

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Campus Climate Survey

Undergraduate Report

April 2018



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Acknowledgments

Part One of this report, which focuses on quantitative analysis of responses to closed-ended questions, was prepared by the university’s Office of Academic Planning & Assessment (OAPA). Questions about these findings may be directed to Liz Williams, Director of Survey and Evaluation Research (williams@acad.umass.edu) or Alicia Remaly, Associate Director of Assessment (mremaly@umass.edu).

Part Two of this report, which focuses on a qualitative analysis of responses to open-ended questions, was prepared by the university’s Office of Equity and Inclusion. Professor Joya Misra (Sociology and Public Policy) led the research team staffed by graduate research associates Kelly N. Giles (Sociology) and Mary Scherer (Sociology) that conducted the analysis. Becky Packard and Lajeunesse Harris (Office of Equity and Inclusion) contributed to the final report. Questions about these findings may be directed to Enobong Hannah Branch, Associate Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion (diversity@umass.edu).

Introduction

In fall 2016, UMass Amherst conducted an extensive Campus Climate Survey to help the university better understand the challenges of creating a respectful and inclusive campus environment. The *Campus Climate Survey Abridged Report*, released in May 2017, describes the conceptual framework that guided development of the survey and communicates a portion of the results for the university's four main populations – undergraduates, graduate students, staff, and faculty. The *Abridged Report* focuses primarily on results related to compositional diversity and the psychological dimension of campus climate ([link to Abridged Report](#)).

Part One of this report focuses on survey results for undergraduate students that were not included in the *Abridged Report*, including results of questions specific to the undergraduate student version of the climate survey. Although most of Part One focuses on these undergraduate-specific questions, it also covers additional findings related to “common core” survey questions that were asked of all four campus populations. Part One communicates results related to compositional diversity, as well as the psychological and behavioral dimensions of campus climate.

Part Two of this report focuses on the results of a qualitative study of undergraduate students' responses to open-ended questions about their experiences with unfair treatment and specific suggestions for change.

The *Abridged Report* details survey methods, efforts undertaken to maximize the response rate, response rates achieved, and how closely survey participants match target populations on key demographics. Given this report's focus on undergraduate students, it is important here to review the response rate and the demographic representativeness of undergraduate student survey participants. Whereas the overall participation rate for the Campus Climate Survey was a robust 41 percent, the rate for undergraduate students was slightly lower 38 percent (n=8323). Undergraduate student survey participants closely match the overall undergraduate student population with regard to level/class year, college/school, race/ethnicity, international status, veteran status, Pell Grant recipient status, and first-generation status. However, women are overrepresented among participants (55 percent versus 48 percent).

Part One: Quantitative Analyses

Considering Context

Given this section's focus on survey questions specific to undergraduate students, it is important first to consider some distinctive aspects of this population. Undergraduate students comprise nearly two-thirds of the university's total population of students, staff, and faculty. This largest segment of the campus population (N=21,687) is also the most transitory given that the vast majority of undergraduates earn their bachelor's degree in 4 or 5 years.

Most undergraduates (77 percent) are residents of Massachusetts, and three-quarters are White. Asian students comprise 11 percent of the undergraduate student body, and underrepresented minorities – undergraduates who are Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino/a, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or Native American – comprise 13 percent. The predominately White composition of the undergraduate student population is a prominent aspect of the campus context for diversity and inclusion.

Although most undergraduates are part of the campus community for a relatively brief period of time relative to most staff and faculty members, the relationship they have with the campus environment is intense – particularly for those who live on campus. UMass Amherst has the third largest on-campus residential system in the nation, with approximately 60 percent of all undergraduates residing on campus and the vast majority spending at least their first year living in the residence halls.

Nearly four-fifths of all undergraduates have a campus meal plan – including many students who live off campus. Open from early morning until late evening, the four dining commons are primary campus locations where substantial numbers of students congregate routinely.

Undergraduates' day-to-day lives revolve around their academic course schedules, and students who work, are caregivers, are student-athletes, are student leaders, or have other extended responsibilities follow particularly tight schedules. Most undergraduates who do not live on campus reside in Amherst, and many use transit system buses for their short commute to and from the university. Physical movement from location to location is a prominent and highly visible feature of undergraduate student life, most commonly on foot, but also via cars and motorcycles, shuttle buses, bicycles, skateboards, and scooters.

Interpersonal communication via social media (e.g., Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram) and other online applications (e.g., video gaming) is a ubiquitous aspect of undergraduate student life. The online dimension of undergraduate interfacing with campus departments, services, groups, and individuals is likely to influence how they perceive and experience the campus climate.

Lastly, change is a prominent contextual aspect of undergraduates' university experiences, with classes, classmates, and course instructors varying from semester to semester and living arrangements for most changing from year to year. All of these changes, as well as potential shifts in academic majors, advisors, leadership roles, organizational memberships and activities, jobs, and friendship groups influence how undergraduates experience the campus environment.

Who We Are: Additional Aspects of Compositional Diversity

The *Campus Climate Survey Abridged Report* includes data pertaining to undergraduate survey participants' race/ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious identity, disability status, political view, and military status. This section presents additional data pertaining to undergraduate survey participants' social identity characteristics, including the college/school of their primary major, international status, transfer student status, and hours engaged in paid employment.

Figure 1 shows the college/school affiliations of undergraduates based on the location of their primary major. As illustrated, more than one-third of all undergraduate survey participants were in the College of Natural Sciences (CNS).

Figure 1: College/School affiliation

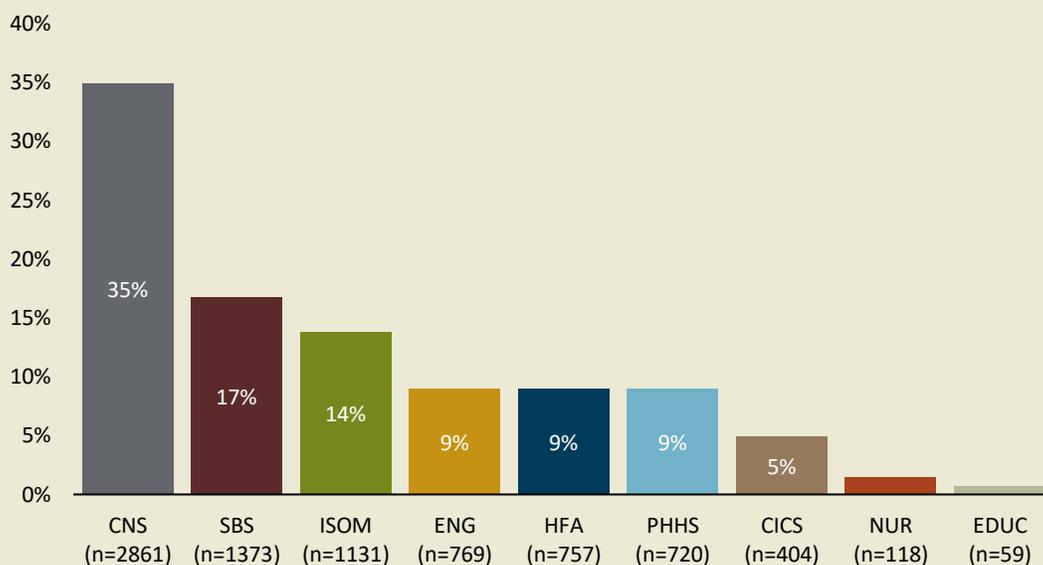
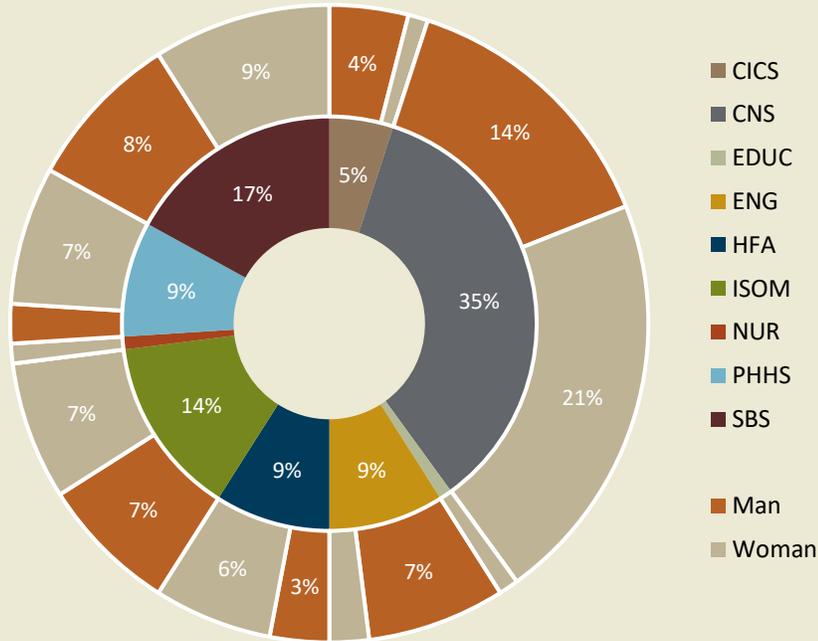


Figure 2 depicts the intersection of college/school and gender for women and men undergraduate survey participants. As illustrated, the distribution of men and women undergraduates across the nine colleges differed considerably. Proportions of women and men were most equivalent in the Isenberg School of Management (ISOM) and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS). (Note: the numbers of trans or genderqueer students, and students of another gender, are too small to include for intersections).

Figure 2: Intersection of college/school affiliation and gender



The vast majority of undergraduate survey participants were 18–21 years of age. One-quarter were first-generation college students, and 23 percent were affiliated with Commonwealth Honors College (CHC). Twenty percent were Pell Grant recipients, 15 percent were transfer students, and 4 percent were international students. One-quarter of undergraduate survey participants reported that they presently practice a religion or engage in religious activities.

Figure 3 shows that nearly one-third of survey participants had been enrolled at the university for only one or two semesters when they participated in the *Campus Climate Survey*.

Figure 3: Number of semesters enrolled at UMass Amherst

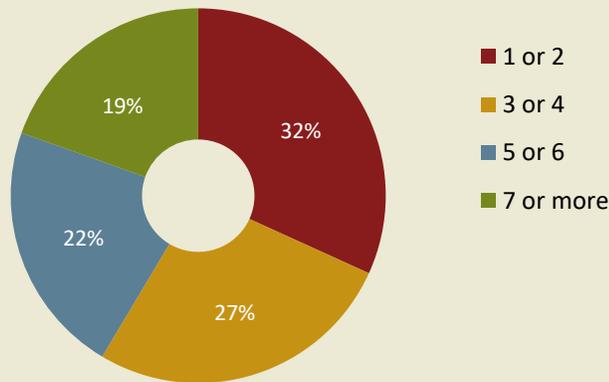


Figure 4 shows Disability Services registration status by disability type. As illustrated, students who indicated that they have a mental health disability or a sensory disability were much less likely to indicate that they are registered with Disability Services than were students who have a learning or mobility-related disability or multiple disabilities.

Figure 4: Disability Services registration status, by disability type

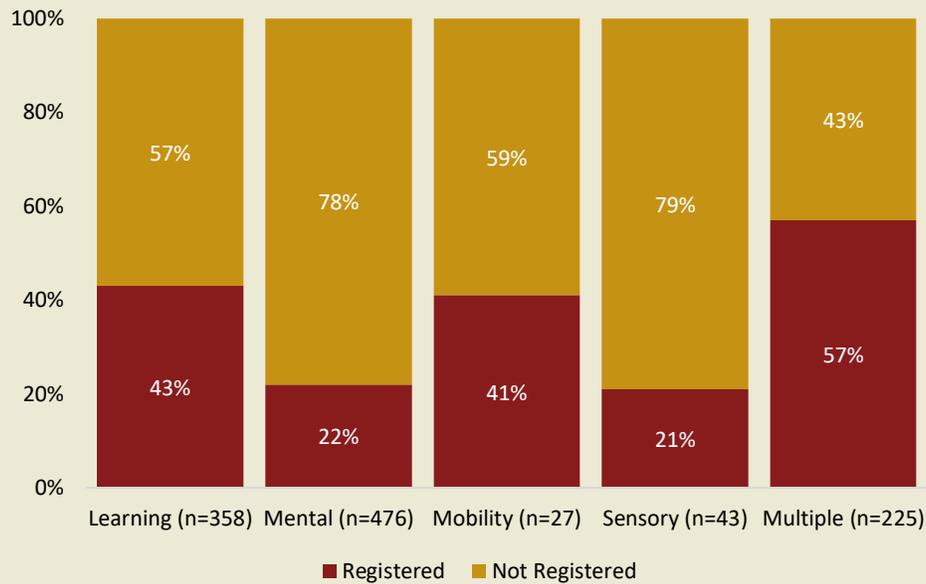
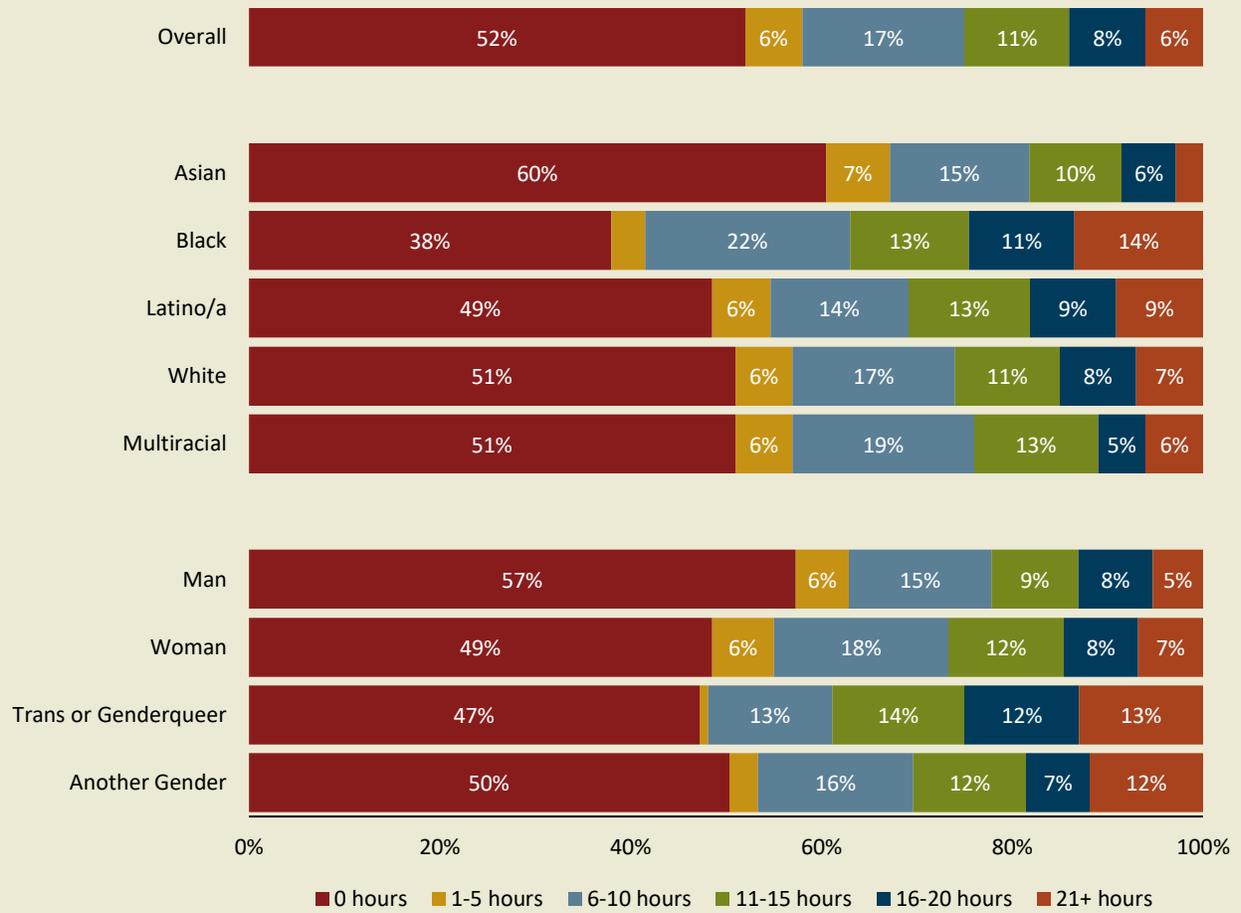


Figure 5 shows that nearly one-half (52 percent) of all undergraduates who participated in the climate survey worked for pay in a typical week, and that 25 percent of all undergraduates typically worked more than 10 hours per week. (Among workers only, 48 percent worked more than 10 hours in a typical week and 10 percent worked more than 20 hours.)

Figure 5 also shows that likelihood of working for pay varied somewhat by both race/ethnicity and gender identity. Asian students were least likely to indicate that they work, and Black students were most likely. Men students were less likely than students of other gender identities to indicate that they work for pay.

Overall, 61 percent of working students indicated that they were employed on campus only, whereas 31 percent were employed off campus only, and 9 percent had jobs both on and off campus.

Figure 5: Hours spent working for pay in a typical week, by race/ethnicity and gender identity

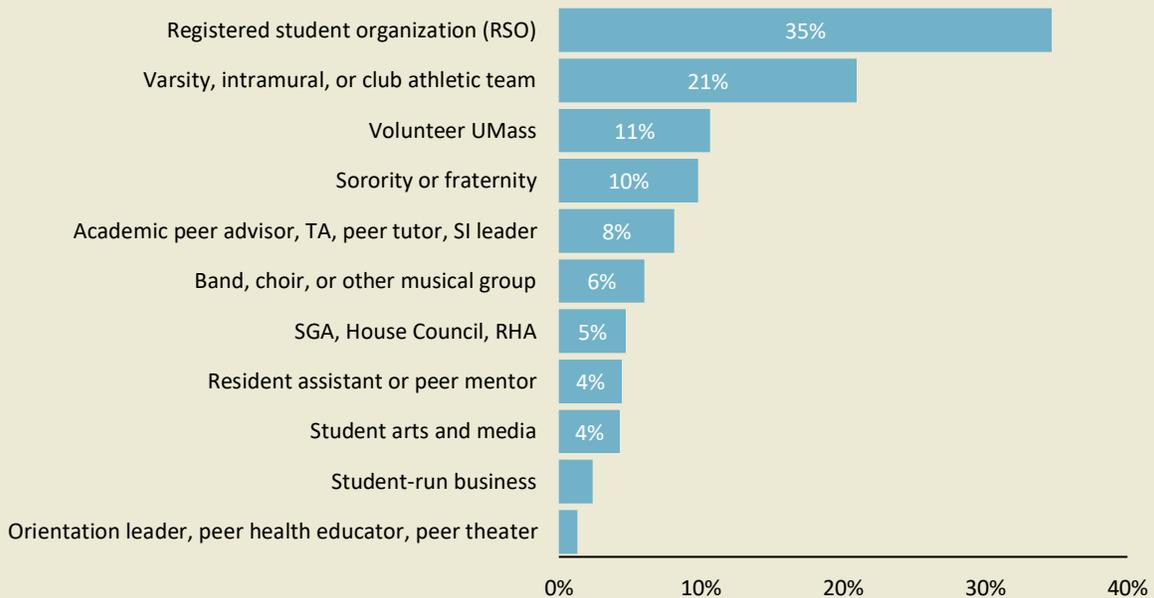


Affiliations and Activities

The undergraduate version of the Campus Climate Survey included a question that asked students to identify their current university roles and affiliations. Figure 6 shows the percentage of students who indicated an affiliation with each of 11 common types of organizations, activities, and/or roles. Slightly more than one-third of students indicated membership in a Registered Student Organization (RSO), and more than one-fifth reported participation in a varsity, intramural, or club athletic team.

Women undergraduates were more likely than men to report being affiliated with an RSO (39 percent versus 29 percent) and with Volunteer UMass (13 percent versus 8 percent), whereas men undergraduates were more likely than women to report belonging to an athletic team (26 percent versus 17 percent).

Figure 6: Campus affiliations and activities



Overall, 65 percent of undergraduates indicated at least one affiliation. Among these students, 56 percent had one affiliation, 29 percent had two affiliations, and 15 percent had three or more.

CNS undergraduates were less likely than were students in the other colleges/schools to have at least one affiliation (46 percent). International students were less likely than were domestic students to have at least one affiliation (53 percent versus 65 percent).

Rating of Overall UMass Amherst Experience

More than one-third of undergraduate survey participants rated their overall experience as “excellent” and nearly half rated it “good.” Undergraduates’ ratings were quite uniform across the nine colleges/schools.

Figure 7 shows students’ ratings broken down by race/ethnicity, gender identity, and political view. Students’ ratings varied somewhat by race/ethnicity, with White students the most likely to rate their experience as “excellent,” and Black students the most likely to rate their experience as “fair” or “poor.”

The ratings of women and men were very similar, as were the ratings of trans or genderqueer students and students who identified as another gender. Trans or genderqueer students, and students of another gender, were more likely than both women and men to rate their overall experience as “fair” or “poor.”

Politically conservative undergraduates were slightly more likely than moderates or liberals to rate their overall experience at the institution “fair” or “poor.”

Figure 7: How would you evaluate your overall experience at this institution?

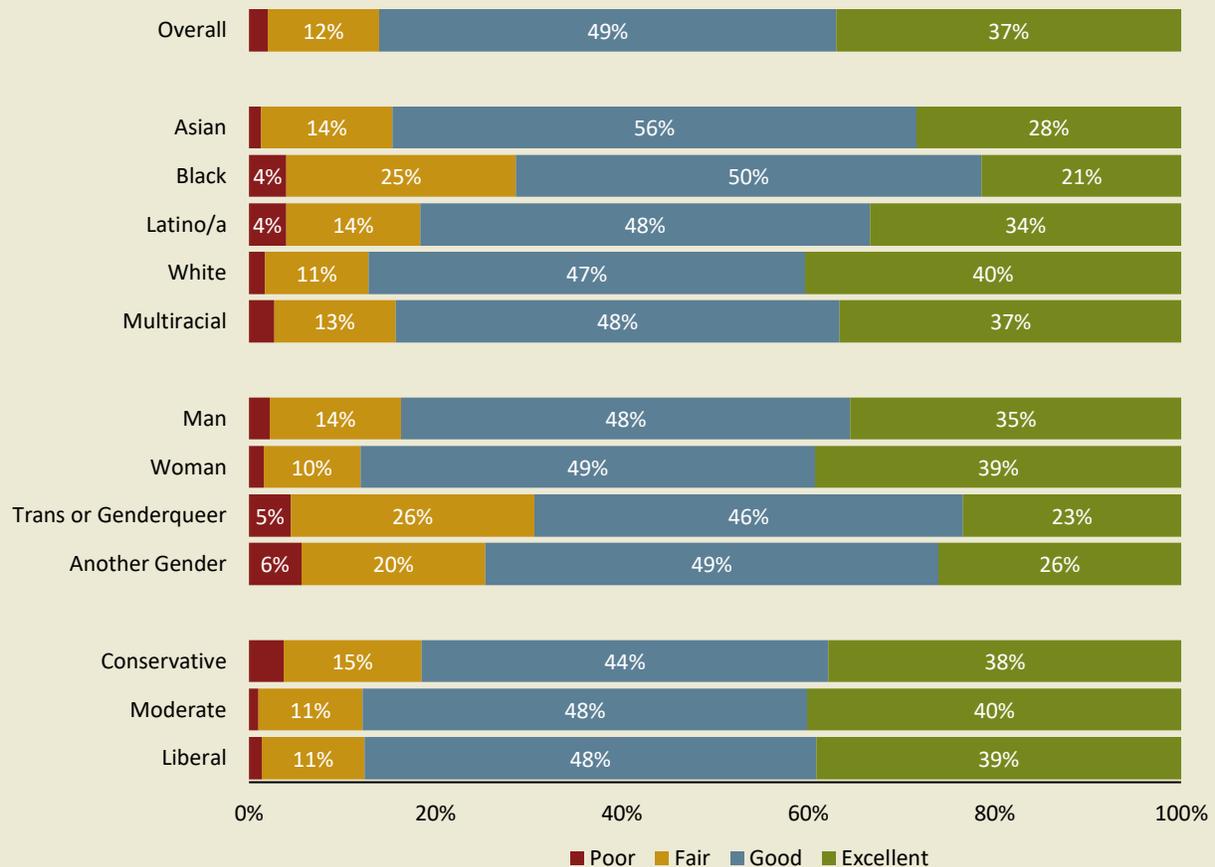
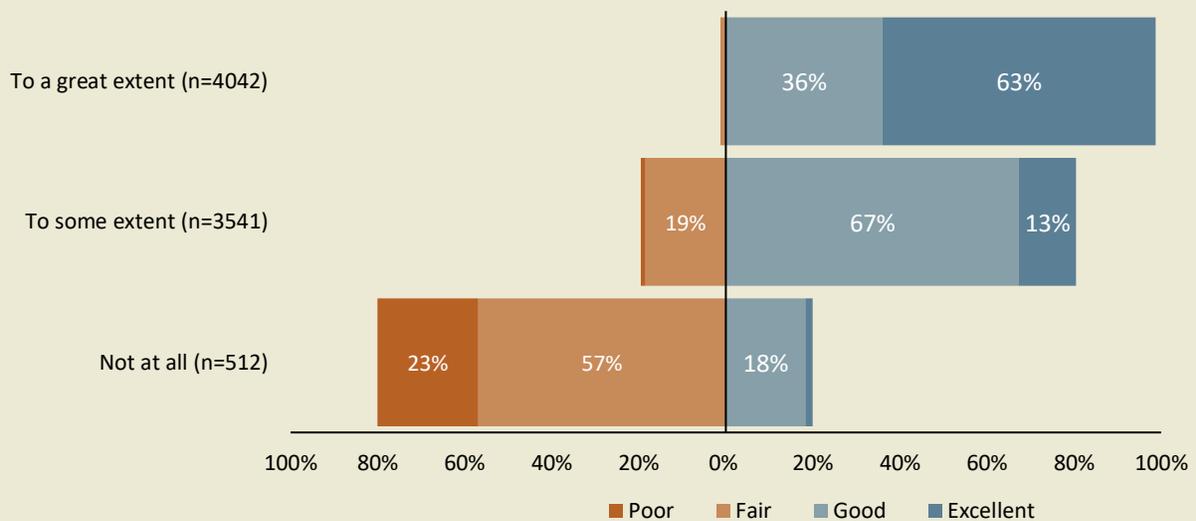


Figure 8 shows the stark relationship between undergraduates’ sense of belonging and their ratings of their overall UMass Amherst experience. More than three-fifths of students who felt like they belonged at UMass “to a great extent” rated their overall experience “excellent” – and hardly any rated their overall experience as “fair” or “poor.” In sharp contrast, the vast majority of those who felt like they did not belong rated their overall experience as “fair” or “poor.”

Figure 8. Rating of overall experience by sense of belonging



Likelihood of Recommending UMass Amherst to Others

Overall, two-thirds of undergraduates indicated that they would be “very likely” to recommend the university to others as a good place to go to school (see Figure 9). An additional 28 percent indicated that they would be “somewhat likely” to do so.

The percentage of students indicating that they would be “very likely” to recommend the university to others varied a bit by college/school. The percentage was lowest among CICS students (57 percent) and highest among NUR students (83 percent). Percentages saying they would be very or somewhat unlikely to recommend the university were negligible across all of the colleges/schools.

Figure 9 shows a breakdown of students’ responses by race/ethnicity, gender, and political view. Black students and Asian students were less likely than were students of other racial/ethnic identities to indicate that they would be “very likely” to recommend the university. Trans or genderqueer students and students of another gender were less likely than both women and men to indicate that they would be “very likely” to recommend the university.

Figure 9: How likely or unlikely are you to recommend UMass Amherst to others as a good place to go to school?

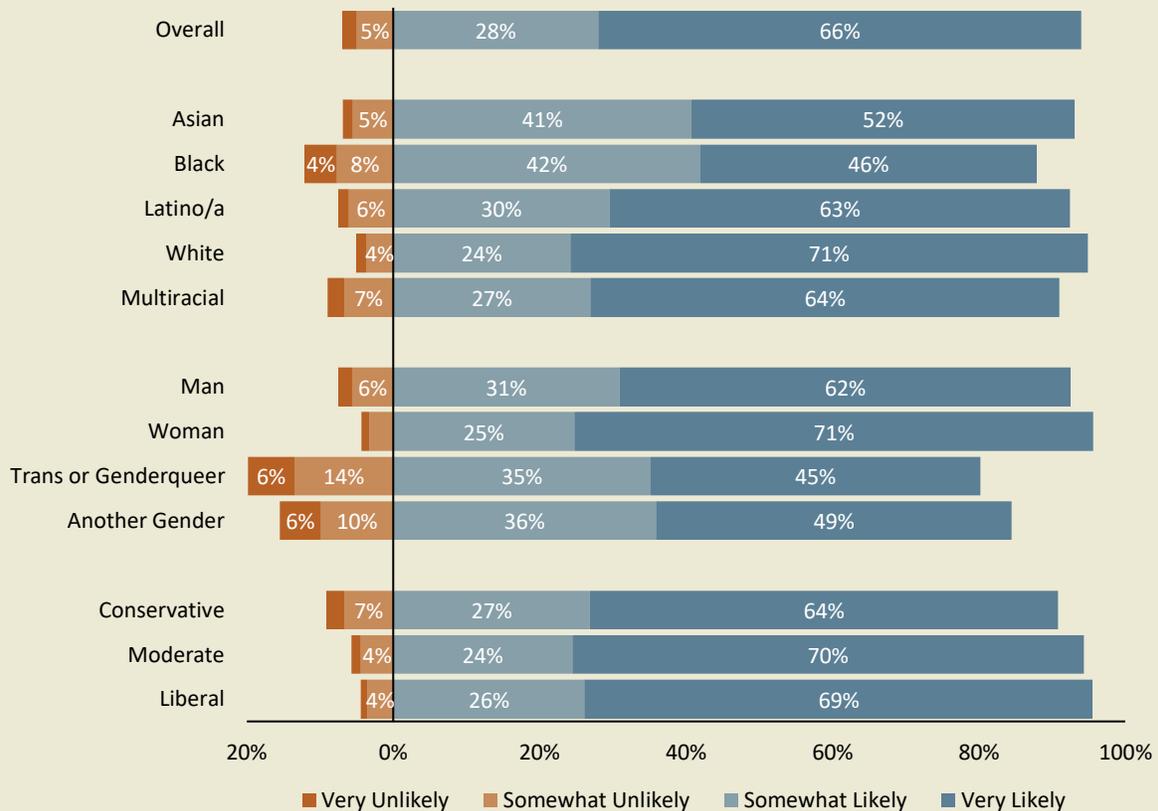
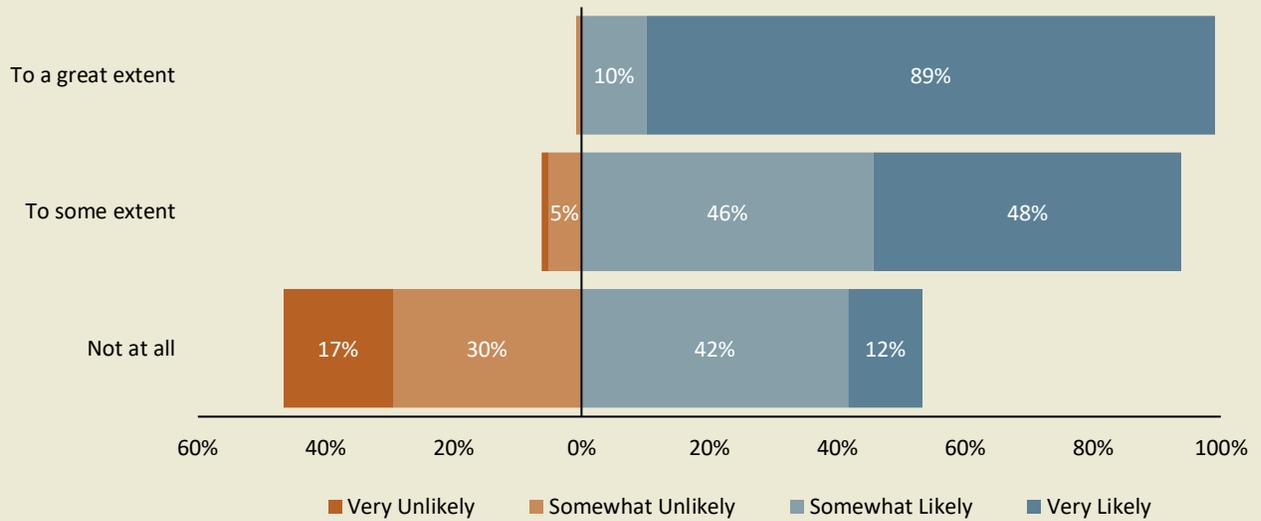


Figure 10 illustrates likelihood of recommending UMass Amherst by reported sense of belonging and shows that the vast majority of students who feel like they belong “to a great extent” are very likely to indicate that they will recommend UMass Amherst to others.

Figure 10. Likelihood of recommending UMass Amherst by sense of belonging



Classroom Climate: Additional Dimensions

The *Abridged Report* includes results of two of the four closed-response items pertaining to undergraduates' classroom experiences and interactions. Here, we report the results of the two items not previously covered – as well as the results of two accompanying questions about the social identity aspects that students perceived to be the basis of their negative experiences.

On the undergraduate version of the Campus Climate Survey, the item about feeling silenced in class was paired with a parallel item about feeling excluded in class. Similarly, the item about course instructors stereotyping or making negative remarks about an aspect of social identity was paired with a parallel item about being targeted unfairly or singled out unfairly by course instructors.

Figure 11 shows that, overall, more than one-quarter of survey participants reported feeling excluded in class on the basis of an aspect of their social identity either “sometimes” or “often.” Within some social identity categories, substantial percentages of undergraduates reported feeling excluded in class. As illustrated, White students were much less likely than students of other racial/ethnic identities to report feeling excluded. Cisgender undergraduates were less likely to report feeling excluded than were students who identified as trans or genderqueer or another gender. Conservative students were more likely to report feeling excluded than were students with moderate or liberal political views.

Figure 12 shows that being targeted or singled out on the basis of social identity by course instructors was far less common than was feeling excluded – both overall and within each social identity category. However, the pattern of differences among social identity groups was nearly identical for being targeted as it was for feeling excluded.

Students who reported these negative classroom experiences and interactions were asked to identify which social identity aspect(s) (e.g., disability, gender identity, race/ethnicity) were the basis of their feelings of exclusion and/or being silenced, and their being targeted or singled out. Figure 13 shows that more than one-third of students who reported feeling silenced or excluded indicated that the basis was race/ethnicity, gender, or political view. Figure 14 shows that more than one-third of students who reported being targeted or singled out by an instructor indicated that the basis was their political view. Slightly lower percentages of students perceived that the basis was their gender or race/ethnicity.

Reported Classroom Experiences and Interactions

Figure 11: How often students feel excluded in class on the basis of an aspect of their social identity

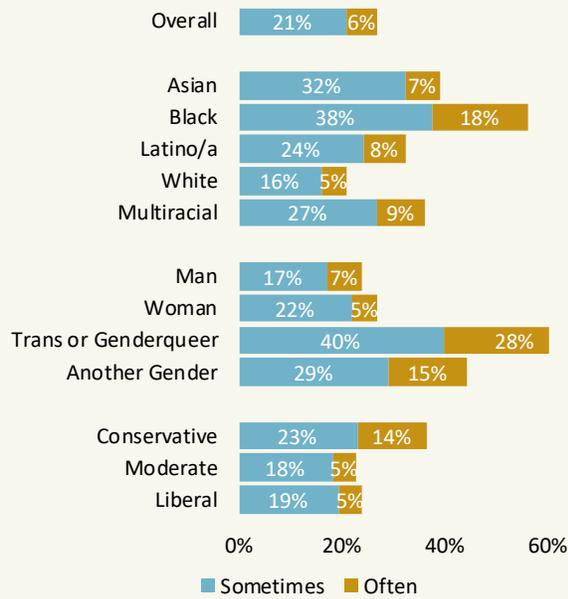
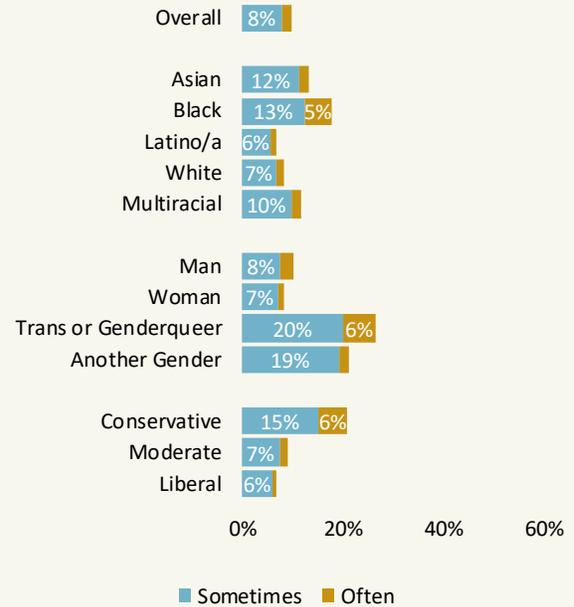


Figure 12: How often students are targeted or singled out unfairly by course instructors because of their social identity



Perceived basis of negative classroom experiences and interactions

Figure 13: Perceived basis of feeling silenced or excluded

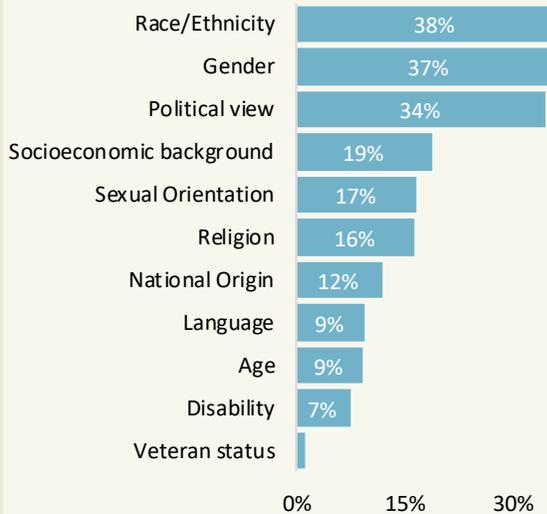
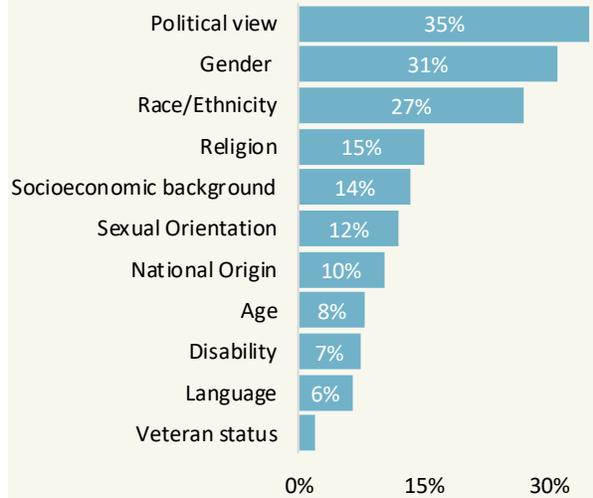


Figure 14: Perceived basis of being targeted or singled out unfairly by instructors



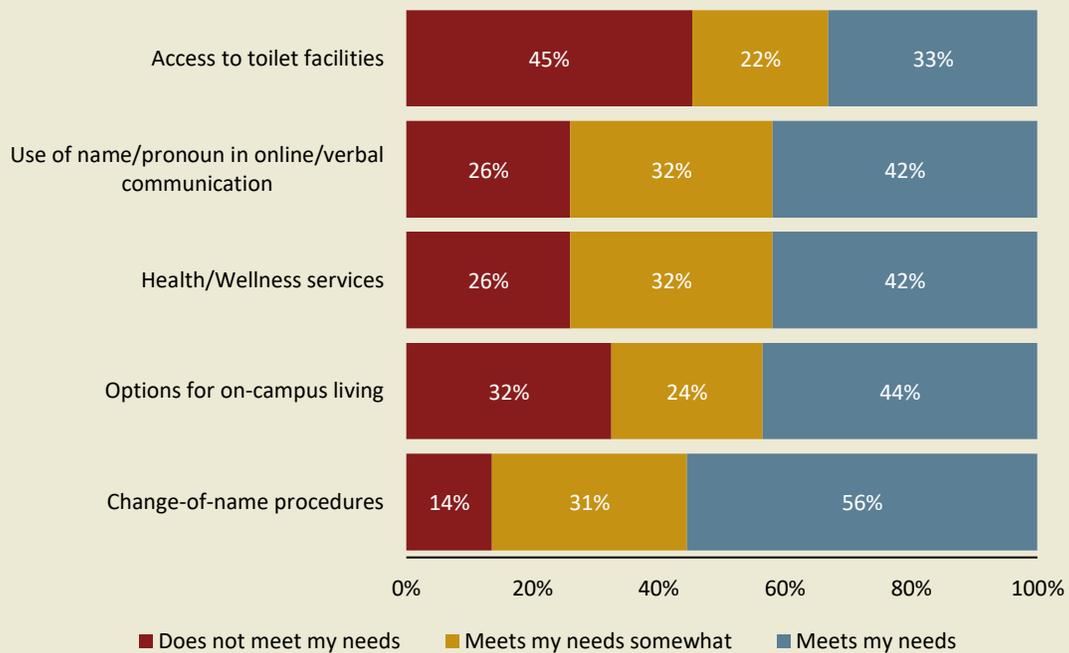
Assessing the Needs of Particular Social Identity Groups

The undergraduate version of the Campus Climate Survey included sets of items designed to assess the extent to which current university services, procedures, and facilities meet the particular needs of specific social identity groups. Needs assessment item sets were developed for each of the following: students who self-identified as transgender or gender-nonconforming, international students, students who worked for pay, students who identified as having a disability, students who indicated that they practice a religion, and students who lived off campus.

Transgender and gender-nonconforming students

Among undergraduate students, the social identity group with the highest levels of unmet need is transgender and gender-nonconforming students (n=253). Figure 15 shows that one-quarter or more of undergraduates who identified as transgender or gender-nonconforming indicated that four of the five University services/procedures did not meet their needs. Nearly one-half indicated that access to toilet facilities does not meet their needs, and nearly one-third indicated that options for on-campus living do not meet their needs.

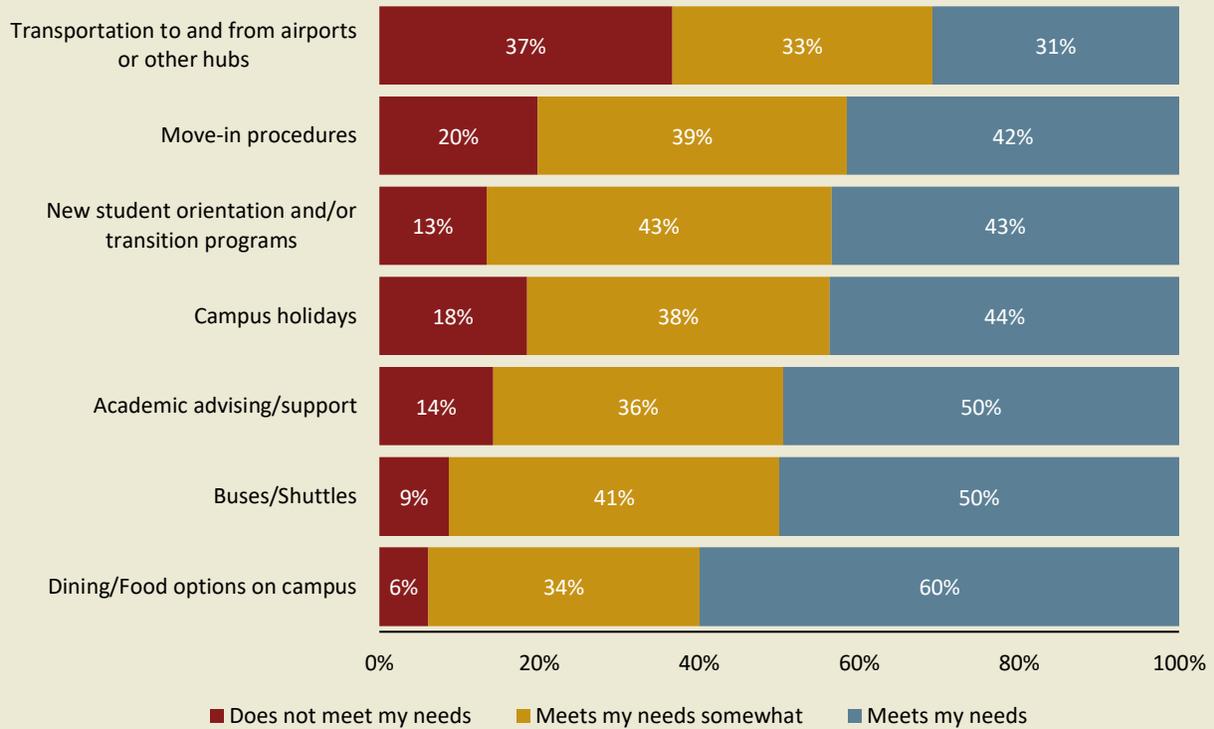
Figure 15: Needs assessment for transgender and gender-nonconforming students



International Students

Figure 16 shows that nearly two-fifths of international students indicated that transportation to and from airports and other travel hubs does not meet their needs. One-fifth indicated that move-in procedures do not meet their needs, and nearly one-fifth reported that campus holidays do not meet their needs.

Figure 16: Needs assessment for international students



Working Students

Figure 17 shows that more than one-half of students who worked for pay indicated that parking does not meet their needs. Slightly less than one-third indicated that connections between job and academic/career goals do not meet their needs, and one-fifth reported that opportunities for co-curricular involvement do not meet their needs.

Figure 17: Needs assessment for students who work for pay

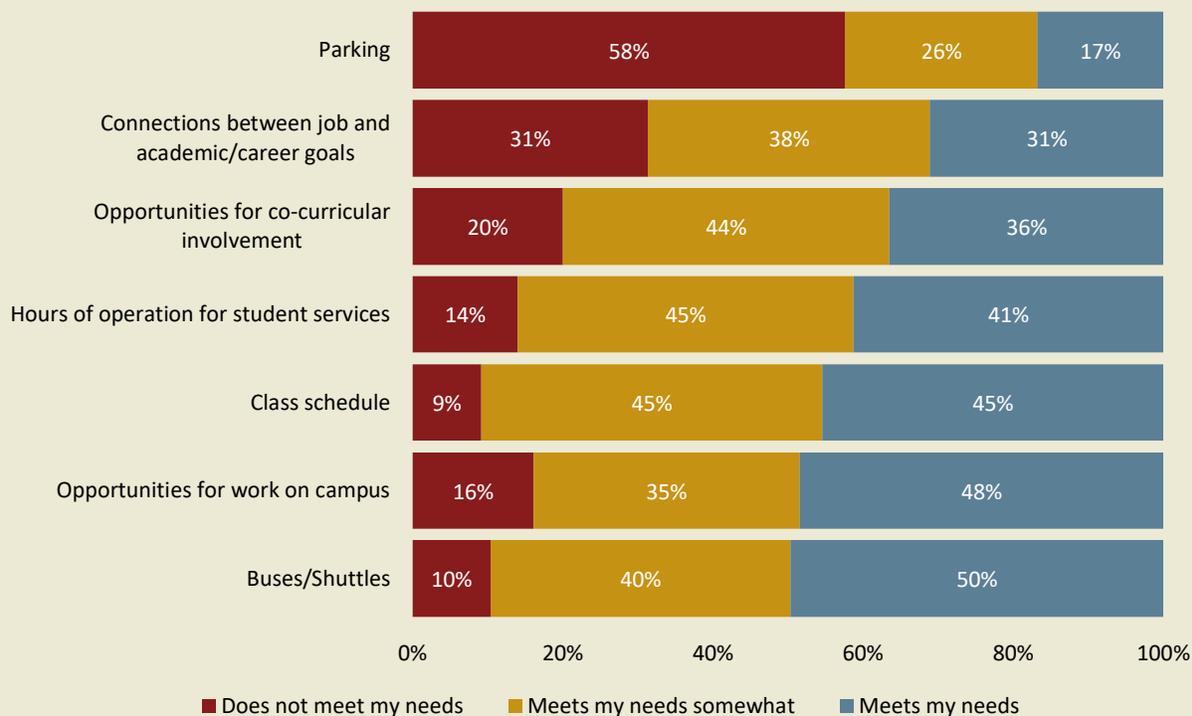


Figure 18 shows that substantial proportions of working students – across race/ethnicity and gender identity categories – find it “somewhat challenging” or “very challenging” to balance work and school. As illustrated in Figure 19, students who worked 21 or more hours per week were most likely to say that balancing is “very challenging,” whereas those who worked 1–5 hours per week were most likely to say that balancing is “not at all challenging.”

Figure 18: How challenging is it for you to effectively balance work and school?

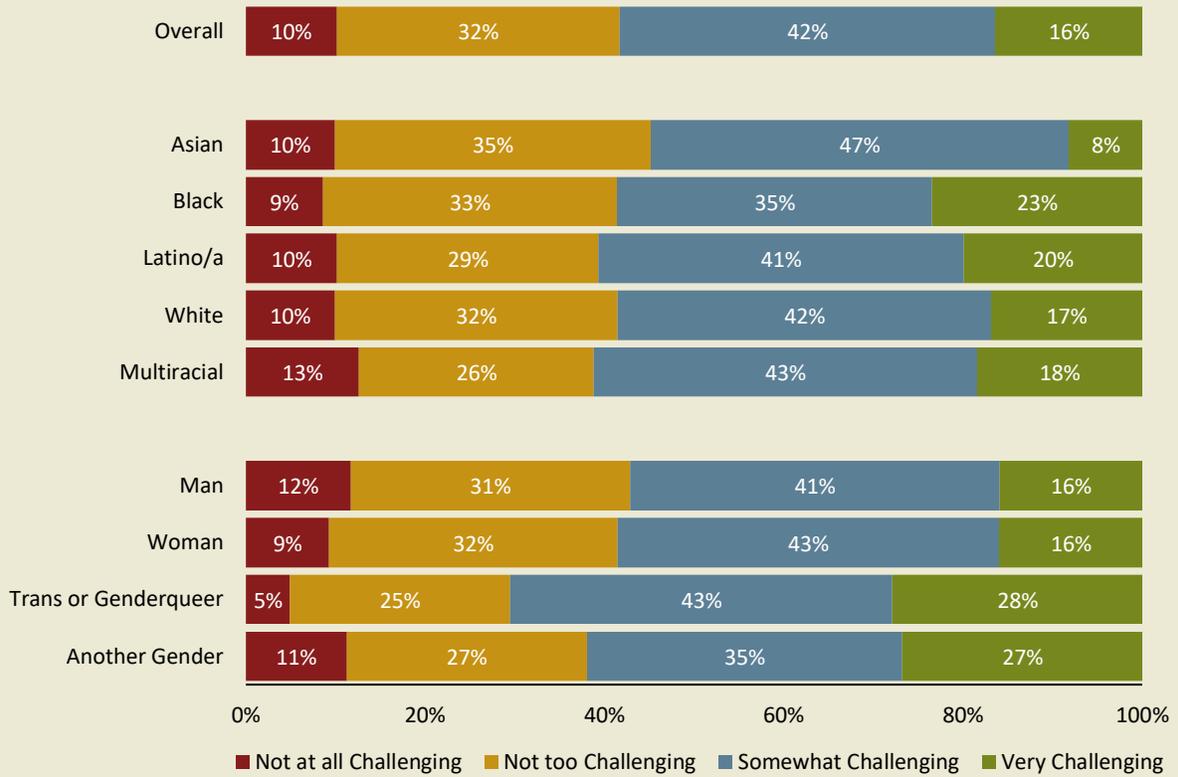
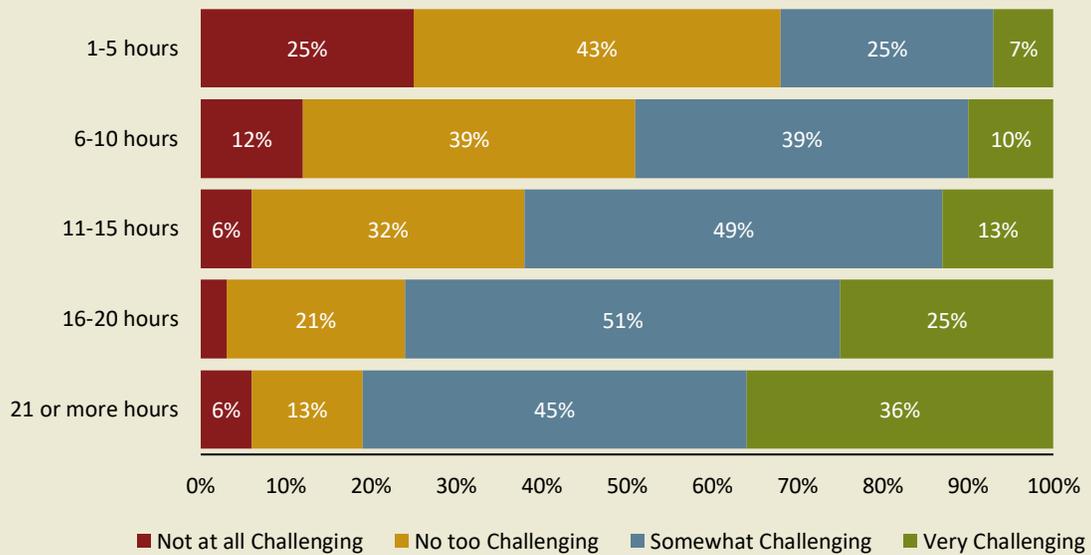


Figure 19: Challenge of balancing, by hours worked in a typical week



Students with Disabilities

Students who identified as a person with a disability were asked about the extent to which nine different campus aspects and services meet their needs. The dashboard of figures on page 21 illustrates students' assessments of six of these nine items. Vast majorities of students, across disability types, indicated that the university website, access to academic platforms, and access to library materials meet their needs.

Figure 20 shows that students' assessment of accessible parking varied only slightly by disability type. The percentage of students who indicated that accessible parking does not meet their needs ranged from 23 percent for students with a learning disability to 30 percent for students with more than one type of disability. Of the six campus aspects that students with disabilities were questioned about, the highest level of unmet needs across disability types related to accessible parking.

Students' assessment of course-related accommodations (see Figure 21) were quite similar for students with a learning, mental, sensory, or multiple disabilities. The percentage of students indicating that course-related accommodations do not meet their needs ranged from 13 percent for students with a learning disability to 19 percent for students with more than one disability.

Students' assessment of social life opportunities (see Figure 22) varied by disability type. Students with a mobility or sensory disability were most likely to indicate that social life opportunities meet their needs (83 percent and 77 percent, respectively). Conversely, students with a mental disability or more than one disability were most likely to indicate that social life opportunities do not meet their needs (17 percent for both groups).

Students' assessment of special transportation services (see Figure 23) varied somewhat by disability type. Students with a sensory disability were most likely to report that transportation services do not meet their needs (25 percent), followed by students with more than one disability (19 percent), and students with a mobility disability (17 percent).

Lastly, vast majorities of students with disabilities – across disability types – indicated that access to non-academic buildings, classrooms, and academic buildings meets their needs (see Figures 24 and 25). Students with a mobility disability were most likely to report that building access does not meet their needs (17 percent and 15 percent, respectively).

Needs Assessment: Students with disabilities by disability type

Figure 20: Accessible parking

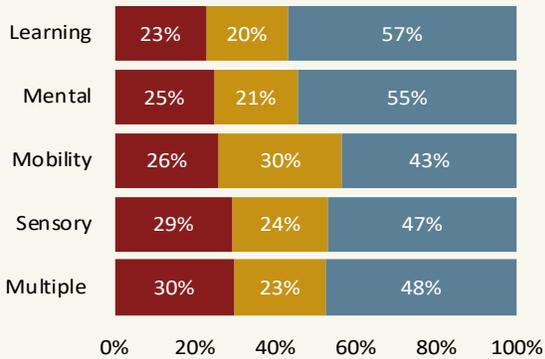


Figure 21: Course-related accommodations

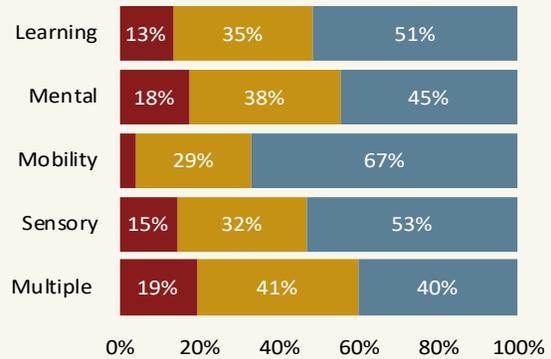


Figure 22: Social life opportunities on campus

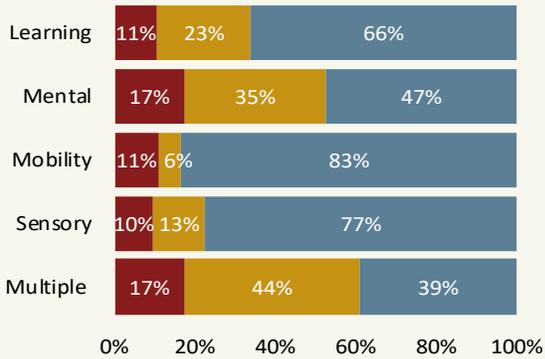


Figure 23: Special transportation services

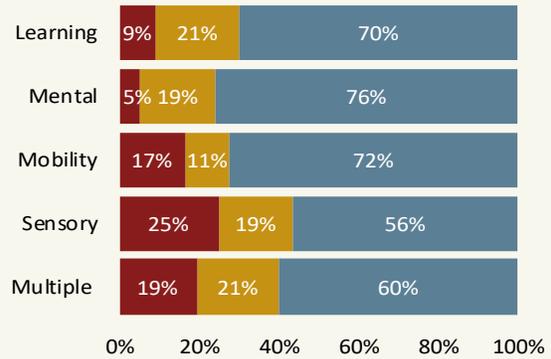


Figure 24: Access to non-academic buildings

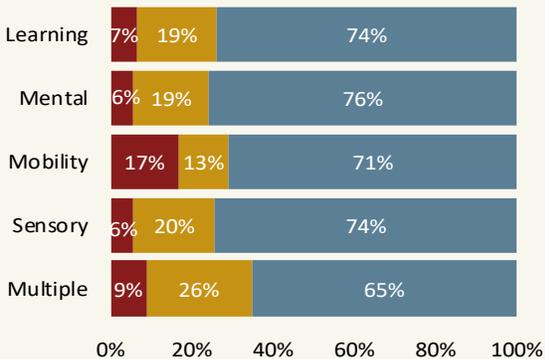
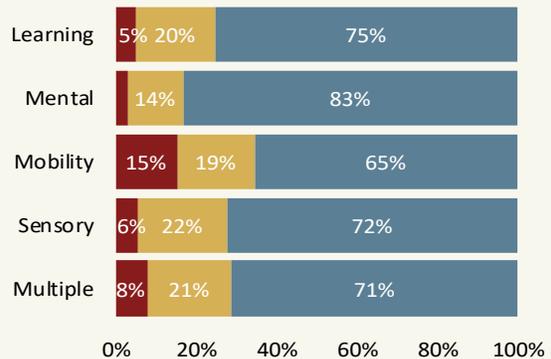


Figure 25: Access to classrooms and academic buildings



■ Does not meet my needs ■ Meets my needs somewhat ■ Meets my needs

Students Who Practice a Religion

Students who practice a religion were asked about the extent to which five campus aspects/services meet their needs. The dashboard of figures on page 23 illustrates students' assessments broken down by religion.

The set of figures show that unmet needs are greatest among students who practice Buddhism. Nearly two-fifths of Buddhist students reported that accommodations for religious observance do not meet their needs, nearly one-half indicated that physical spaces on campus for individual religious observance do not meet their needs, and two-fifths indicated that the availability of suitable spaces for organized religious activities do not meet their needs.

Levels of unmet needs were similar for Hindu and Muslim students with regard to accommodations, physical spaces on campus for individual observance, dining, and advising for religious organizations (see dashboard of figures). Approximately one-quarter of Hindu and Muslim students indicated that accommodations for religious observance do not meet their needs. One-fifth of Hindu and Muslim students indicated that physical spaces for individual religious observance do not meet their needs, and similar proportions reported that dining/food options do not meet their needs.

Levels of unmet needs are very low for Christian and Jewish students, with one exception being that nearly one-fifth of Jewish students indicated that accommodations for religious observance does not meet their needs.

Needs assessment: Students who practice a religion

Figure 26: Accommodations for religion observance

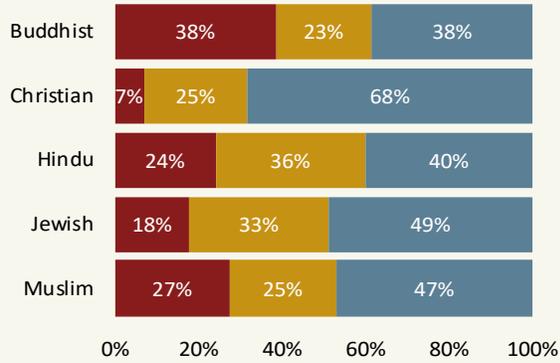


Figure 27: Advising for religious organizations

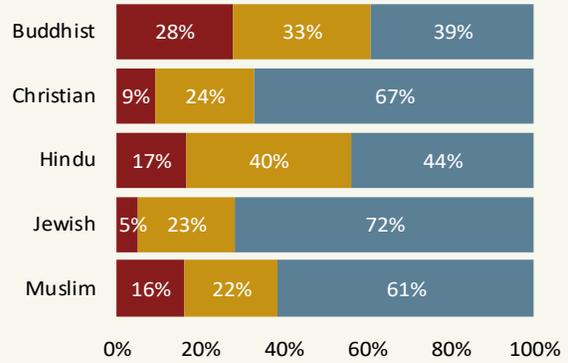


Figure 28: Physical spaces on campus for individual prayers, meditation, etc.

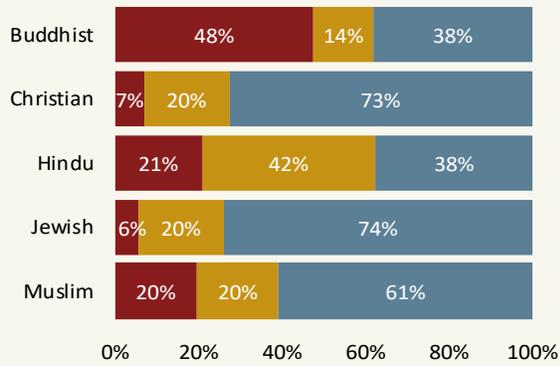


Figure 29: Availability of suitable spaces for organized religious activities

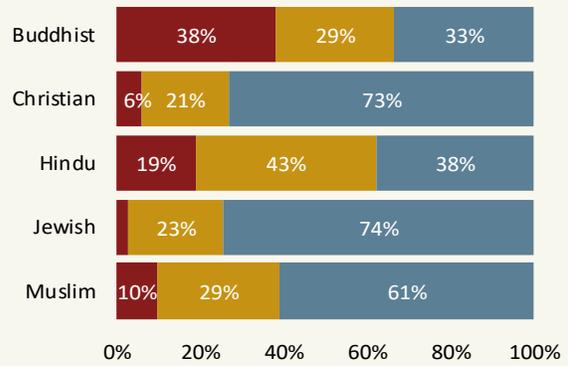
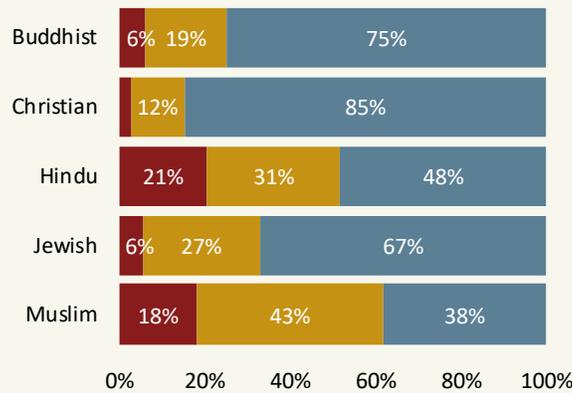


Figure:30 Dining/food options on campus

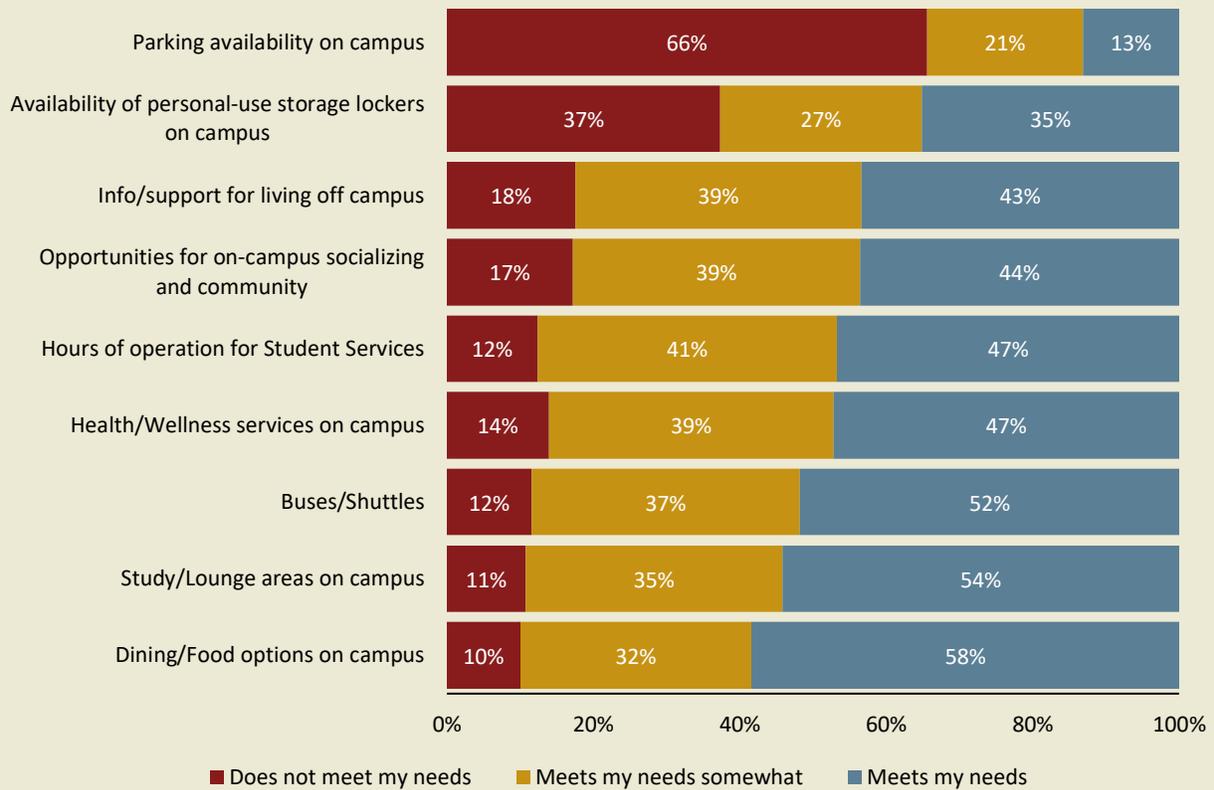


■ Does not meet my needs ■ Meets my needs somewhat ■ Meets my needs

Students Who Live Off Campus

Students who live off campus were asked the extent to which a wide range of campus aspects and services meet their needs (see Figure 31). Among students who live off campus, unmet needs were high with respect to two of nine aspects, in particular: the availability of on-campus parking and the availability of on-campus personal storage lockers. Two-thirds of off-campus students indicated that the availability of parking does not meet their needs, and slightly more than one-third of off-campus students indicated the availability of personal storage lockers does not meet their needs. Less than one-fifth of off-campus students indicated that the other seven aspects/services do not meet their needs.

Figure 31: Needs assessment for students who live off campus



Experiences with Unfair Treatment: Additional Insights

Up to this point, the report has focused mainly on Campus Climate Survey questions particular to undergraduate students. The last four sections of this report highlight undergraduate students' responses to questions that were part of the climate survey's "common core" items directed to all four main campus populations, including open-ended questions about experiences with unfair treatment and suggestions for change.

The climate survey queried undergraduate students about their experiences with unfair treatment during the fall 2016 semester based on 12 specific aspects of social identity (see *Abridged Report*, p. 44). Figure 32 shows that overall, slightly more than one-half of undergraduates did not report experiencing any type of social identity-based unfair treatment during fall 2016, whereas 13 percent experienced four or more different types of unfair treatment. Figure 33 shows that mean campus climate ratings are highest for undergraduates who did not experience social identity-based unfair treatment and lowest for those who experienced four or more different types.

Figure 32: Cumulative types of unfair treatment experienced during fall 2016

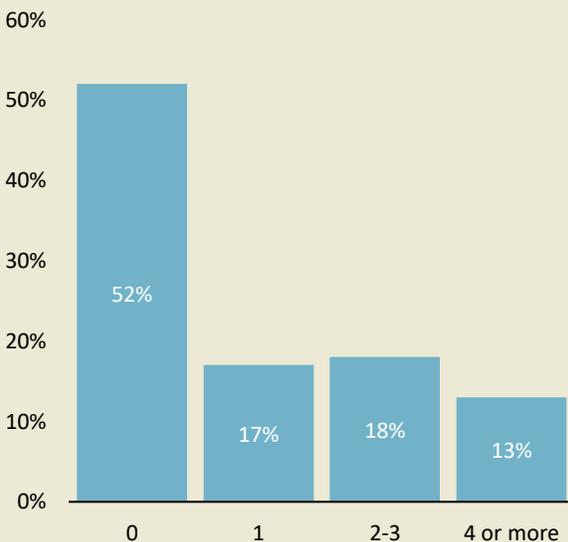
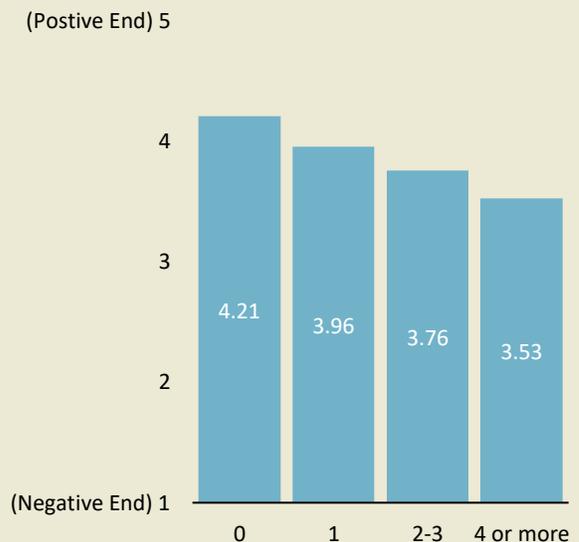


Figure 33: Perception of campus climate by cumulative types of unfair treatment experienced

(mean rating across 8 climate dimensions)



The *Abridged Report* revealed that the most prevalent types of unfair treatment reported by undergraduates were unfair treatment on the basis of political view and unfair treatment on the basis of gender identity. Here we focus on these two specific types of unfair treatment and intersections with gender and race/ethnicity.

Figure 34 shows that conservative undergraduates, across gender identities, were most likely to report that they experienced unfair treatment on the basis of political view. Figure 35 shows percentages of undergraduates who reported experiencing unfair treatment on the basis of gender during the fall 2016 semester, broken down by gender (women and men) and race/ethnicity. As illustrated, there was modest variation by race/ethnicity.

Figure 34: Experienced unfair treatment on the basis of political view, by political view and gender

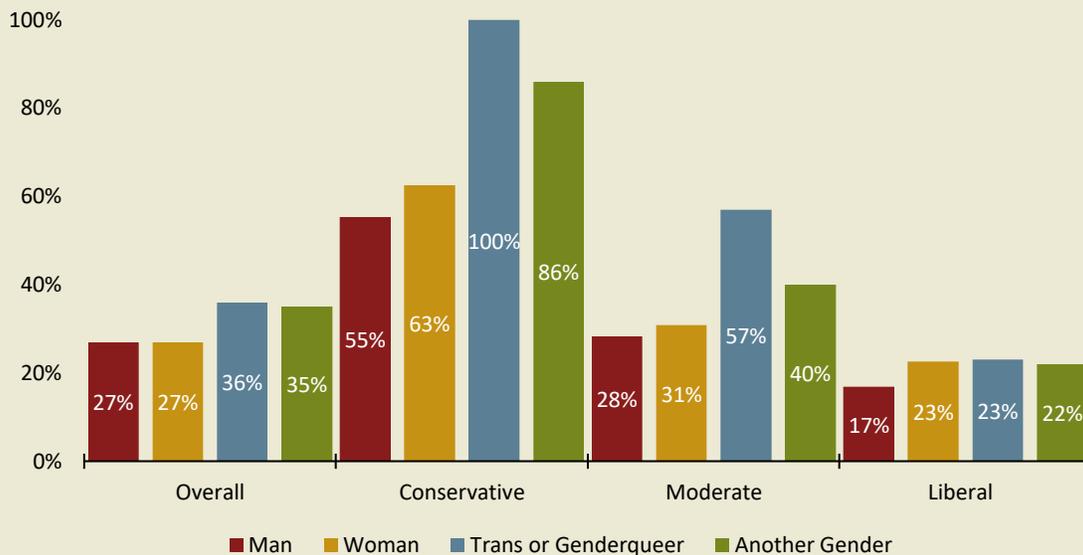


Figure 35: Experienced unfair treatment on the basis of gender, by gender and race

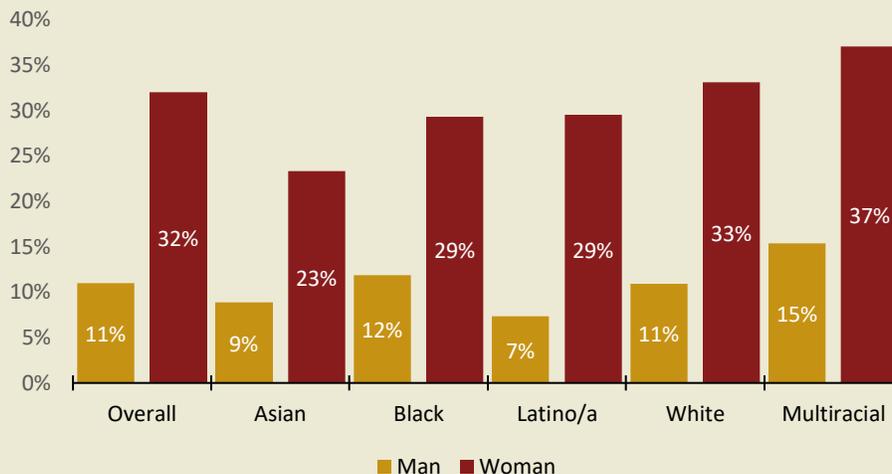
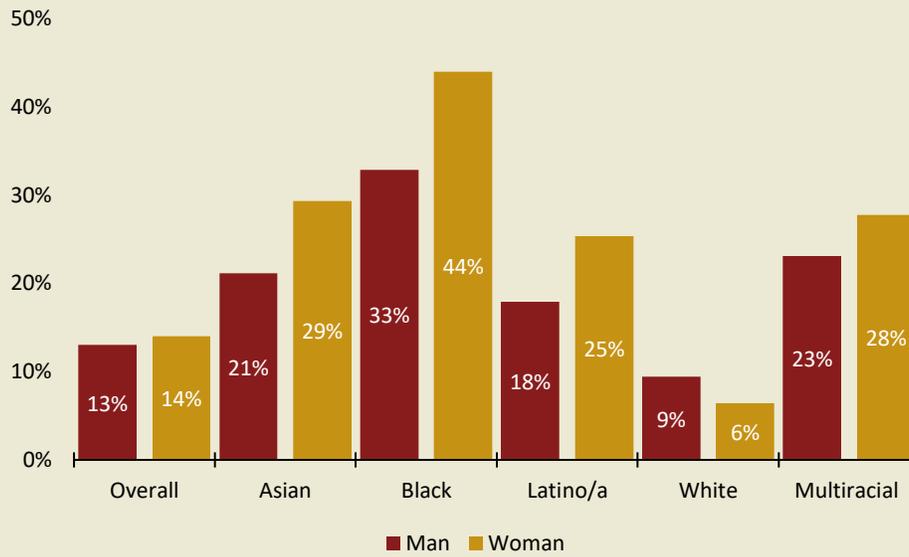


Figure 36 illustrates percentages of undergraduates who reported experiencing unfair treatment on the basis of race during fall 2016, broken down by race and gender (women and men). Among Asian, Black, Latino/a, and multiracial undergraduates, women were more likely than men to report that they experienced unfair treatment on the basis of race/ethnicity.

Figure 36: Experienced unfair treatment on the basis of race/ethnicity, by race and gender



Negative Remarks Related to Social Identity

The Campus Climate Survey asked participants to indicate how often they hear (or see) negative remarks or comments related to social identity in a variety of settings. Figure 37 shows that substantial percentages of undergraduates reported that they hear negative remarks either “sometimes” or “often” in numerous contexts.

Students were most likely to encounter negative remarks on social media, with nearly one-fifth reporting that they hear or see negative remarks on social media “often.” One-half of undergraduates reported that they hear negative remarks in public spaces outdoors on campus and in campus residence halls. Two-fifths reported that they encounter negative remarks in campus dining facilities, and one-third indicated that they encounter negative remarks at sports venues or in class.

Figure 37: How often students hear or see negative remarks or comments related to social identities in the following locations

Undergraduates were asked a follow-up question about the aspects of social identity that are the targets of the negative remarks they encounter. Figure 38 shows that the three most common targets are political view, racial/ethnic identity, and gender identity.

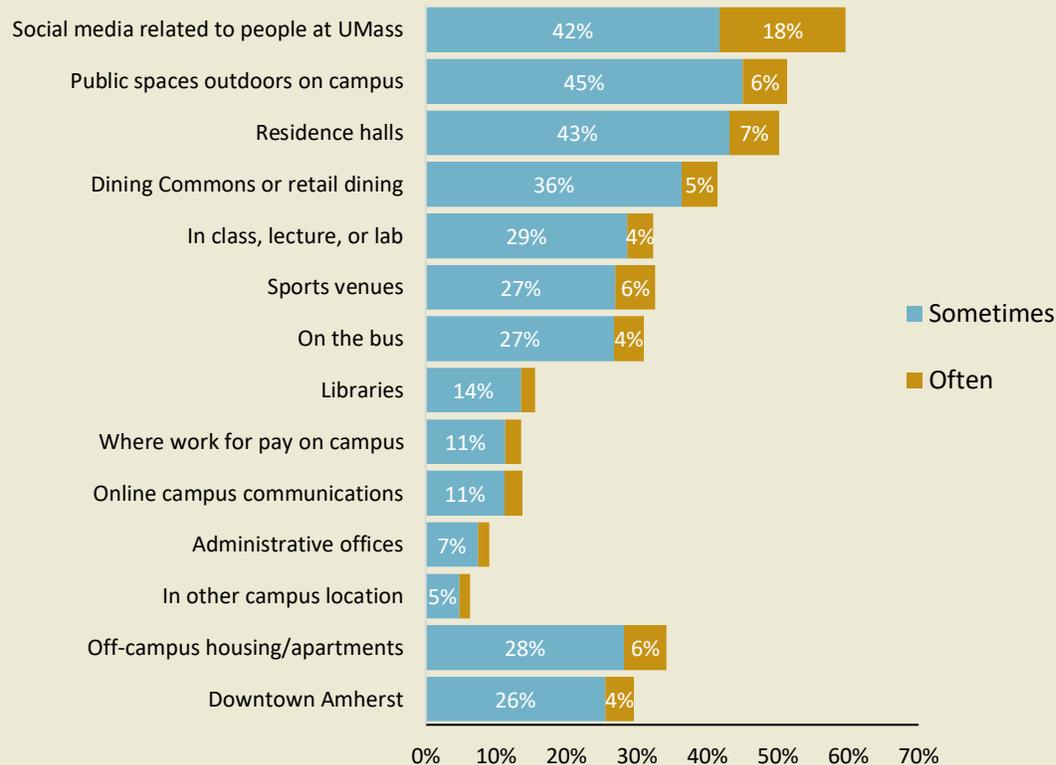
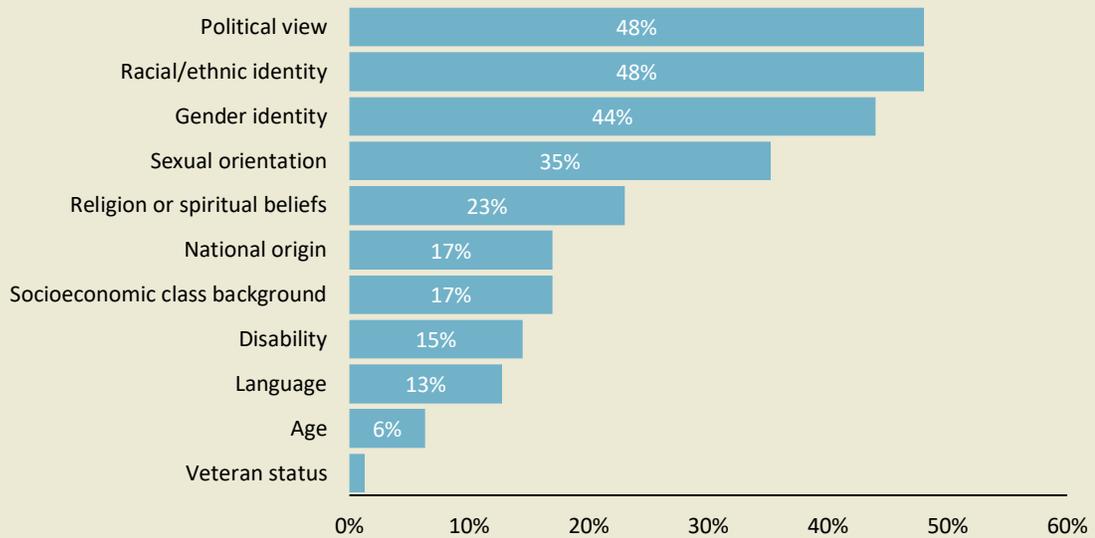
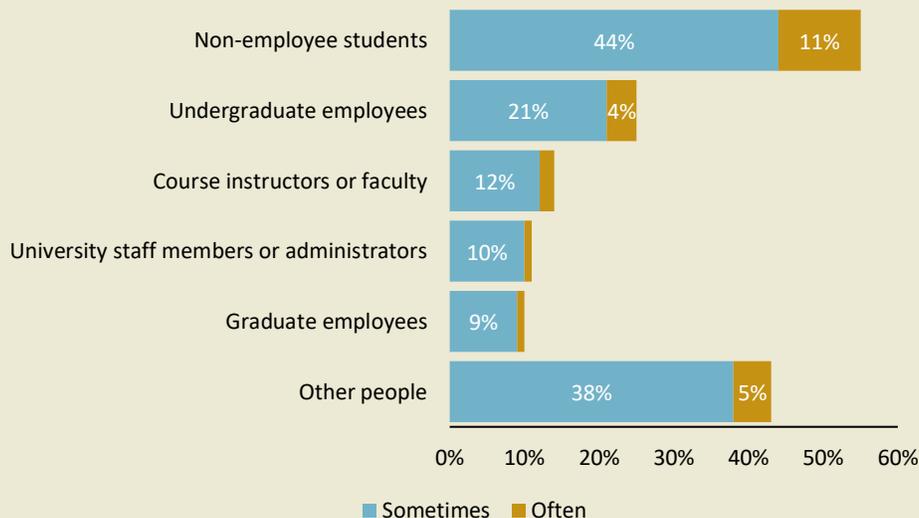


Figure 38: Social identity aspects that are targets of the negative remarks undergraduates hear (or see)



Undergraduates who indicated that they hear or see negative remarks were asked how often they hear (or see) particular categories of people making negative remarks or comments related to social identity. Figure 39 shows that undergraduates are most likely to hear negative remarks from other students: more than one-half reported that they hear non-employee students making negative remarks “sometimes” or “often.” Slightly more than two-fifths of undergraduates reported that they hear (or see) individuals not affiliated with the university making negative remarks.

Figure 39: How often undergraduates hear (or see) particular categories of people making negative remarks or comments

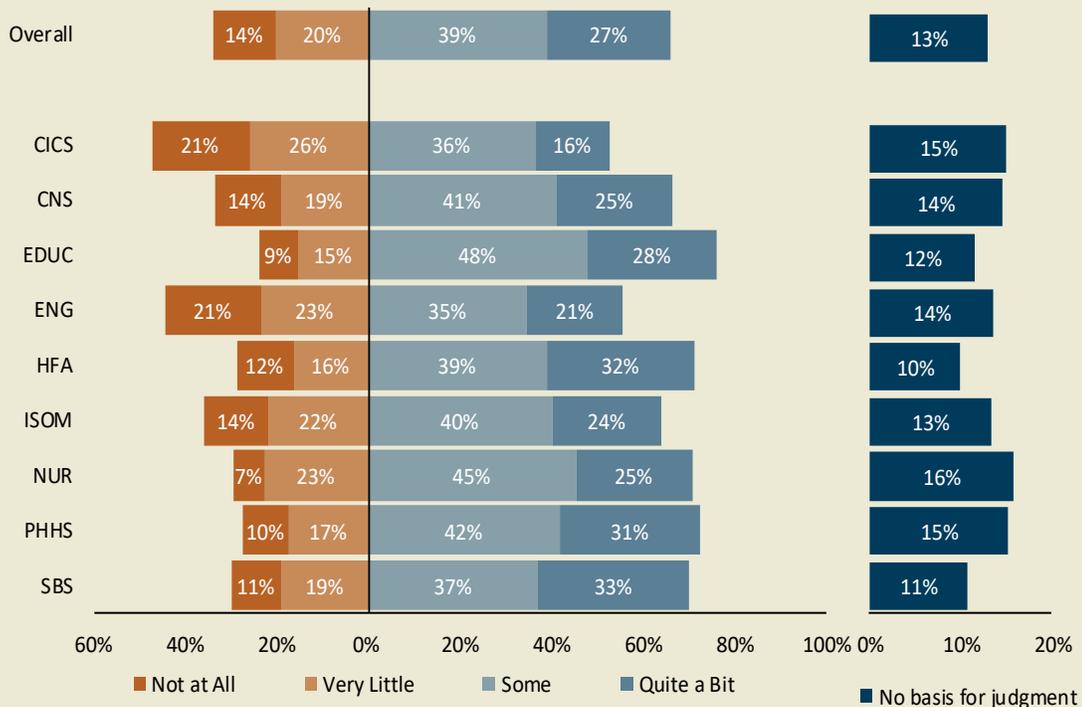


Perceived Impact of Campus Interactions across Social Identity Differences

One set of survey items asked participants to reflect on the interactions they have had at UMass Amherst with people whose social identities are different from their own – and to estimate how much these interactions impacted them in particular ways. In this section, we include undergraduates’ responses to four of the items in this set, broken down by college/school. Each of the figures in this section is comprised of a main chart and a supplementary chart that shows the percentages of students who indicated “no basis for judgment.” It is important to keep in mind here that differences in college/school compositional diversity likely underlie some of the minor variation in responses.

Figure 40 shows that overall, two-thirds of undergraduates perceived that their campus-based interactions across difference enhanced their understanding of course content either “some” or “quite a bit.” Differences by college/school were modest, with CICS students and ENG students more likely than students in other colleges/schools to say “very little” or “not at all” (47 percent and 44 percent, respectively).

Figure 40: How much interactions increased undergraduates’ understanding of course content



As illustrated in Figure 41, nearly 80 percent of undergraduates overall perceived that their campus-based interactions across difference increased their ability to work effectively with others who are different from them (either “quite a bit” or “some”). There were slight differences by college/school, with ENG students and CICS students more likely than students in other colleges/schools to say “very little” or “not at all” (30 percent and 27 percent, respectively). HFA, NUR, and PHHS students were most likely to say “quite a bit.”

Figure 41: How much interactions increased undergraduates’ ability to work effectively with others who are different from them

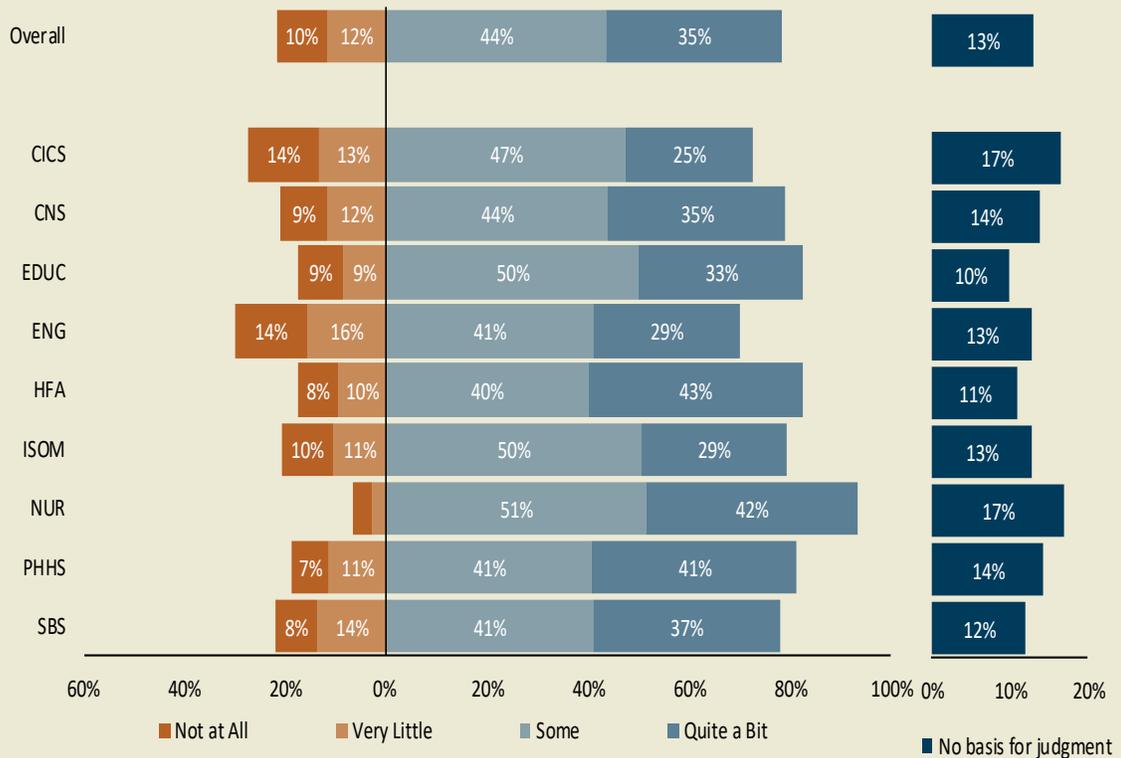
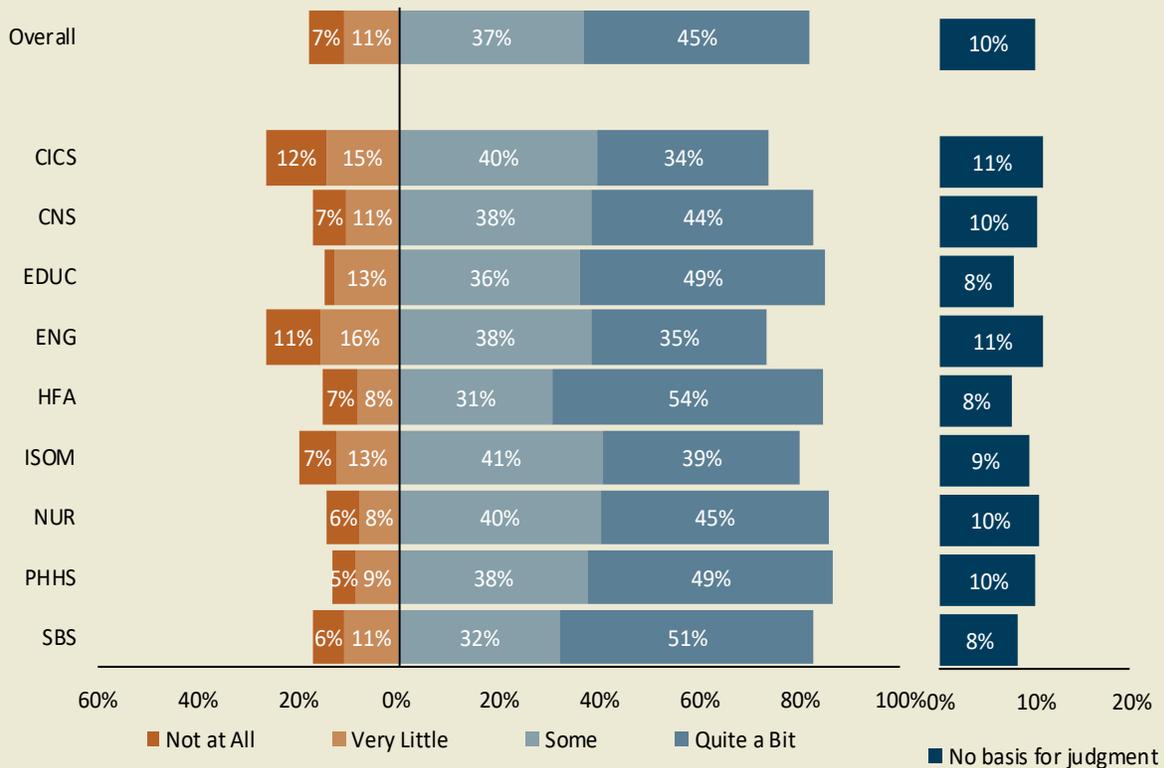


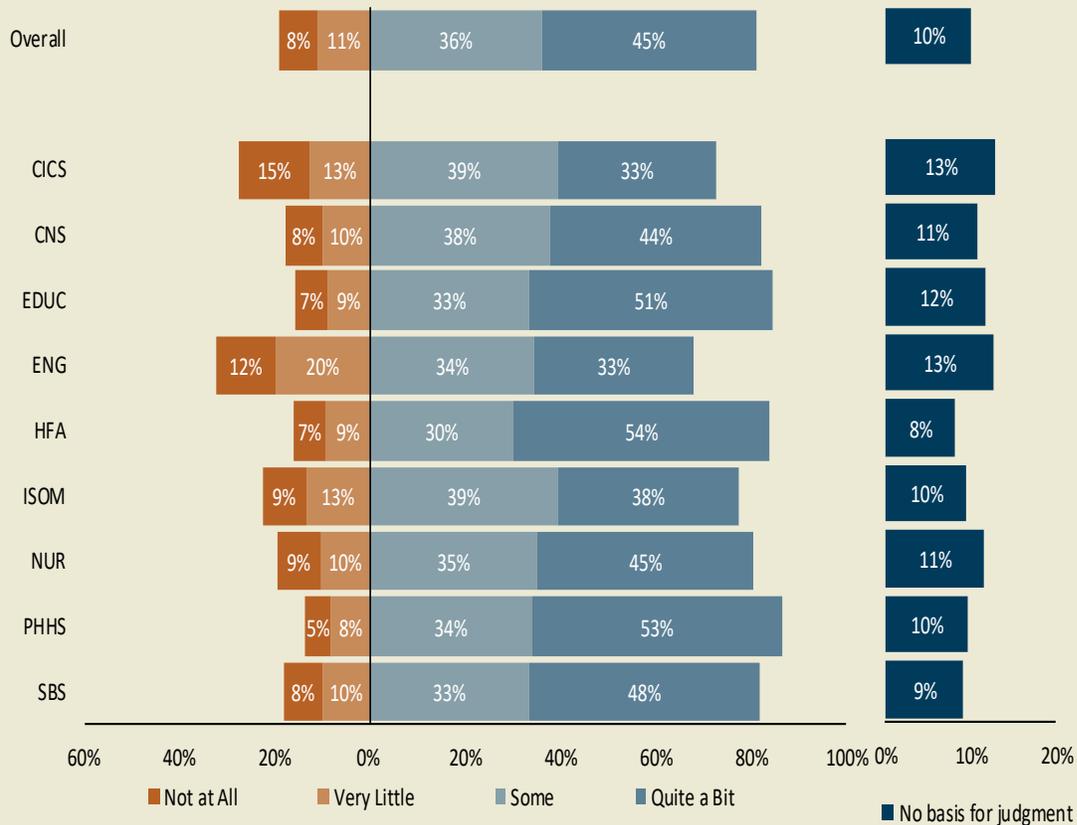
Figure 42 shows that the vast majority of undergraduates perceived that their interactions across difference helped them recognize biases that affected their own thinking – with 45 percent saying “quite a bit.” There were slight differences by college/school, with ENG students and CICS students more likely than students in other colleges/schools to say “very little” or “not at all” (27 percent for both).

Figure 42: How much interactions helped undergraduates to recognize biases that affect their own thinking



Lastly, Figure 43 shows that the vast majority of undergraduates perceived that their interactions across difference helped them be more thoughtful about language use – with 45 percent saying “quite a bit.” The pattern of responses across colleges/schools was similar to that of previous items, with modest differences by college/school.

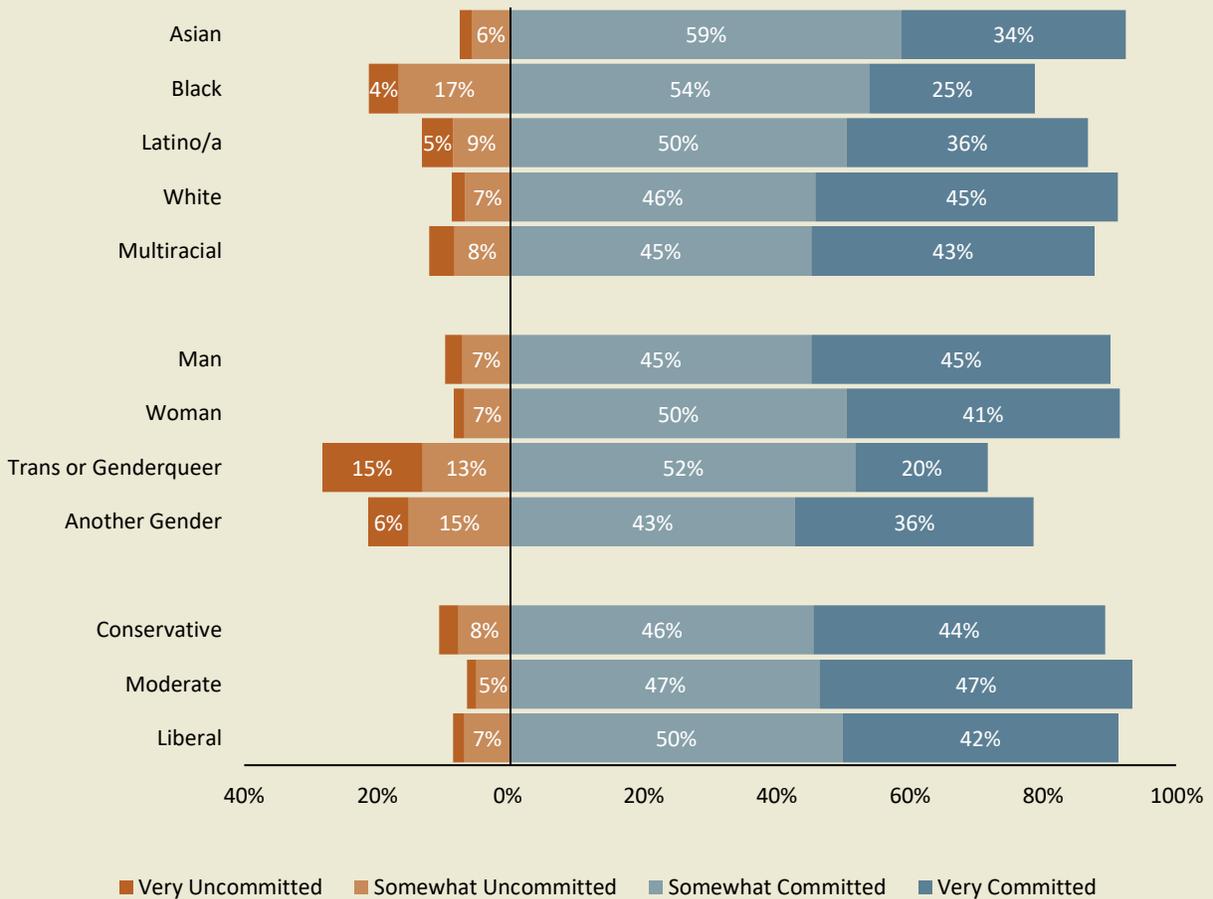
Figure 43: How much interactions across difference helped undergraduates be more thoughtful about their use of language



Perceptions of Institutional Commitment to Inclusion

Figure 44 shows that a vast majority of undergraduates, across each social identity category, perceived that UMass Amherst was either very or somewhat committed to inclusion. Undergraduates who identified as trans or genderqueer, undergraduates who identified as another gender, and Black undergraduates were most likely to perceive that the institution is uncommitted to inclusion (either “somewhat” or “very”).

Figure 44: How committed or uncommitted to inclusion is UMass Amherst as an institution?



Part Two: Qualitative Analyses

Background and Methods

This section presents results of a qualitative analysis of undergraduate student survey participants' responses to the climate survey's open-ended questions. Analysis of these rich and extensive comments (5,504 total comments from 3,147 undergraduates) provides a nuanced description and understanding of the experiences of undergraduate students at the university and reveals common themes in their suggestions for how to make UMass Amherst more welcoming and inclusive.

The qualitative data analysis team was comprised of three researchers who each assumed primary responsibility for coding the data of a specific population or populations (undergraduates, graduate students, staff, and faculty). The team used NVivo™ software to code and analyze the four sets of open-ended data. Initially, each team member read through their entire set(s) of comments and identified key themes question by question. The team worked together as a group to develop an initial set of codes/themes. For example, stereotyping and insensitivity surfaced in survey participants' descriptions of unfair treatment, and each of these was designated as a code.

Next, each researcher coded all of the comments in their assigned data set(s). The data coding and analysis process was both iterative and comprehensive. The team revised the initial data coding scheme, adding specificity to or combining similar themes. Ultimately, all comments across the four data sets were coded completely. In addition, data pertaining to survey participants' social identity characteristics (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity) were linked to the comments and used to run "matrix coding" to explore and identify patterns within and among subgroups. Once all of the data were coded, each team member crafted a set of question-specific memos that summarized the themes present in the set(s) of comments they analyzed. The research team discussed each of these memos, and one team member initially crafted four separate narratives that each communicated the findings for a specific campus population. Thereafter, the report was reviewed by another research team, who revisited the original data and coding memos, iteratively editing the report, to ensure clarity for a broader audience.

The undergraduate student version of the climate survey included two open-ended questions that were part of the survey's "common core" of items and one question that was asked of undergraduates and graduate students.

The first of these questions is a follow-up posed to survey participants who reported experiencing unfair treatment on the basis of social identity during fall 2016. The wording is as follows: *You indicated that you have personally experienced unfair treatment based on social identity. Please describe your experience(s) with unfair treatment – for example, the context(s)*

and impact on you. Note: your anonymous comments may appear in public reports exactly as worded. Of the 3,421 undergraduates who received this follow-up question, 1,536 (45 percent) provided a comment (18 percent of all undergraduate survey participants).

The second open-ended question, which was asked of all survey participants, solicited suggestions for change. The wording of this question is as follows: *From your perspective, what specific things need to change to make UMass Amherst a more welcoming and inclusive place for all?* This question yielded 2,433 comments from undergraduates (29 percent of all undergraduate survey participants).

In addition, undergraduate and graduate students who reported a lack of confidence in the university's ability to respond effectively to specific incidents of unfair treatment, harassment, and/or assault were asked a follow-up question: *What suggestions do you have for how the university can respond more effectively?* Of the 2,823 undergraduates who received this follow-up question, 1,021 (36 percent) provided a comment (12 percent of all undergraduate survey participants).

We also note that in all cases, quotations are taken from the survey. If a student used all capitals or had a misspelling, we left the wording as written by the student. Where a particularly long quotation was truncated, ellipses (...) are used to signify that gap in the quotation. Finally, if within a quotation, a particular name or phrase could possibly identify the speaker or someone named in the quotation, an additional step was taken to maintain anonymity and any adaptation to the quotation is marked by brackets to signify [replacement text] that differs from the student's original text.

A note on intersectional identity. Although the quantitative data presented unfair treatment by social identity singularly (e.g., race, gender, disability, etc.), in the open-ended comments, undergraduates described layered experiences of unfair treatment. All undergraduates possess multiple social identities, across intersections of race, class background, sexuality, gender identity, disability, nationality, and religion. However, undergraduates who possessed multiple marginalized identities described experiences of unfair treatment of a stronger degree or intensity because their experiences represented an accumulation of unfair treatment. For example, gender and race were primary social identities by which unfair treatment was illustrated, with an emphasis on women being treated with less respect, and students of color experiencing insensitivity and, at times, hostility. Undergraduate students, however, described heightened experiences of unfair treatment at the intersection of gender and race.

Illustrating the Nature of Unfair Treatment

The primary themes that illustrate the nature of unfair treatment experienced by undergraduate students include: 1) disrespect, 2) insensitivity and stereotyping, 3) invisibility

and hostility, and 4) discrimination and marginalization. It is important to note that many instances of unfair treatment were described in the classroom context.

Disrespect. One primary way that undergraduate students described unfair treatment was in terms of disrespect. Undergraduate students experienced disrespect from their peers, faculty, and, at times, staff members. Disrespect included being spoken to in a condescending tone, being ignored, interrupted, or shut down, as well as sexual slights, which students described as disrespectful, derogatory comments with sexual or gendered overtones.

Undergraduate students described being disrespected when their contributions and/or comments were overlooked or ignored in the classroom. In one example, a student described being ignored by a professor who spoke primarily to the men in the classroom, while another student described having someone else take credit for ideas. In other cases, students describe disrespect in the form of not having one's opinion taken seriously or not gaining as many chances to participate.

Often in lab settings I've noticed male students getting more attention and more opportunities for learning while female students often don't speak up and their education suffers and the environment is hard to be in.

Sometimes I feel that my opinion is not taken seriously in class discussions because I am a woman. In class discussions, I have had male classmates repeat what I just said and they are told what a good insight it is.

When expressing my feeling in class, my professor cut me off. It's happened a few more times. Now I don't want to participate in class because I don't feel my opinions are valid.

Because I am white and because I tend to have more conservative viewpoints (fiscally at least) I find that at UMass my words are immediately discounted.

One time in the class, I stated my opinion that I felt strongly about, and I was not even allowed to finish my sentence because the entire room went into an uproar, not accepting what I had to say.

Although classroom-based disrespect was noted across student identities, the experience of being cut off or not given airtime was more prevalent among women and politically conservative students. Women did not find many routes to improve the situation; in one case, when a woman complained to her instructor about perceived inequalities, the instructor treated her as "acting emotionally." Other women lost confidence or became angry. Politically conservative students felt pressured to hide their viewpoints in future discussion, thereby withdrawing their participation from class.

Undergraduate students also described disrespect in the form of sexual slights, which were described by students as demeaning comments about women that had sexual overtones; women students encountered these instances of disrespect as they walked across campus, rode the bus, or engaged in social events.

Men on this campus think it's funny to slut shame girls and make degrading comments to us. I've had it done probably every week here.

I was explaining sexism in my class and group of three young men actually laughed at me and attempted to humiliate me in front of my class.

I'm a woman and derogatory comments or unwelcomed flirting are common in the college social scene, especially when alcohol is involved.

While these interactions were primarily illustrated as involving male peers, disrespectful interactions with male staff members seeking romantic involvement were also described.

Overall, the open-ended responses included a strong theme pertaining to being disrespected, whether by professors or peers. While undergraduate students from all social identities mentioned some form of disrespect in their responses, the threads of gender and political beliefs are particularly notable. The behaviors associated with this form of unfair treatment includes being overlooked, discounted, or objectified and with negative emotional, academic, and social impacts.

Insensitivity and Stereotyping. A second prominent theme within the open-ended comments pertained to insensitivity and stereotyping. Insensitivity referred to instances when undergraduate students encountered negative assumptions or mistreatment by others based on their social identity. Stereotyping referred to a particular form of insensitive treatment where a peer or faculty member evoked a negative stereotype or treated a student in a stereotypical manner; stereotypes were based on gender, race, or perceived citizenship status. Thus, although insensitive treatment was broader than the use of stereotypes, these were combined into one theme given the high degree of overlap in the open-ended comments. Students reacted to the insensitive treatment in a variety of ways, ranging from a sense of resignation to severe emotional discomfort and anxiety. When students experienced this form of unfair treatment, they also described the campus as less inclusive and unwelcoming.

Undergraduate students described being stereotyped based on their gender. For example, students encountered faculty members who made comments about how women scientists are less likely to be successful, and these stereotypes influenced how peers and instructors treated women and men in classes. In some cases, the examples categorized as insensitive or stereotypical also contained an element of being disrespectful or dismissive; however, the additional assumption based on a gender stereotype was evoked as a basis for

the unfair treatment. These situations are particularly fraught in classrooms where women are in the minority:

In one of my courses, I am one of two girls in a class with fourteen boys and our instructor sometimes makes stereotypic comments about women that make me uncomfortable or think he believes we are less capable than the boys in our class. I don't feel confident speaking out in class or volunteering for activities.

Often in class instructors will dismiss answers from myself and other women and accept similar answers from men in the class. I do not believe this is intentional but often women's answers are looked at with the anticipation of them being incorrect especially in male dominated fields.

Transgender students also describe experiences of insensitivity experienced in the classroom based on their gender identity. This often took the form of faculty failing to acknowledge or not using their preferred pronoun(s). Transgender students pointed to the lack of faculty understanding about what it means to be transgender or gender-nonconforming, and their need, as students, to explain and clarify their gender identity regularly was frustrating:

*Professors make minimal attempt to use the proper pronouns for me and my friends, classmates make actually no attempt, never acknowledge when they misgender me. Makes me want to hide in a hole literally every moment that I'm on campus. I personally would not have lasted a year living on campus, have trouble trusting anyone I meet at school, don't feel that people beyond my immediate circle give a s**t about trans people. It feels bad.*

I am also misgendered by peers and professors quite often despite being very open about my pronouns and have had some instances of confusion in terms of my preferred name vs legal name, for instance in terms of attendance and grading in classes.

Transgender and gender-nonconforming students note that such experiences of unfair treatment are associated with feelings of distress in the classroom.

Undergraduate students also experienced insensitive treatment in relation to their nationality and/or perceived citizenship status. This included being stereotyped by other students who assumed that they do not speak English and felt excluded from social conversations and friendships as a result. While international students, as well as non-native English speakers, were the targets of this form of unfair treatment, domestic Asians and Latinos/as also reported this experience.

People think I'm an international student when I was born in the USA and ask me questions of where I come from or what language I speak. I also am judged because I

hang out with people of the same race which make people believe I'm an international student or someone who can't speak English.

Sometimes, people believe that all immigrants are here to take their jobs, be criminals, kill people, do drugs, and it's not true. Some of us just want better education and more opportunities.

In addition, many students note how uncomfortable they are because of the assumptions students, staff, and faculty make about their nationality or racial-ethnic background. The stereotyping, assumptions about visa status, and other comments can be difficult to navigate. International students also describe how challenging it is to hear negative comments about immigrants on campus.

Students also described insensitivity in relation to socioeconomic status or class background. These accounts involve faculty members who assumed a student came from a more privileged class background when assigning expensive course materials; for example, students recounted experiences where a faculty member suggested that they should ask their parents or family for money for additional course materials. Many students further noted that staff members, from an array of offices on campus, are dismissive of students who come from lower-income backgrounds. The insensitivity was experienced by comments made or actions taken that negatively impacted them.

The largest problem I ran into this semester was when loans were a few days late coming through. I received emails notifying me that if bills were not handled by Monday 10 AM, I would be removed from my housing section. And that simply is not ok.

I have had instructors and students make many remarks about "the poor" under the assumption that no one in the class falls under that category. Oftentimes professors can expect money for extra materials right away with no warning (aka not listed in the syllabus), and if you explain that you don't have the money, then professors will pressure you to ask your parents, leading to an uncomfortable situation where you have to explain that your parents can't give you money either...I've also been singled out in a class during a discussion about minimum wage and while nodding in agreement at a particular point made in the lecture, was asked by the lecturer if I wanted to share any personal experiences, which was mortifying.

Overall, insensitivity and stereotypical behavior were experienced by undergraduate students particularly in relation to their gender identity, racial identity, socioeconomic background, and perceived citizenship status. Often students who endured these types of unfair treatment conveyed that they believed it was linked to one of the multiple social identity categories they possessed that were misunderstood or disregarded. Students who experience this type of unfair treatment shared that they feel the university does not care about them as individuals,

or educating them, as a result.

Invisibility, Isolation, and Hostility. A third theme from the open-ended comments pertained to invisibility, isolation, and hostility. Invisibility referred to instances when undergraduate students felt that others, most often peers, did not see them or spoke about them as though they were not present. Isolation, in contrast, referred to undergraduate students not feeling incorporated into or feeling removed from the community. Hostility referred to more overt instances of bias or negative treatment that students saw as happening on the basis of a particular social identity. Experiences of invisibility, isolation, and hostility were described across a range of social identities.

Students with disabilities noted experiencing invisibility and isolation across spaces: in classes, in work settings, within their dorms, and in other campus settings. In some cases, students reported that their disability was questioned or denied. Further, many students noted that accessing disability services and their resources is an arduous process, making it difficult to receive accommodations. Other students note that peers, among others, make dismissive comments about people with disabilities regularly on campus, leaving them feeling invisible, isolated, and unwelcome:

Disability services does not understand my disability and is not friendly. Teachers or administrators oftentimes single me out or put me in a bad situation. I am made to feel like using my UMass approved accommodations is cheating by teachers or TAs and feel like I cannot use them.

Further, undergraduate students with physical disabilities noted experiences of isolation due to inaccessibility.

UMass Amherst is structurally not an accessible place for students with disabilities and even the buildings that are technically accessible still isolate students with disabilities by forcing them to sit directly in front of the class, etc. There are a few specific buildings that are, quite frankly, not accessible at all. For example, the FAC, Bartlett, Herter, and many of the older buildings are literally impossible for students with certain disabilities to take classes in.

Nontraditional students noted that they experience invisibility on campus, too, when they are questioned about their student status.

My experience is by no means traumatic or as a result of hate, but being an adult learner in my mid 30s I'm excluded from groups because I'm not in my late teens / early 20s. Or when I say that I've gone to student events I'm told that events are for students only, and when I tell people I am [a student] I've received looks of doubt as if I'm lying. It doesn't affect my ability to learn at UMASS but there is an entire college of adult learners that are excluded from the culture on campus based on our age.

Students from various religious backgrounds, including Jewish and Muslim students, also describe their invisibility and isolation when their holidays go unrecognized.

I had a religious Islamic holiday so I wanted to take off work to be with my family. My supervisor denied me the right to take the day off and forced me to come in and work. While my white coworker was allowed to miss work for [extra-curricular activity].

Students also described being treated insensitively based on their sexual identity, while these experiences occurred across campus, the majority of accounts referred to experiences in residence halls. Gender and sexuality also intersected, with lesbians describing unfair treatment related to not being a straight woman presented a challenge to forming connections on campus.

On occasion, when I make my sexual orientation known - not straight - it affects how people interact with me from that point forward, both in class by professors and classmates and outside of class by friends and fellow residents of res halls. Additionally, I feel like being a woman has created the opportunity for people to use that as an excuse for treating me differently in addition to hearing a lot of microaggressions related to being a non-straight woman.

Gender-nonconforming students described experiencing hostility when they attempted to utilize bathrooms that aligned with their gender identity.

When you have close friends who have been mocked and chased out of gendered bathrooms on campus, the current efforts by the university just don't cut it.

Gender-neutral bathrooms were described as often inaccessible because they were locked or not available in all buildings on campus as well as in residence halls.

Isolation and hostility also surfaced when instructors or peers assumed that the entire class shares a liberal political orientation; in these cases, moderate, conservative, or non-liberal students can feel invisible. In addition, students described situations where faculty did not moderate discussions in a neutral way, and they experienced hostility within the classroom from faculty and peers alike:

I have been put down for supporting Trump, I have been screamed at for expressing my political opinions, I have been told my opinion doesn't matter because I am "white," "a man," a "Republican," a "sexist," a "misogynist" and even a "racist."

Multiple professors I have this semester OPENLY MOCK individuals for not subscribing to the same liberal ideology that they do. Not even necessarily along lines of party

affiliation, sometimes as simply as "this person is not liberal, therefore they are stupid." It is quite shameful that faculty at a learning institution are so dismissive of any real diversity of thought.

UMass tries so hard to be inclusive and often liberals preach that conservatives are intolerant and hateful but these past four years liberals have been horrible to me regarding being a conservative. Just because I'm a republican does not mean I am a racist, homophobic tyrant. I have a very diverse group of friends but have been verbally attacked multiple times on campus for being a republican. We need to be inclusive of EVERYONE including republicans. I cannot stress enough how mean and rude people have been to me and how I often feel unsafe sharing my personal views in fear of physical or verbal assault

There was a perception expressed that the university's strong liberal bias hinders political diversity. Yet, many students also note that open discourse can be challenging across multiple dimensions, not only across political viewpoints. A number of students argued that UMass should not allow hate speech or racial slurs, while allowing for open discussion of political issues.

Students experienced hostility and isolation in relation to their race, when they left an interaction feeling unwelcomed. This negative behavior was present in social circles, involving peer interactions with roommates and classmates.

I have noticed that it's much harder to make white friends, or have white students talk to me. I grew up in a white community so it feels very weird. People just assume that I'm not a native English speaker and act surprised when they hear me, which I feel is very disrespectful.

I am clearly Latina, and that, I assume, bothers some of my peers. I specifically have felt excluded by them and have experienced racial microaggressions by them as well...Either they purposefully close doors on me or other things like making certain comments that are obviously offensive. This has made me extremely uncomfortable.

My roommate made a racist tweet about another one of our roommates. I reported the issue...Nothing has come of it. I have told my ARD that I feel uncomfortable and unsafe living with this person as a [Person of Color] but nothing has been done.

In summary, students experienced isolation and invisibility when their identities were ignored, whether due to a lack of access to the campus or social networks, and they experienced hostility along various social identity dimensions that was more overt. Overall, students describe how unfair treatment created negative academic, emotional, and social impact.

Discrimination and Marginalization. A final theme within the open-ended comments pertained to discrimination and marginalization. Discrimination referred to prejudicial treatment, such as being unfairly penalized for the same infraction or observing someone of another group gaining a benefit unfairly. Typically, discrimination was described on the grounds of race and gender. Marginalization referred to situations where students felt they existed on the fringes of the university community. Students emphasized a lack of belonging and trust after experiencing discriminatory or marginalized treatment.

Students who expressed they had experienced discrimination or marginalization felt they were the targets of offensive commentary, were treated more severely, or were not given the same benefits as white students:

Co-workers will say racist/sexist things to me or other women of color on staff and my supervisors routinely ignore it or put the burden of educating upon me.

One of my professors continually targets the black athletes in my class and reprimands only them for doing the same things (arriving late, being on their phones, not handing in assignments etc.) as other white students.

I've been in classrooms and other spaces on campus where students and faculty have felt comfortable using racial slurs without having the proper education and knowledge as to why those slurs would be offensive. In this situation, I felt uncomfortable with the use of the slur and the conversation following, but I was also the only person of color in the class and I feel like it isn't my responsibility to educate faculty, staff and students on why racial slurs and stereotypes are extremely detrimental.

A couple of times this semester I have had dining common workers refuse to give me an extra serving of food (which I completely understand), however, what angers me is that I would often see a white male ask for the same serving size moments later and get what we wanted. Also at the rec center, I have seen the staff member make sure people of color follow the rules, but when old, white males disobey the rules, they do not have the guts to say anything.

A similar sentiment was shared by Jewish students who recounted hearing anti-Semitic statements or seeing swastikas around campus. Some students hide their religious identities as a result, one student points this out:

There isn't enough awareness and advocacy for Judaism and the fight against anti-Semitism compared to some social identities. I don't appreciate hearing that there are swastikas being drawn all over campus, but zero action taken after with reasonable repercussions.

Students also shared hearing comments that signified homophobia or were dismissive to people with disabilities that had a similar effect of making the spaces feel unwelcome.

One time I was part of a production in which large blocks had to be cleared off stage. The professor asked for volunteers in the cast to clear the blocks. I volunteered and the professor laughed and told me "We can't have a person in the wheelchair carrying a block offstage!" In a later rehearsal it came up again and she was now even more desperate for a volunteer. I volunteered again and she disregarded me. I explained that I could easily set the block on my lap and wheel it offstage faster and quieter than anyone else. She didn't have a response but, turned the other way and asked another cast member to do it even though he would of have had to take two trips and slow down the set change. I was the only cast member in that show who didn't have to move a set piece.

Another way that students felt marginalized was when groups appeared to limit their entry. International students noted that they felt conversation stops when they enter social spaces, making it awkward to join the group. Those who are non-native English speakers particularly describe feeling ostracized on campus and are rarely welcomed on team projects or in social situations. Some of them note that English speakers assume when they speak in their language of origin, they are saying negative things about Americans. Asian students suggest that their friend-groups are often limited to other Asians because other students assume that they do not speak English fluently. They describe feelings of alienation, a sense of missing out on social opportunities, and feeling like social outcasts.

I am an international student from China and I happened to sit with a few other Chinese students in class one day. Then when we were asked to participate in in-class group activities with people near us, we just formed groups together. None of the other students said anything. However, when we presented our group findings, the professor jokingly said, "Now let's hear from the CHINESE group!" Everybody laughed but none of my groupmates nor me felt it was funny. Since then, some other students who are American would ignore me or knowingly avoid me to participate in group activities in class and eventually the group project. At the same time, it became awkward if I were to sit with other Chinese students or to be in the same group again because we always felt we were being judged. And the professor didn't stop the joke about the "Chinese group" for the rest of the semester.

I'd love to communicate with guys in my dorm. But it seems like everyone is afraid of me, since I am Chinese. And they are not nice to Chinese. When Chinese show up, they do not talk anymore. Not even to greet to us...I just feel like I am not welcome by them.

Social exclusions were also noted by politically conservative students, women, and people who do not identify as heterosexual. For example, students expressed:

I was just told by a peer the following, “anyone who voted for Donald Trump needs to leave class and never come back.”

I am the only female [work team] member and I am definitely treated differently by the men. They have made remarks “we’ll see how long she lasts.”

In certain group activities on my floor, my sexuality (homosexual) has been cited as a source of uncomfortableness. Thus, I am sometimes excluded from activities that all others are welcome in.

To conclude, students expressed unfair treatment in the form of discrimination and marginalization. This came in the form of social exclusion, exposure to racial slurs or anti-Semitic language, as well as differentially enforcing rules.

Overall, undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds – based on gender, gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexuality, religion, class background, disability, age, nationality, and language of origin – describe a wide range of unfair treatment on campus. Many students feel disrespected and isolated because they are not from the dominant groups; others feel that they are discriminated against. Students described a lack of ideological diversity on campus and feel that UMass students and faculty promote certain political perspectives and not others. Conservative students feel silenced, at times attacked, and students across the political spectrum spoke to the importance of creating a more tolerant and open intellectual environment.

Impact of Unfair Treatment

In the previous section, we detailed the themes that emerged from the unfair treatment experiences that undergraduate students described. However, students often illustrated the impact of the unfair treatment both inside and outside of the classroom. The primary negative impact students described was a combination of emotional and academic impact. The emotional impact included fear, anger, dread, or discomfort. The academic impact was missing class, worrying about class, or not wanting to participate in class. Missing class was experienced in relation to religion, whereas politically conservative students expressed fear of having their political views held against them. Students reported their performance had suffered or they had to withdraw from a course because of the treatment they endured on the basis of their race or class.

One fear expressed from politically conservative students was concern about having peers find out about their political views. In some cases, students were concerned that peers assumed their political beliefs connect them to racism, sexism, and homophobia. While some expressed they were resentful and angry that they are treated this way, others were simply hurt by it. Even students who did not feel personally attacked for their political beliefs describe

a pervasive sense of dread or anxiety and distress in classroom settings with some describing serious impacts following the 2016 presidential election.

I do not feel free to express myself here. I do not feel enabled to intellectually expand myself here. I find that in class I spend a lot of time trying to appease the proverbial "thought police." If I did not feel as though I literally NEED a degree in order to make a comfortable living in today's society I don't think I would stay here for very long. I feel my mental health slip more and more after each passing semester.

Racial minority students similarly describe experiencing and anticipating exclusion, which result in anxiety and hypervigilance due to their high visibility on a predominantly white campus. One student details this experience:

When sitting in a classroom full of 20-30 white students, being one of the very few people of color in the room is quite intimidating. When students start off their discussion points with, "I'm not trying to sound racist but...", I usually know that what they are about to say is probably going to be offensive...I do not feel comfortable sharing my opposing thoughts. I have left classes crying, on the verge of panic attacks, because I am often reminded that I am the "other." It's not fair that my classmates get to take up space, and my professors get to use the "N" word in lectures, and I am the one who has to feel uncomfortable.

Thus, the emotional impact in some cases also showed up in a negative academic impact as students are not able to fully participate in their learning experiences.

Students also described social impact, such that they had fewer friends or friendly peer relations, while others described a negative financial impact.

I felt as though I was unable to relate and interact with a group of people because of my race, I was the only non-Caucasian person and for the first time, I actually felt like that mattered.

My socioeconomic status has affected me greatly. The [science] class offered on campus that was mandatory for my then major requires a \$400 book package that is not sold separately. When I explained to the professor that I was working to support my then sick mother who was battling cancer and couldn't afford the book she told me tough luck it's required. I struggled in the class because I ended up not being able to afford such a bill on top of all my other book costs.

Undergraduate students stressed the impact of unfair treatment, not just the experience. We wanted to be sure to capture the strong sentiment that unfair treatment took a toll on students, both academically and emotionally.

Recommendations for Change:

Undergraduate students shared suggestions for changes that would make UMass more welcoming and inclusive. The recommendations were wide-ranging but concentrated within four areas: 1) administrative accountability, 2) increase support for diversity and inclusivity, 3) encourage tolerance, and 4) build community. We should also note that a substantial number of comments suggested that UMass does not need to change and should continue the current efforts to create an inclusive climate.

Administrative accountability. A theme among undergraduate students who shared recommendations was for the administration to be more accountable on a variety of fronts including issues of racial hostility and sexual harassment/assault. This included the sentiment that the university administration should take a stand on issues, take more action, and demonstrate greater transparency.

Acknowledge the rape culture on campus and educate men on how to get consent and to RESPECT consent or no consent.

Making statements on incidents are NOT effective. Yes, they comment on something and say that the university acknowledges it, but it does not do anything to combat the issue or incident.

Make racial issues a bigger deal. Make social issues a bigger deal. We are seeing a lot of protests right now. A lot of them are being run by students. But does the university care? If it stands for equality, then it should stand up for it as well.

UMass administration needs to make more of an effort to do things, rather than just make statements. By doing so, students are more apt to feel the administration cares about the issues and about them.

Another sentiment was to listen more to students and take them seriously. Undergraduate students described at times feeling dismissed or having their concerns trivialized.

Listen to your students when they ask you for something!!!! There are plenty of demands and protests requesting very specific changes, please listen to those requests and take them seriously!

I think a lot of the time the administration can be dismissive of concerns/issues and that problems aren't handled because students feel that they aren't being perceived legitimately.

This may sound like a common-sense solution, but it often goes unheeded: Listen to students. And I don't just mean hear the words coming out of their mouths; I mean really

sit down, either with them or on your own (the former is preferable, the second less so), and seriously consider the concerns for their safety and health that they are voicing.

Emphatically, students emphasized the need for both consequences for offenders and better responsiveness for victims.

Create spaces/promote the message that racism isn't tolerated, and be vigilant about not letting racist acts and microaggressions go without punishment. Make sure that students of color feel safe and that they actually have staff members and teachers who are for their safety.

Don't let people hang white supremacy flags in windows of dorms and protect it as freedom of speech when it is actually harassment and a racial attack.

Believe survivors. Validate survivors. Give survivors the support they need without making them jump through bureaucratic loopholes.

Re-write the school legislation for how to deal with mistreatment to ensure every sufferer of mistreatment is heard and/or given proper support. Victims who wish to press charges or have a constructive and peaceful confrontational talk with harassers should have that opportunity.

In summary, students called for administrators to take more deliberate, demonstrable action. Whether listening to students, being more transparent about processes, or following through on consequences for those who have inflicted harm on others, students offered many suggestions that would allow the UMass administration to demonstrate its seriousness on these issues.

Increase Support for Diversity and Inclusion. Undergraduates recommended supporting diversity initiatives with a focus on greater demographic diversity across race and class, in particular, across the faculty, staff, students, and administration. Students who suggest expanding demographic diversity across campus described supporting traditionally underrepresented, marginalized, or underserved populations. A strong sentiment was to “increase racial diversity.”

We need to admit people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to give them an equal chance to receive a college education. In order for minorities from low income communities to come here, we also need to be more inclusive in the way we factor their backgrounds with financial aid.

Some students argued that the university emphasizes diversity but does not do enough to recruit students of color. Others point to the importance of increasing diversity, either because as a student of color or international student, they feel alone and isolated in their dorms and

classes, or because, as a student from a majority group, they believe interacting with more diverse students is important.

Students emphasized the need to go beyond changing the composition of the university to supporting an inclusive climate. There were calls to help people from diverse backgrounds and with different values interact more effectively. For example, some students suggest that in RA training, they receive good information about gender identity and sexuality, but much less support for helping international students integrate into the university. To create a truly inclusive environment, these students suggest being more thoughtful about all of the ways to proactively support the diversity of students at UMass.

Students emphasized the importance of social justice training, how to be an ally to racial and ethnic minority students, and the need for training around issues of sexual harassment and assault. Students note that, while there are some programs available to students, trainings are not always mandated nor made accessible to all students. Thus, students suggest that more programs aimed at allowing students to recognize their biases and privileges would go a long way toward creating a more supportive and diverse environment.

These educational conversations need to be incentivized: maybe students need to go as a requirement of grading or in order to get a hold off their SPIRE. I've had dismal showings at my RA social justice programs, and it sucks. A lot of the time, the people who are the biggest problems don't want to hear the stuff that will help them the most, so it's really important to grab them early, often and insistently.

Further, students also note the importance of including training for faculty and staff, who may seem tolerant, but consistently ignore or respond insensitively to diverse students. Students also ask for greater support for underrepresented students, not only on campus generally, but also in certain majors, such as STEM majors. Rather than encouraging diverse students to come to UMass – and then leaving it up to them to negotiate the campus – students called for more training for students, staff, and faculty to ensure that diverse students are treated respectfully.

The university needs to do a better job at encouraging people who aren't white to pursue STEM degrees and needs to provide more advising and support for those who are already in it.

UMass should not just encourage but mandate that university faculty attend sensitivity training to understand how students of different backgrounds are not simply “tokens” of diversity or something to be ignored. UMass needs to elevate the marginalized voices of the community rather than tell them to show up and shut up.

I and nearly all of my friends experience anxiety that complicates our academics, stemming from the perfectionism that post-grad opportunities demand, food and money insecurity, the pressure of working multiple jobs while a full-time student, on top of

which lies the emotional labor of trying to exist as a marginalized body in a world that promises neither simple accommodation nor guaranteed safety. I offer these examples up not as an excuse but in the hopes that it may illustrate some of the problems that contribute to the precariousness of student mental health and physical health, of which, I feel, many faculty members are ignorant.

Some students further suggest that students should be required to take General Education courses that address issues of sexism, racism, homophobia, and transphobia. In some cases, the students who avoid learning about diversity are the same students who would benefit most from recognizing the challenges faced by underrepresented groups.

More designated safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students and staff, spaces where we can just be from day to day, not necessarily through a group meeting. More teachings about differing social identities in the residence halls, including safe space trainings.

More central spaces, i.e. in the student union, campus center, and Whitmore, need to exist as havens to deal with identity, stress, and as gathering places for the celebration and expression of identity.

Some students called for more attention to religious diversity by having an academic calendar that reflects people of different religions.

There was a strong sentiment from some students that there should be *less* emphasis on social identity, equity, and diversity on campus. Another subgroup of students suggests that the university should ignore social identities and treat all students – no matter their demographic identities – the same. The underlying concern, for both groups of students, was that majority students were disadvantaged by programs aimed at supporting underrepresented students. Thus, they argued, paying less attention to social justice programs and social identities would create a more cohesive and equitable environment.

Encourage Tolerance. Students note that they are being asked to be tolerant of students whose identities differ from theirs, but their own political identity is not tolerated. They argue that creating a truly inclusive campus requires open discourse on politics, where certain individuals are not rejected on the basis of their political identity or beliefs. Undergraduate students emphasize the importance of helping students develop their thoughts, by exposing them to a wide variety of perspectives. Some students called for greater neutrality, asking faculty not to disclose their political leanings, or attempt influence or critique students' perspectives.

Students pointed to the importance of inclusion across the ideological spectrum so that all students feel accepted.

There needs to be far greater tolerance of conservative viewpoints in class and in social

settings.

Students suggested creating spaces where differing views can coexist and both sides heard in a tolerant manner where agreeing to disagree may be the outcome. Encouraging tolerance was the core sentiment, where a culture of open-mindedness is valued even if views expressed are not in alignment with one's own. Students felt that fostering this culture of tolerance should be central to the institutional missions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Responses focus on ways to build respectful and open dialogue, including public forums to discuss current events. Students from a variety of standpoints suggest the importance of open dialogue, though they also note the importance of moderating these dialogues, and not condoning hate speech.

Facilitate discussions of ideas and condemn shaming or labeling based on one's ideas or social identity. . .As a liberal, I am worried that PC culture and hyper-liberalism on campus will go overboard and work against intellectual discussion and progressive values some are trying to spread on campus.

Encourage open discussions and formal debates, with moderators if needed. Allow people to truly voice their opinion, inquire, and develop their thoughts. Allow for the creation of ideas, rather than indoctrinate the ideas of professors into students' minds.

People need to respect each other's opinions and not attack each other the second something they say isn't the same opinion as the one that they have. It isn't Trump that has me terrified, it is the discord he has created.

Overall, students ask for everyone to be treated with greater respect and sensitivity, and not judging a person based on their social identities. White men, and conservatives, asked for greater respect, but students also suggested the importance of being more respectful to members of underrepresented groups.

Build Community. Undergraduate students called for more campus-wide events and celebrations as opportunities to socialize with new groups of students, while also recognizing different social identities and combating isolation.

The university needs to work hard at making a big campus feel like that of a small one. In a large major such as biology it is not easy to build relationships with professors in classes of 300 people.

I am a transfer student, and even after 3 full semesters at UMass I still find it incredibly hard to make friends. There's nothing specific that UMass can do to help, it's just the way the dorms and dorm rooms are set up that make it hard for kids who don't have friends to incorporate themselves into campus social lives.

Another sentiment was to promote social events that are educational and that allow students to engage in a fun and social way, but without partying.

For example put on events for Cinco de Mayo, have dances for black history month, make a fun event that explores different gender identities. Learning about another group doesn't always have to be a boring educational event. Make it a fun social, laid back event, that will actually get students to attend.

I think there should be more activities on campus for kids who do not want to go out every weekend and party. It would be more welcoming and inclusive if students who don't party could attend events (at night) on the weekends and realize they are not the only ones skipping out on parties. This is better than staying in your room.

Sponsoring more events for socialization! I feel a bit isolated still, since my floor is small and I'm not friends with any of them, so meeting more people would be nice.

Students talked about connecting groups together, and in doing so, helping to make UMass feel like a smaller place. With stronger connections among groups, and integration, the campus could leverage its strengths.

Conclusion

Undergraduate accounts describe the unfair treatment they face, as well as their suggestions for how the university could become a more inclusive institution. They suggest a wide array of unfair treatment, both for underrepresented groups, and for those with more conservative political perspectives. Students also describe a range of ways such treatment impacts them academically, emotionally, and socially.

There is a subset of students who suggest that UMass cannot be responsible for the larger issues in society, and therefore, cannot fully address these issues. A larger group emphasizes that UMass has created an unusually inclusive community and should be recognized for doing so. Some students really do love and appreciate the campus's efforts toward inclusion and diversity. Yet, many of the students who are pleased with the diversity and inclusivity of the university note that they do not think all students have had the same experience they have had and that there is work to be done on all levels.