, sex, and some disabilities) is “invisible”, it is difficult to know what proportion of A&F employees are actually not heterosexual. However, the small size of the GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered) survey population means that differences between people of different sexual orientations generally could not be statistically validated using the chi square test.

A&F employees were asked to rate the campus and their immediate workplaces on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “homophobic” and 5 is “not homophobic”. About one-half of respondents (53.1%, n=362) gave the campus a positive rating of 4 or 5, and 59.0% (n=384) gave a positive rating to their immediate work environment. See Figure 2.38.

Figure 2.38



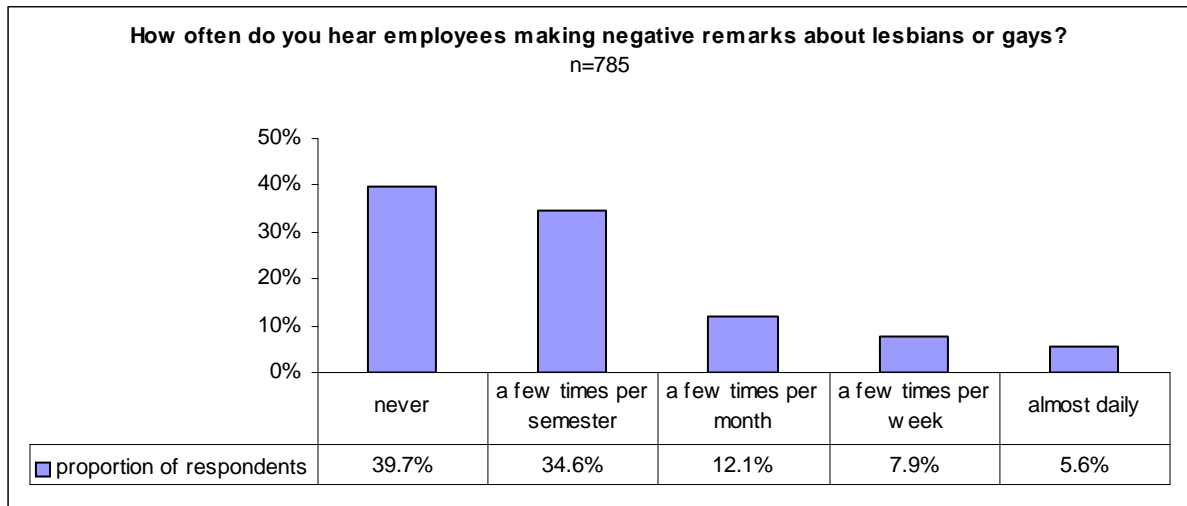
Of people who identified themselves as GLBT, about one-third gave both the campus (31.6%, n=6) and their immediate work environments (31.7%, n=6) a rating of 1 or 2, where 1 is “homophobic” and 5 is “not homophobic”.

People’s perceptions of the level of homophobia in their immediate work environment varied significantly depending upon whether the respondents were classified or professional staff. Classified employees were twice as likely as professional employees

(16.0%, n=74 v. 7.4%, n=13) to give the campus a rating of 1 or 2, where 1 is “homophobic” and 5 is “not homophobic”.

Survey respondents were asked to report how often they heard UMass employees making negative remarks about gays and lesbians. The responses are illustrated in Figure 2.39.

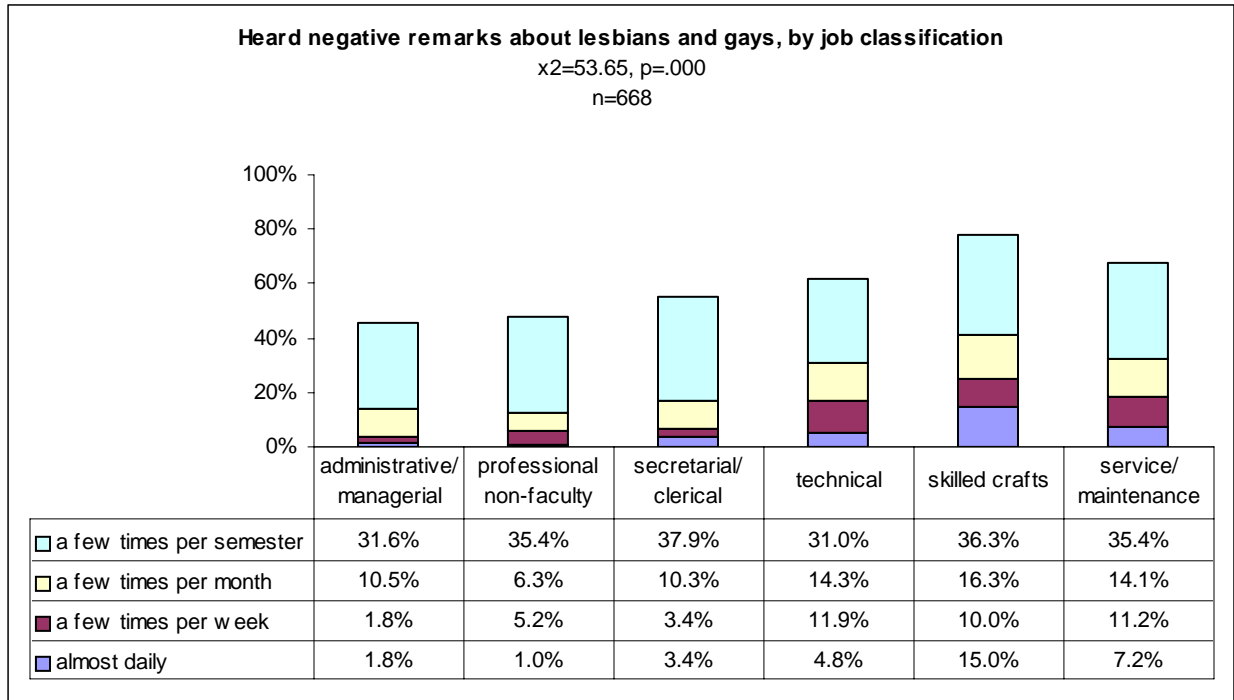
Figure 2.39



Professional staff were significantly more likely than classified staff (50.3%, n= 96 v. 35.5%, n=195) to report that they “never” heard negative remarks about gays or lesbians ( $\chi^2=22.21$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

When responses to the question on negative remarks was analyzed by job classification, there were also significant differences, with over three-quarters of skilled crafts workers reporting that they hear such remarks fairly regularly. (See Figure 2.40)

Figure 2.40



A&F employees were asked if they had observed or experienced “unfair treatment because of one’s sexual orientation”. 8.5% (n=67) said that they had observed, and 4.2% said they had experienced unfair treatment. Of the 20 individuals who identified themselves on the survey as GLBT, 20% (n=4) said that they had observed and 10% (n=2) said that they had experienced unfair treatment because of sexual orientation.

The phrase “unfair treatment” can cover a wide range of experiences, from annoying to deeply troubling. One focus group participant talked about having what should have been a routine interaction with a UMass employee.

*“...when I called to register for Winterfest I told the person that I was bringing my partner. She said ‘you’re not allowed to bring friends, only family.’ I told her that she was my family, that she is my partner. Then she insisted I give her the name. Since my partner is not out I didn’t feel comfortable doing that and told the woman this. She said ‘well, I’ll put you down for one friend’.”*

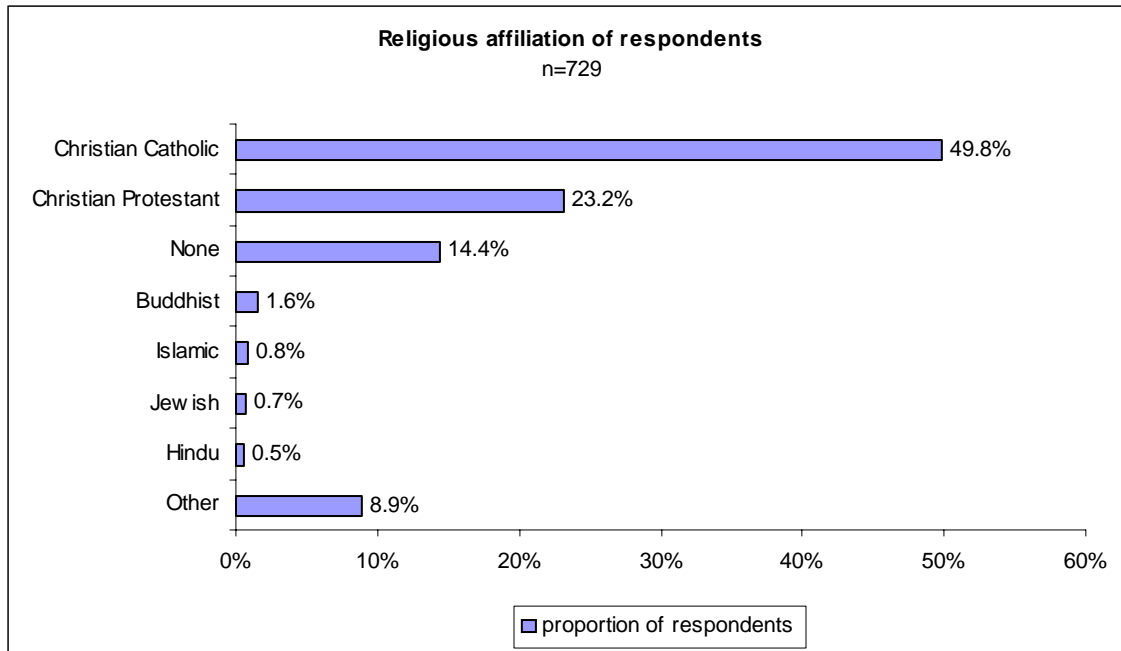
Another informant talked about some of the practical problems and disadvantages faced by GLBT workers at UMass.

*“...there are no domestic partner benefits here...affects health care, retirement benefits for same sex couples”*

## Religion

The survey asked A&F employees to indicate their religious affiliation. Almost three-quarters identified themselves as either Catholic or Protestant Christians (73.0%, n=523), another 14.4% (n=105) said they were not affiliated with a religion, and other groups were represented by very small proportions of the survey population. (See Figure 2.41.) A total of only 27 individuals (3.6% of the survey sample) identified themselves as Buddhist, Islamic, Jewish or Hindu, and another 65 responded with “other”.

Figure 2.41

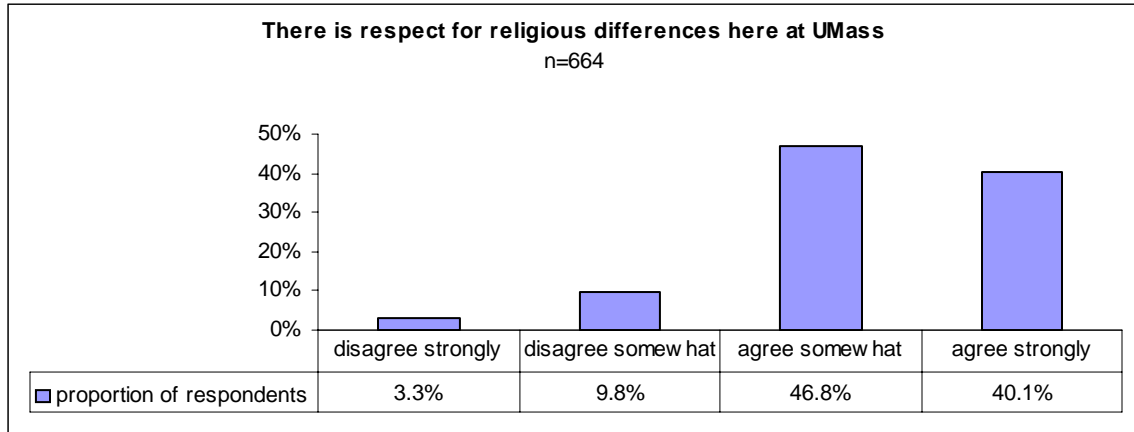


Given the small proportion of non-Christians in the sample, it was not possible to productively compare the responses to the different religious groups using the chi square test. It is worth keeping in mind the preponderance of mainstream Christians in the surveyed population when examining the results of other questions dealing with experiences based on religion.

A&F employees were asked whether they had observed or experienced “unfair treatment because of one’s religion”. 5.1% of respondents (n=40) said that they had observed, and 3.3% (n=26) said that they had experienced, this kind of unfairness.

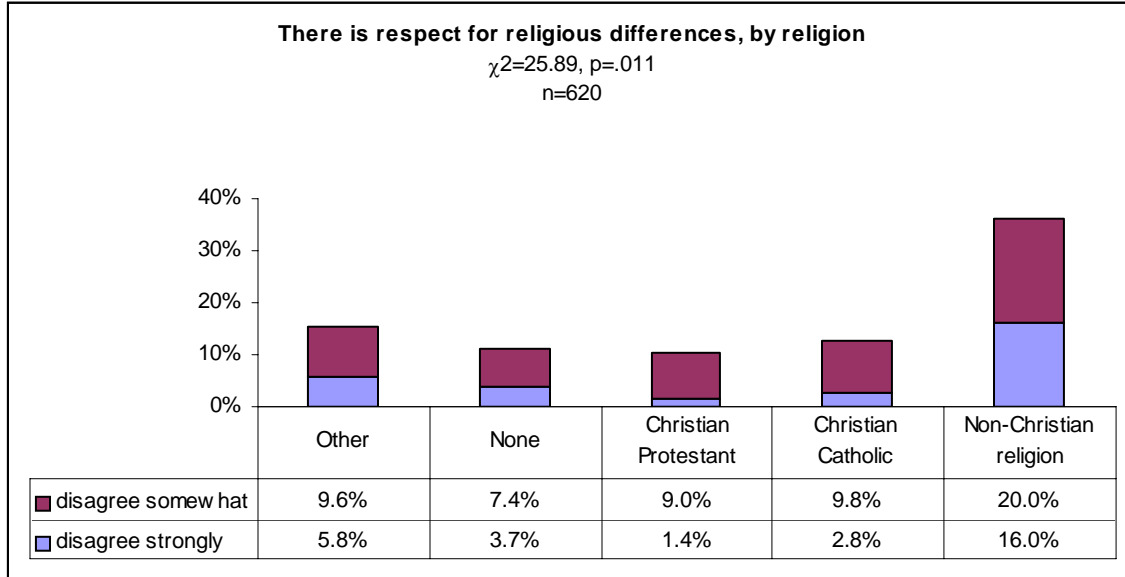
Most respondents (86.9%, n=577) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” with the statement “There is respect for religious differences here at UMass. (See Figure 2.42.)

Figure 2.42



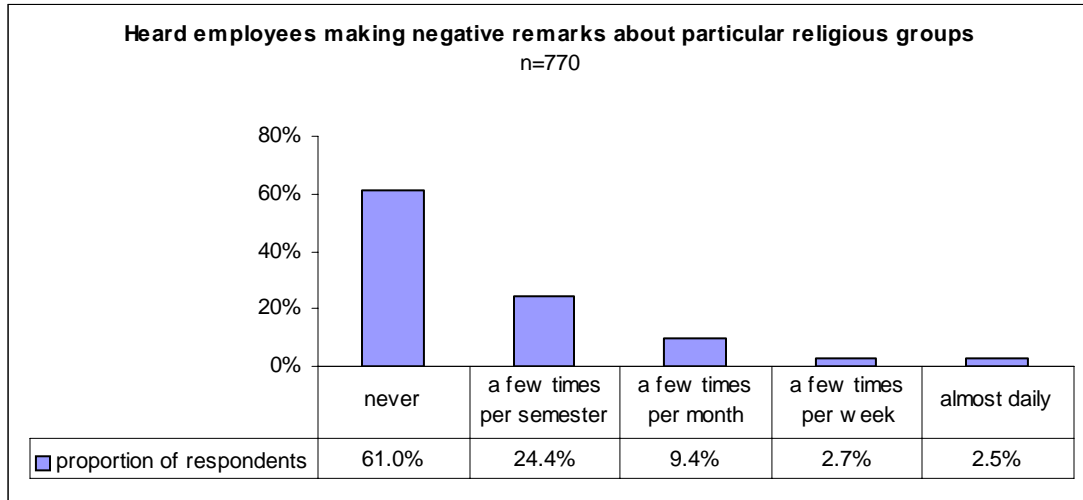
When the religious affiliations of A&F employees were recoded to group all non-Christians who claimed a religious affiliation, the responses to this question did vary significantly. Religious non-Christians were two to three times more likely than those in other groups to disagree with the statement that there is respect for religious differences at UMass. See Figure 2.43.

Figure 2.43



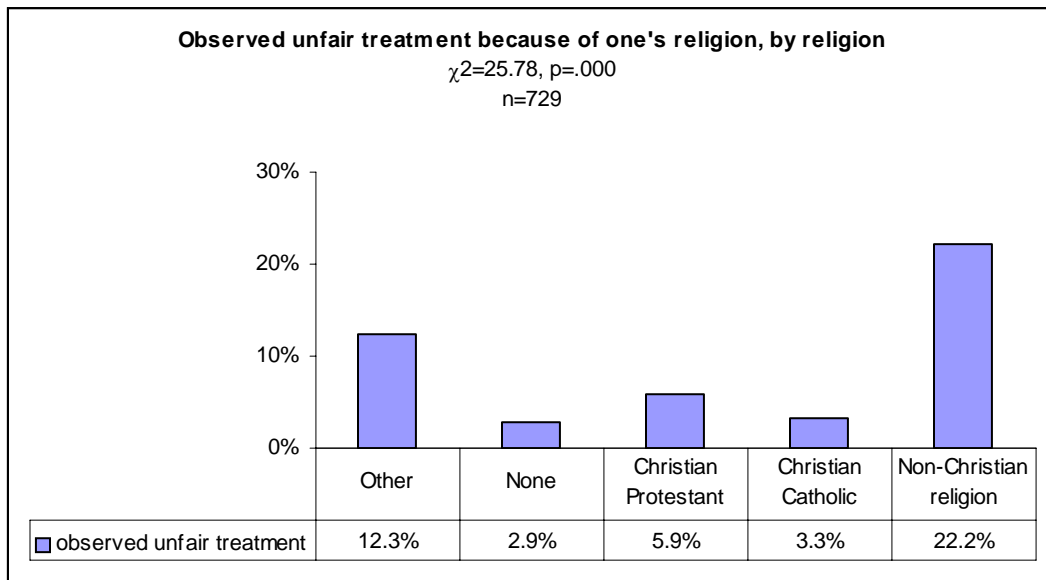
The survey asked respondents to estimate how often they heard “employees making negative remarks about particular religious groups”. Over one-third of those responding (39.0%, n=300) reported that they heard negative remarks about religious groups at least a few times per semester. See Figure 2.44.

Figure 2.44



The survey asked respondents if they had observed unfair treatment because of one's religion. Most respondents (94.9%, n=745) reported that they had not observed this kind of unfairness. However, when the religious affiliations were recoded to group all non-Christian religions together, there was a significant difference groups. Individuals identifying themselves with a non-Christian religion were at least twice as likely as those in other groups to say that they had observed unfairness because of religion. See Figure 2.45.

Figure 2.45



## Recommendations

### Overall Recommendations

All of the issues identified in Section 2 have one thing in common; they are about the climate of respect that exists in the work environment and how we treat people who are different from ourselves. While some areas of our division have more success than others in treating people equitably, it is clear across the board that there is great room for improvement. Improvements that might benefit A&F overall include:

- Hold people accountable, including managers and supervisors as well as other employee groups, for creating and maintaining a respectful workplace by utilizing feedback (both ongoing and through the PMP (APR) process) to more clearly set the expectation for respect in the workplace and to address issues of disrespectful behavior.
- Utilize a visual media campaign (posters, mouse pads, etc.) to convey the message about respect in general and respect for differences in particular in the workplace. Conduct a contest (with prizes) to solicit ideas from the employees about positive messages that could be used on the posters. Another approach would be to use some of the direct quotations from the focus groups to illustrate the climate that currently exists. We would benefit from more visual, consistent, and non-threatening reminders of the behaviors we expect in the workplace.
- Create a brochure (web site, poster, etc.) for the “defunct” Workplace Concerns Group listing resources which are available to help employees address the issues that are reflected in the report, emphasizing that informal support is available as well as the opportunity to register their concerns formally.
- Encourage staff, managers, etc. to attend the Multicultural Competence in the Workplace Certificate Series (also customized and offered on site to departments) to learn better how to work productively and respectfully with diversity in the workplace and provide training/coaching for staff on how to deal with and interrupt discriminatory behavior. While most staff members are able to identify such behavior, they seem reluctant and/or don’t have the skills to deal with it. A&F needs to foster a climate in which differences are accepted and valued.

### Job Classification

Developing an internal culture that values all employees regardless of job classification, and finding concrete ways to validate the contributions of all employee groups, would enhance A&F’s credibility regarding our expressed commitment to CDSJ issues. Suggestions for improvement include:

- Change the terminology used to describe different employee groups. The language currently in use reinforces for many a class system that values the work of some (“professionals”) over the work of others (“classified”).

- Encourage staff to learn the names of the people they interact with daily and to extend the same courtesy and recognition to everyone regardless of job classification.
- Encourage awareness about the perceptions and experiences of classified staff among the administrative/managerial and professional employees, and address issues of differential treatment especially as it relates to issues of accountability, professional development opportunities, flexible use of time, and rewards and recognition. (These issues will be addressed further in Section 3)

### Ability and Disability

In general, there are few opportunities for staff in A&F, particularly supervisors, to learn about providing appropriate accommodations for staff with disabilities and to learn how to interact respectfully with people with different types of disabilities. Actions which may improve this situation include:

- Create visual material about how to interact respectfully with people with different types of disabilities (i.e. people who are deaf or have hearing loss) and post in the workplace as a reminder for co-workers.
- Include training about disabilities and reasonable accommodations in the affirmative action training for any new hire. Currently there is only a focus on gender and race.
- Make more information available about issues of mental illness for supervisors and co-workers.
- Provide supervisors with information on working effectively with adults with learning disabilities. It is likely that some of our older employees might have undiagnosed learning disabilities.
- Make information about the accessibility of the campus available, especially to supervisors of employees with disabilities. If the campus does not currently have one, create an updated plan for future accessibility of the campus.
- Until all areas of the campus are accessible, make every effort to maximize the utilization of current resources. For example, provide an elevator key for the student union building to a staff member using a wheel chair in order to facilitate entry to the campus center.

### Language Differences

- Train managers and front line supervisors on the most effective ways to communicate with speakers of other languages.
- Make important employee information (memoranda, policy changes, important dates for upcoming events), new employee information and other employee resources available in a variety of languages. Identify individuals who can

translate (in writing as well as orally) and compensate them accordingly, or offer internship credit to students who could provide this service.

- Post important information in a variety of languages in visible areas, thereby recognizing and legitimating languages other than English.
- Provide release time (or other creative solutions) for employees to participate in ESOL classes offered through Labor Management Workplace Education.

#### Gender Differences

- There continues to be a need to recruit women into non-traditional fields and into leadership positions within A&F.
- Some of the concerns of transgendered people about accessibility to bathrooms can be addressed in future design and building projects by creating single stall, unisex, accessible bathrooms which can accommodate both trans people and people with disabilities.

#### Sexual Orientation

- Provide domestic partner benefits equally to heterosexual and GLBT couples. This would include health insurance, tuition for children of the non-employed partner, and full access to the retirement options.
- Given the small number of respondents who identified as GLBT and the fact that no one volunteered to be a part of a GLBT focus group, it would be beneficial for further research to be done before making further recommendations.

#### Religious Differences

Given the significant numbers of Christians in A&F, we would benefit from making efforts to acknowledge other religions and to create an environment where other religions are accepted and valued. For example:

- Provide maximum flexibility in allowing members of all religious faiths to take time off for holidays and religious celebrations.
- Create celebrations in the workplace that are inclusive and not specifically geared to one particular faith tradition, such as the celebration of Winterfest.
- Educate employees on the negative impact of treating everyone as if they all celebrate the same holidays, especially Christmas and Easter.

#### Race

It is difficult to make recommendations about racial issues without first acknowledging the primary issue, which is that the number of people of color in our division is very small. People of color are mostly segregated into certain departments, and are a very small number of respondents in the survey. This is not to say that we should not take

what these few people say seriously. Their opinions should be weighed and valued to enhance our understanding of the work environment for people of color in A&F. We must use caution, however, to keep from generalizing to an entire population based on a small number of respondents.

- Improve our recruitment of people of color using the following strategies:
  - develop outreach efforts and a mentoring program focused on students of color that would enhance their likelihood of seeing the university as a good place to work
  - increase our potential pool of applicants of color by doing better outreach to communities where larger numbers of people of color live
  - advertise with organizations that are focused on people of color communities and issues.
- Improve our retention of people of color.
  - provide mechanisms by which people of color who are new to the Amherst area are made aware of resources and services in the area
  - provide active mentoring for new staff of color